



HEAL THE BAY'S SANTA MONICA PIER AQUARIUM OPENS MICROSCOPE LAB

“S. Mark Taper Foundation Science Lab” to Provide Scientific Discovery for All

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SANTA MONICA, Calif. (September 27, 2005) – A \$100,000 grant from the S. Mark Taper Foundation, has enabled the Santa Monica-based environmental organization Heal the Bay to open an interactive and educational microscope lab at the non-profit's Santa Monica Pier Aquarium.

“During a time when school funding is being cut back, the S. Mark Taper Foundation grant has provided Heal the Bay with an amazing opportunity to offer vital scientific education to school groups and the general public,” said Heal the Bay Executive Director Mark Gold. “Thanks to the Foundation’s generosity, the Aquarium now has an entire area full of high-tech microscopes, computers and flat panel viewing screens to educate and inspire all Southern Californians.”

The new S. Mark Taper Foundation Science Lab will serve to teach students and other aquarium visitors about the cornerstone of the ocean environment – microscopic organisms. With the Foundation’s donation, as well as time and materials donated by HO+K Interiors and others, the lab will accommodate up to 15 students and an educator in an engaging, hands-on setting during education field trips.

Heal the Bay has equipped the lab to provide an accessible learning environment intended for students in fifth grade through college. Students will collect and study microorganisms from the Santa Monica Bay, practice scientific methodology and discuss issues such as urban runoff and pollution prevention.

The lab will also be available to educate the public during visiting hours. Aquarium staff will use the microscopes to show visitors aspects of marine life not visible with the naked eye. A large television screen will be used for slideshows and to show documentary films on environmental issues and other marine themed topics.

The Santa Monica Pier Aquarium (located beach level at the Santa Monica Pier) is open to the public Tuesday through Friday from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., and weekends from 12:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. Reservations are required for school groups interested in attending an education program. Call (310) 393-6149, ext. 105, for more details.

The S. Mark Taper Foundation, founded in 1989, is a private family foundation dedicated to enhancing the quality of people’s lives by supporting nonprofit organizations and their work in our communities. In more than 10 years of work with Heal the Bay, S. Mark Taper Foundation grants have helped to train citizens to recognize and prevent pollution in their communities and to develop and design the Heal the Bay Website.

For 20 years, Heal the Bay has made Southern California waters safer and healthier for people and marine life through a unique approach that combines science, advocacy, education and fun. As one of the largest non-profit environmental organizations in Los Angeles County, with over 10,000 members, Heal the Bay inspires environmental stewardship by educating communities and individuals about ways to transform their neighborhoods and improve their local water quality. Heal the Bay has managed the Santa Monica Pier Aquarium since 2003.

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