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Bay Area Event to Focus on UCSB's DigitalOcean Program

The DigitalOcean project at UC Santa Barbara is going on the road –– all the way to San Francisco's Pier 39 –– for a special event on Sunday, November 8, from 3 to 5 p.m., titled "DigitalOcean: Connecting for Ocean Sustainability." Sponsored by Oracle, the program is designed to bring attention to DigitalOcean, a virtual commons being developed by UCSB's Environmental Media Initiative to create global communities using new media to advance ocean sustainability and protect ocean ecosystems.

The event, which will take place at Theater 39, will focus on showing how young people can get involved in ocean conservation efforts. The program includes the world premiere screening of the film "Students Saving the Ocean" and clips from the documentary "Saving the Bay"; a presentation by David Helvarg and Jim Toomey, author and illustrator, respectively, of the book "50 Ways to Save the Ocean"; and a keynote lecture on "Sustainable Fisheries" by Steven Gaines, director of UCSB's Marine Science Institute and the newly appointed dean of the Bren School of Environmental Science & Management. The event is free and open to the public.

Lead sponsors of the event are Oracle and Outhink Media, with additional support from Aquarium of the Bay, The Bay Institute, and the Blue Frontier Campaign.

The program will open with a screening of "Students Saving the Ocean." This 20-minute documentary film, produced by Outhink Media, highlights a group of Bay

Area high school students and the actions they take to help protect the health of their local ocean. It is based on several chapters in Helvarg's book "50 Ways to Save the Ocean," and is narrated by the students and members of local global environmental organizations, including the Bay Institute, Environmental Justice for Bayview Hunters Point, the California Academy of Sciences, and others.

A trailer for "Students Saving the Ocean" can be viewed at www.savetheocean.info/.

"It has been extremely inspirational to work with Bay Area scientists and enthusiasts who care about the Bay and the ocean," said Dave Toole, a UCSB alumnus and one of the main organizers of the event. "We're trying to show how we can connect students and other members of the local community with the global community around these issues." The founder and chief executive officer of Outhink Media, Toole is a member of the advisory board of UCSB's Center for Information Technology and Society, and is a key partner in building the DigitalOcean software infrastructure.

Following the film screening, Helvarg and Toomey will give a humorous presentation on ways that young people can get involved in saving the world's oceans using tips from their book. President of the Blue Frontier Campaign, Helvarg is also editor of the "Ocean and Coastal Conservation Guide." Toomey, a syndicated cartoonist, is the creator of the comic strip "Sherman's Lagoon," which appears in more than 250 newspapers in North America and over 30 foreign countries. He also is active in marine conservation, and has received the Environmental Hero Award presented by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Bay Area filmmaker Ron Blatman will introduce and show clips from "Saving the Bay," a four-part documentary film that premiered on KQED, the public television station in the Bay Area. The film chronicles the history of the San Francisco Bay and efforts to address man-made problems such as pollution and overfishing.

Keynote speaker Gaines, a professor in UCSB's Department of Ecology, Evolution, and Marine Biology, will discuss research showing how changing the economics of fishing by implementing regional catch shares programs is having positive effects on efforts to save endangered ocean species and ecosystems. Gaines' study, co-authored with Chris Costello and John Lynham, and published in the journal Science, has been widely cited in international media outlets, including the New York Times, Washington Post, Toronto Star, and The Economist.

Gaines will also introduce DigitalOcean's "Sampling the Sea" project, which involves middle and high school students in learning about sustainable seafood choices.

Funded by a Digital Media and Learning Grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the project will be pilot-tested in 200 classrooms around the world in spring 2010.

UC Santa Barbara's DigitalOcean project is a research effort of the Environmental Media Initiative, a collaboration among UCSB's Carsey-Wolf Center for Film, Television, and New Media, Bren School of Environmental Science & Management, and Marine Science Institute. Partner organizations include the New Media Research Institute and Outhink Media. Please visit http://www.cftnm.ucsb.edu/Programs/EMI/Research/DO_splash.html for more information.

"We have been developing the concept of DigitalOcean at UC Santa Barbara for several years, and are thrilled to bring it to the Bay Area with this event," said Constance Penley, a professor of film and media studies and co-director of the Carsey-Wolf Center. "The future health of the world's oceans depends on reversing the harm caused by human activities. We are happy that DigitalOcean is helping to engage San Francisco Bay Area youth in making media about activities that can help move us toward a more sustainable future."

Oracle is the world's largest enterprise software company. For more information about Oracle visit http://www.oracle.com.

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Digital Ocean

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draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.