



California Surf Lifesaving Association

Southwest Region - United States Lifesaving Association

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For Immediate Release...

**The “SoCal PaddleDown for Cancer Relay” comes ashore
at San Clemente City Beach on Thursday, July 25.**

**The 250-mile ocean paddle, promoting sun safety and skin cancer
awareness, features Lifeguards and Junior Lifeguards from
more than 25 agencies paddling the official “SoCal PaddleDown”
paddleboard up the California Coast.**

(San Clemente, CA). The “SoCal PaddleDown For Cancer Relay” will hit the shores of San Clemente City Beach on Thursday, July 25, before it continues on the next leg of its 250-mile paddle up the California Coast. Lifeguards and Junior Lifeguards from San Clemente will paddle the Official “SoCal PaddleDown” paddleboard into the next lifeguarding jurisdiction, where it will continue on its northbound trek.

The “SoCal PaddleDown For Cancer Relay” was launched recently at Imperial Beach near the Mexican Border, and the paddleboard will continue its journey up the California Coast throughout the summer.

Lifeguards and Junior Lifeguards will paddle through their jurisdiction, before handing the board off to the next agency up the coast. The paddle will involve more than 25 lifeguard agencies along the coast with the relay ending at El Refugio State Beach in Gaviota.

The “SoCal PaddleDown” is raising awareness for the John Wayne Cancer Foundation’s (JWCF) “Block The Blaze” skin cancer education program. The paddle, which is geared to the Junior Lifeguard Programs of Lifeguard and Marine Safety Agencies throughout California, was specifically established to help promote “Block The Blaze.”

“As lifeguards, we spend the majority of our careers in the sun, and we know the dangers of sun exposure,” said Bill Humphreys, President of the California Surf Lifesaving Assn. (CSLSA) “The SoCal PaddleDown” is a great way of raising awareness about the dangers of sun exposure, and the JWCF is providing the next generation of lifeguards the tools and information to prevent and detect skin cancer.”

cslsa.org

In California, 1 in 3 residents will be diagnosed with skin cancer during their lifetime. Nearly all skin cancer is curable if caught early and treated quickly. Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the United States with nearly 4 million people diagnosed annually, according to the JWCF.

“Sun damage is cumulative, so the sooner we can provide lifesaving information to our youth, the better,” said Lauren Fraga, Senior Program Director of JWCF. “Each summer, nearly 25,000 Junior Lifeguards learn how to be sun safe through our “Block The Blaze” presentations, after which they are given sunscreen and a hat to immediately implement sun safety. We are grateful to the CSLSA for helping the JWCF promote sun safety.”

The “Block the Blaze” program is the official partner of the CSLSA to provide skin cancer education to Junior Lifeguards throughout California. To support this effort with donations please visit jwcf.org.

The program has educated over 100,000 Junior Lifeguards about sun safety and skin cancer with an emphasis on skin cancer prevention and screening. In addition to early detection and how to recognize the first signs of skin cancer, the program teaches the Junior Lifeguards how to protect themselves from harmful sun exposure.

The San Clemente Junior Lifeguard Program is an ocean and beach safety program for youths ages 9-17. Participants receive education and experience in ocean safety, first aid, rescue techniques, body and board surfing, physical fitness and Marine Safety operations.

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