



For Immediate Release
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Environmental Defense Center and Get Oil Out! Receive 2009 Ryerson Memorial Award

SANTA BARBARA, CA--The Environmental Defense Center (EDC) and Get Oil Out! (GOO!) announced today that they have both received 2009 grant awards from The Jim Ryerson Environmental Foundation. The awards were presented to the two groups by his widow, Christine, on Thursday, February 19, in commemoration of what would have been Jim's 63rd birthday.

EDC and GOO! were selected to receive this year's grant awards in recognition of their constant work to protect the Santa Barbara coastline from the perils of oil development, a topic with which Jim was intimately familiar—starting forty years ago when, as a student, he spent months helping to clean oiled and tarred beaches in the aftermath of the infamous 1969 oil spill.

“The Environmental Defense Center is thrilled to once again be receiving this very important award,” stated Linda Krop, Chief Counsel for the EDC. “Jim was well-respected for his commitment to his work, be it fighting for air quality or coastal protection, and his tenacity to do the right thing. His legacy lives on through both of these awards.”

“Like Jim Ryerson, GOO! has continued to fight against the many threats to our coastline from existing, as well as potential oil and gas development,” stated John Abraham Powell, President of GOO! “Having just celebrated our 40th Anniversary and the 40th anniversary of the 1969 oil spill, we are very pleased and honored to be a recipient of this prestigious award.”

Jim Ryerson served as Director of the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District after working for the California Air Resources Board, the U.S Environmental Protection Agency and as District Director of the California Coastal Commission. Ryerson passed away in 2005. He is credited, among many other accomplishments, with spearheading the successful effort to obtain federal legislation allowing Santa Barbara County to control and ultimately eliminate most air pollution impacts of offshore oil drilling.

The EDC award is specifically dedicated to continuing EDC's Jim Ryerson Internship Program, providing funding for interns who work towards the protection of our spectacular environment that was so important to Jim. Since its founding, EDC has mentored hundreds of students from UCSB and many other colleges and universities, beginning their careers in environmental protection. Former EDC interns now work for governmental agencies, non-profit organizations and private firms all over the World.

The GOO! award was granted to assist GOO! to continue the fight to reach its ultimate goal, to 'get oil out' of the Santa Barbara Channel and to support alternative energy sources, such as energy conservation, wind, solar, biodiesel, etc.

The presentation of this annual award gives the community an opportunity to remember and reflect upon this giant of a man who gave so much to protect our environment, both in his professional capacity and in his personal life. He is well-remembered.

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