

Coast 4U Quarterly
Spring 2010 Issue
Volunteer Spotlight on Sierra Garcia of Save the Sea Club

For our first issue of Coast 4U Quarterly, we caught up with Sierra Garcia, 13, from Monterey County. Through the Adopt-A-Beach program, Sierra has participated in dozens of cleanups with the Save Our Seas Club, a club she started over 4 years ago. Read on to see why she believes caring for your beaches and environment is so important.

C4UQ: How long have you been participating in the Adopt-A-Beach Program?

SG: I officially adopted Del Monte Beach a few months ago.

C4UQ: Why did you create the Save the Sea Club?

SG: I wanted to help the beaches in the most direct way possible- something official and something that I could commit to. I've been doing it since I was nine, and I've never seen a reason to stop.

C4UQ: How long has the Save the Sea Club been around?

SG: It started over four years ago.

C4UQ: How many members do you have?

SG: 47

C4UQ: What is the Save the Sea Club? What activities do you participate in?

SG: The Save the Sea Club is an unofficial organization to clean and spread awareness about the appalling amount of litter on the local beaches. We pick up litter on Del Monte Beach for an hour a cleanup, and I try to schedule cleanups once a month.

C4UQ: Why do you think it's important for people your age to participate in beach cleanups or other environmental programs?

SG: It's definitely important for everyone, but teens and younger kids need to do the most. We have our whole lives ahead of us to do something important for the earth, and when you start talking about it, young people listen - they pay tons of attention since it's unusual. It should not be exception to the rule for young people to help. Plus it's much more effective learning about how to help from a friend than from an adult giving a homily.

C4UQ: Is there anyone in your life who inspires you?

SG: I do have some people who inspire [me], including my Grandma for her incredible work ethic, Julie Packard for being able to accomplish such an enormous thing as the [Monterey Bay] aquarium, and Natalie Coughlin, since I am a swimmer and can't imagine the dedication and commitment that it takes to win the Olympics.

C4UQ: What would you like to do with your life when you grow up?

SG: I plan on going into a field for science, and I'd like to continue helping our oceans. Marine biology is a good option for me, but I'm still pretty open.

C4UQ: Do you think that your behaviors (such as starting a club or organizing beach cleanups) have had positive effects on other people or on the environment?

SG: Absolutely there have been positive effects on others, and especially the environment. We've picked up 1,500 cigarettes from relatively clean beaches in an hour before, and over the years the individual cleanups really add up. One cleanup, there was horrible weather and it wasn't going too well when we ran into a man and his 3 or 4 year old daughter. They enthusiastically joined the cleanup, and even though they lived hours away and were only visiting the area, they added their email address to the list. This random volunteering is one of the best things for the beaches and for the club.

Many thanks to Sierra and the Save Our Seas Club for their incredible dedication to marine conservation!