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Keep America Beautiful Awards Local Non Profit Organization National award goes to San Diego River Park Foundation

The San Diego River Park Foundation's Healthy River, Healthy Communities Program was awarded a "Distinguished Service Citation" from *Keep America Beautiful*. This prestigious national award recognizes the group's accomplishments in organizing more than 5,000 volunteers annually to remove trash from our region's namesake river.

The "Distinguished Service Citation" was presented during the Keep America Beautiful Annual Conference in Orlando, Florida on December 10. During 2010, the San Diego River Park Foundation's Healthy River, Healthy Communities Program reached the milestone of removing 1.3 million pounds of trash from the river. Over 5,000 volunteers, providing over 18,000 volunteer work hours were organized by the River Park Foundation in 2010. As part of the effort to clean up the river, twice per year the organization and its volunteers systematically survey 30 miles of the river for trash and other issues. The data collected guides more than 45 community cleanup events annually.

The San Diego River Park Foundation is a non-profit organization created in 2001 to protect and restore what had become one of the nation's most endangered waterways. Executive Director, Rob Hutsel stated, "Being this year's Keep America Beautiful Award recipient is quite an honor for our organization. However, the award really belongs to our wonderful volunteers whom without we would never have made so much progress in our mission to restore our river and help to make it healthy again."

The ongoing success of The San Diego River Park Foundation's Healthy River, Healthy Communities Program is fast gaining international attention as well as broad based support from the local business community. Local business supporters include Union Bank, REI and other organizations with an interest in the health of our environment and community.

To learn more about the program and future plans for the San Diego River Park, visit www.sandiegoriver.org, or call (619) 297-7308.

About The San Diego River Park Foundation

The San Diego River Park Foundation's mission is to engage people to work toward a better future for the San Diego River and the creation of a 52 mile river parkway from the mountains to the ocean. The River Park Foundation is a non-profit community-based organization that was founded in 2001. Since its founding, it has grown in membership to more than 3000 people and annually organizes volunteers who contribute more than 20,000 hours of service to San Diego.

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