

THE ORANGE COUNTY BETA REGISTER

Laguna resident receives Heart & Soul Award

BY [MARK GARCIA](#)

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James Pribram of Laguna Beach is the May recipient of the Orange County Heart & Soul Award, officials announced.

Pribram, a professional surfer and owner of Aloha School of Surfing, is being honored for his dedication to improving water quality and protecting endangered reefs and wildlife along Orange County's coastlines – an endeavor Pribram embarked upon in Laguna Beach more than 10 years ago.

Created by O'Connor Mortuary, the Heart & Soul Award program is designed to recognize an Orange County citizen each month for their passion for life and for their dedication to making a difference, whether they possess a lifetime of endeavors or for a one-time inspirational achievement.

"James is the perfect selection for our Heart & Soul Award because he's incredibly passionate about what he does. He works hard and remains dedicated to doing what he loves – protecting our coastlines for generations to come," said Neil O'Connor, President and CEO of O'Connor Mortuary, in a press release. "He's an inspiration for us all to follow our hearts and to use our talents to serve a greater good."

Pribram's journey of environmentalism began locally in 1997. He was elected to the Laguna Beach Water Quality Committee in 2000 and has worked relentlessly since to raise awareness of coastal environmental issues.

"The Water Quality Committee gave way to more programs dedicated to cleaning up the beaches, and created awareness among the community that had never existed before," Pribram said. "Now there are beach clean-ups every month in Laguna. People are doing great things and it was all brought on by the ocean committees."

Pribram remained committed to keeping his hometown clean by serving on the Laguna Beach Environmental Committee from 2005-2007, and in 2006, he created The Eco-Warrior project, an environmental preservation initiative focused on improving ocean-water quality, preventing destruction of surf locations and protecting endangered reefs and wildlife on an international level.

In addition to making a difference in the environment, Pribram co-founded They Will Surf Again, an organization that raises funds for individuals who have suffered from ocean-related spinal injuries, which has since merged into an outreach program with Life Rolls On. He will also be supporting Project Save Our Surf during International Surfing Day, June 19-20, for a 24-hour surf-a-thon.

As winner of the Heart & Soul Award, O'Connor Mortuary will present Pribram with an official plaque and a donation will be made in his name to a local nonprofit organization of his choice.

ABOUT O'CONNOR MORTUARY

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