



Trust.

Media Contact:

Emily Carlton

HKA, Inc.

emily@hkamarcom.com

(714) 426-0444

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Laguna Beach “Eco-Warrior” Receives Heart & Soul Award

LAGUNA HILLS, Calif. – May 17, 2010 – James Pribram of Laguna Beach was announced today as the May recipient of the Orange County Heart & Soul Award. 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. “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. While teaching a surfing class, he entered the water with a small cut on his wrist that landed him in the emergency room only hours later with a near-fatal staph infection. Shaken by the reality of the situation, Pribram knew that something needed to be done to raise awareness and improve polluted ocean conditions in Orange County. After speaking before City Council, 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 took his passion far

beyond the Southern California coast. With roots in Laguna Beach, Pribram 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. Eco-Warrior's efforts have taken Pribram to Chile, New Zealand, Canary Islands, Peru, Japan, Spain, Portugal, Hawaii, the Great Lakes and Chicago. Most recently, Pribram traveled to Louisiana and Mississippi to report on the massive oil spill taking place in the Gulf of Mexico.

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

[O'Connor Mortuary](#) is the oldest family owned and operated mortuary in California. With offices in Laguna Hills, San Juan Capistrano and Irvine, Calif., it is the leading "stand alone" mortuary in Orange County. Founded in 1898 by Patrick J. O'Connor, and succeeded by his son Joseph and grandson Joseph Jr., the company today is managed by fourth generation *CEO*, Neil P. O'Connor, and his two brother-in-laws, Joseph Fitzgerald, *CFO* and Charles Ricciardi, *COO*; as well as Jeff Turner, *CAO*. O'Connor Mortuary is recognized throughout Southern California for its longstanding tradition of caring, personalized service, honesty and integrity. The multi-generational company is active in numerous local charitable organizations and was honored by the California Historical Society for more than 100 years of continuous care and service to Southern California families. In addition, the company was honored in 2005 by the Family Owned Business Council for longevity and has received the Leatherby Award for Ethics in America.

###