



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Ocean Explorer/Submarine Pilot Embarks on Special Solo “Expedition” to All 50 U.S. States, Territories

To commemorate his 50th birthday, the “Ocean Doctor,” ocean explorer, sub pilot and conservationist Dr. David E. Guggenheim, president of 1planet1ocean, begins a unique year-long journey to share his experiences and lessons from the sea to thousands of students in all fifty U.S. states, territories.

WASHINGTON, DC (January 5, 2009) – Later this week, ocean explorer, sub pilot and conservationist, Dr. David E. Guggenheim, known as the “Ocean Doctor,” begins a one-year journey of education, outreach and discovery called, *The Ocean Doctor’s 50 Years - 50 States - 50 Speeches Expedition*. The expedition begins on **January 7, 2009 at 8:45am at the Sonoma Ecology Center in Eldridge, California.**

Announced by Dr. Guggenheim on his 50th birthday (October 6, 2008) the expedition will bring, at no charge, speeches about the oceans to schools in all 50 U.S. states plus territories. By its culmination at the end of 2009, the “expedition” will have reached well over 100 schools and tens of thousands of students in communities ranging from the nation’s northernmost city, Barrow, Alaska, to schools in Rapid City, South Dakota, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and the Florida Keys.

Dr. Guggenheim will share firsthand accounts of his experiences exploring ocean depths, including videos from his experiences piloting a small, 1-person mini-sub, bringing important lessons about the oceans, their exploration and conservation. “Equally important are the lessons I will learn from the students,” says Guggenheim, who plans to share his travels in real time via the OceanDoctor.org and 1planet1ocean.org web sites and using a range of Web 2.0 tools, including Twitter. “I’ve worked inside the [Washington, DC] beltway long enough to understand that there’s no substitute for getting out to the ‘real world’ to truly understand what’s going on – in this case, what do young people understand and feel about the oceans?”

During the journey, Guggenheim will collect “messages in a bottle” from the visited students to deliver to the Obama Administration at the close of the journey so that they may share their thoughts, hopes and dreams for the future of the oceans. The project will also connect students from all of the visited schools so that they may share their experiences with one another. Billed as “the first social network for the other 70 percent of the planet” (i.e., the oceans), a new web site,

ExploreOurOceans.org, has been launched to allow students to create their own ocean blogs, communicate with one another, and even seek advice from volunteer online experts and teachers.

Guggenheim's inspiration for this project comes from the need for better education about ocean issues. Despite a recent trend toward environmental awareness, a serious lack of public "ocean literacy" remains. According to the Ocean Literacy Network, most in the U.S. are unaware or only vaguely aware of environmental problems in the oceans, and most that are aware incorrectly identify the major causes. Recalling the inspiration his generation enjoyed from the Gemini and Apollo space programs, Guggenheim states, "I hope to stimulate the same sort of awe and wonder, drawing students into ocean issues by inspiring their imagination through the sense of adventure and excitement of submarine exploration and research. This sets the stage for learning about ocean science and conservation."

Guggenheim's expedition is also a tribute to his father, William L. Guggenheim, who was lost at sea several months shy of reaching his own 50th birthday. "It was my days as a boy, fishing with my dad that I truly inherited his passion for the sea, and I feel lucky to have been able to spend much of my life near, in, or best of all, under the water," says Guggenheim.

Free speeches are still available for a number of states and territories, listed at OceanDoctor.org. Speeches are awarded to the first school requesting them in each state or territory. The expedition is a project of The Ocean Foundation, the project's fiscal sponsor, and is supported by tax-deductible donations to the "Ocean Doctor's 50 Years - 50 States - 50 Speeches Expedition Fund" at The Ocean Foundation.

About The Ocean Foundation:

The Ocean Foundation (TOF, oceanfdn.org) is a unique community foundation with a specialized practice. Its niche is providing high-end philanthropic advice for a community of donors who care about the coast and oceans. TOF's mission is to support, strengthen, and promote those organizations dedicated to reversing the trend of destruction of ocean environments around the world. Its goal is to grow the financial resources available to support marine conservation. TOF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, international public foundation. Its Board is comprised of individuals with significant experience in marine conservation philanthropy, complemented by an expert, professional staff, and a growing international advisory board of scientists, policy makers, educational specialists, and other top experts.

More Information: www.oceandocor.org, www.1planet1ocean.org, www.oceanfdn.org

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