

# Manhattan Beach Sun

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## Weekend Weather Forecast

### Friday

Sunny

77°



### Saturday

Sunny

76°



### Sunday

Mostly Sunny

71°



## Coastal Cleanup Day



Site captain, David Lloyd, organizes material collected by Manhattan Beach volunteers for Coastal Cleanup Day—white bags for recyclables and orange bags for other trash.

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## Leadership Manhattan Beach Welcomes New Class

By Evan Ortega

When the newest members of Leadership Manhattan Beach met for their orientation at the Belamar Hotel last week, dozens of alumni showed up to offer the students some support and encouragement. Police Chief Rod Uyeda graduated from Pasadena's Leadership program while he served on that city's police department. Uyeda explained he came because he wanted to show his personal support and that of the department's for the program. "Anything that can get a wide variety of people together for the cause of just helping other people, and especially with the folks in Manhattan Beach, is a wonderful thing," Uyeda said.

The chief recalled talking to his eight-year-old son about how it's one thing to simply survive, but another thing to truly live and make a difference in the world. "Things like leadership Manhattan Beach can really make a difference, so that's why I'm here," he said.

The nine-month program combines leadership training and a collaborative volunteer project to benefit the city. It brings together a broad spectrum of residents, from business owners and executives to high school students and elected officials. Participants work together as a team to develop their project, raise money to fund it and collaborate with City employees and officials to get it approved.

Before the 27 students (including six teenagers) of the Class of 2010 met privately, several alumni spoke about their experiences in the program. 2006 graduate and recruiting director James Gill said that through his experiences in the program, he has come to consider nearly everybody in Leadership a good friend. "That's an awesome thing, to be in the city and suddenly see people that are your friends everywhere around town—it's a great feeling," Gill said.

As recruiting director, Gill felt proud

to recruit a class of such amazing people. "Manhattan Beach is a wonderful, rich community that has resources like no other," he said. "Everybody is very educated, very motivated, very civically minded; it's not hard to recruit 25 people in this town, but again, [it's] a really strong class."

Gill encouraged the new class to not only get to know each other but also reach out to the board of directors and alumni at Leadership events. "We're basically going to be your support system," Gill said. "We're going to help you. We'll be there to financially support your project when it happens, so do reach out and get to know all of us."

Manhattan Beach Mayor Portia Cohen told the students about being accepted into the Class of 2003, shortly after moving here from the East Coast. The Mayor explained how she was able to use the program to begin her political career, beginning with an appointment on the Parks and Recreation Committee. "Many of our City commissioners and a handful of City Council members and mayors have all graduated from Leadership Manhattan Beach," Cohen said. "The coincidence is not the club or clique one might conclude, but rather the concurrence in the aptitude and appetite that Leadership

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## Manhattan Beach Schools Continue Rise in API Testing

By Brian Simon

Six of the seven Manhattan Beach Unified School District campuses reported higher scores than last year in Academic Performance Index (API) testing, according to results released last week. All schools easily exceeded the state's benchmark goal of 800, while the District itself was tops in the South Bay and the fifth best performer in all of California with an overall average score of 915—eight points better than 2008 and only trailing La Canada, Palo Alto, Piedmont and San Marino.

Grand View Elementary School made

the most significant jump, moving up 25 points from 930 to 955, while Aurelia Pennekamp Elementary led all District schools by scoring 966, a 17-point increase from last year. Pennekamp was also tied for the South Bay's highest individual score. Meadows Avenue Elementary rose 10 points from 955 to 965, while Opal Robinson elementary nudged upward by one point, also to 965. Manhattan Beach Middle School (839 to 844) and Mira Costa High School (864 to 872) showed increases of five and eight points respectively. Pacific

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