Celebration of World Trade Week at the Port of Hueneme Highlights Importance of Green Tech and Blue Economy

**Big splash of international companies, countries, and local businesses participate in event**

[Port Hueneme, CA] – Trade consuls from around the world, high-ranking Department of Commerce officials, local elected officials, business leaders, and maritime industry experts gathered at the Port of Hueneme to present an important program with a special focus on environment, green technology, and the economy as it relates to the marine realm.

The 10th annual World Trade Week event, “Green Tech and Blue Economy,” was held at the Port of Hueneme on May 3, 2022 and welcomed over 100 people from around the globe with an interest and involvement in international trade.

“When you take a tour of the Port, you will see trade happening all around you from auto imports coming off large ro-ro [auto] ships arriving from Europe and Asia to fresh produce exports,” said Oxnard Harbor District President, Mary Anne Rooney. She welcomed attendees by stating that international trade between nations is an important factor in raising living
standards, providing decent employment, and enabling consumers to enjoy a greater variety of goods.

Kristin Decas, CEO & Port Director, was the event’s emcee. She provided an overview of the Port’s customers, operations, supply chain, and the Port’s impact on the local and regional economy. “Trade makes up about 16 percent of the Ventura County economy versus only about 12 percent in the state,” Decas said. “In other words, trade is a more significant contributor to jobs and the economy in Ventura County than it is in the state as a whole.”

Photo at left: Will Powles, First Secretary, Trade Policy, British Consulate-General, Los Angeles; Betty Young, Business Development Officer, Hong Kong Trade Development Council; Manuel Herrera-Rábago, Deputy Consul, Consulado de México en Oxnard
Photo at right: José Cabascango, Trade Commissioner, Ecuador
Trade representatives from the countries of Guatemala, Ecuador, Mexico, Hong Kong, and the United Kingdom shared key information about how their country’s traditional exports and emerging markets are fostering growth and investment opportunities for years to come.

“This was a great opportunity for me to participate in this event and to share what we do,” said Betty Young, Business Development Officer for the Hong Kong Trade Development Council. She showcased Hong Kong’s position as a world leader for international trade.

José Cabascango, Ecuador’s Trade Commissioner, said it is important for his country to continue to have its relationship with the Port of Hueneme. “We are trying to improve our export level from Ecuador to the U.S.,” he said. “We are now working on a trade agreement with the U.S., so it is important for us to be at an event like this.”

Alyson Santoro, Associate Professor of Ecology, Evolution and Marine Biology (EEMB) at the University of California at Santa Barbara was the event’s keynote speaker. Her presentation focused on “Biodegradable Plastics for Tomorrow’s Oceans.”

Santoro mentioned that the time to act is now when it comes to addressing the concerning level of plastics found in the oceans.
“We’ve all heard about ocean plastic pollution, but this prediction — that there may be more plastic than fish in the ocean by 2050 — really drives home the magnitude of the problem,” Santoro said. She, along with a team of marine biology experts in the field, are working on the technology to produce biodegradable polymers from sustainable resources and use them to manufacture plastic products for marine purposes.

“These ‘smart’ materials can be used to enable new oceanographic tools, fishing gear, and other single use items,” Santoro said.

Richard Swanson, a Senior Advisor for the Office of the Regional Director - Pacific South Network, U.S. & Foreign Commercial Service, International Trade Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce, introduced Maryanne Burke who is the new Director of the U.S.
Commercial Service for the U.S. Export Assistance Center office located at the Port of Hueneme. Burke spoke to attendees about the administration’s climate goals, stakeholder outreach, and supporting clean tech sectors.

During a roundtable discussion moderated by Dona Lacayo, Chief Commercial & Public Affairs Officer for the Port of Hueneme, questions were posed to a panel of industry experts that included Andrea Neal, PhD, CEO, Board Member, Bring Back the Blue; Armen Kvryan, PhD, Materials Engineer - Corrosion Subject Matter Expert, NAVSEA, Warfare Centers, Port Hueneme; Peter Struffenegger, North America Operations for Urchinomics; and Giles Pettifor, Environmental Manager, Port of Hueneme.

The panel answered questions about global concerns in ocean plastic and plastic waste supply chains, rust and corrosion and why it is important to the U.S. and the world, the work being done on offshore sea urchin ranching systems and kelp beds, improving upon the cleantech initiatives, and decarbonization.

The Port reported out on decarbonization efforts to address the climate crisis and share a vision of how the clean energy transition that the Port is undertaking can be a catalyst for the entire Ventura County region. The Port envisions a future climate and economic success for the region driven by clean fuels and the installation of clean energy infrastructure driving regional advantages as well as critically important improvements in clean air and equitable access to clean energy careers and education.

“We seek to help drive not only the economic benefits of clean fuels like electricity, but also and importantly the community benefits of cleaner air and more opportunities for our youth and young professionals to empower climate solutions here,” said Port of Hueneme Environmental Manager Giles Pettifor.

Bruce Stenslie, President & CEO of the Economic Development Collaborative and Ray Bowman, Director of the Small Business Development Center at the Economic Development Collaborative provided attendees with an update regarding the Ventura County economy and its reliance on trade in the region.

To close the event, the Oxnard Harbor District Board of Commissioners presented awards to two companies who export goods through the Port of Hueneme.

President Mary Anne Rooney, presented McCain Foods USA with the Container Export Achievement Award, mentioning that this company has won this same award three consecutive years in a row. “Thank you, McCain Foods, for the continued support and for winning the well-deserved Exporter of the Year Award during World Trade Week Event at the Port of Hueneme,” Rooney said.

The Auto Exporter Achievement Award was presented to General Motors USA for their rise in importing and exporting new vehicles through the Port of Hueneme. Oxnard Harbor District Vice President Jess Herrera said, “We are proud of being their provider along with GLOVIS America for many years. We are here to support them in their vision for all-electric future. Congratulations on another consecutive win for auto exporter award, General Motors.”
“The Port of Hueneme is a critical economic driver in our community, facilitating global commerce and creating good jobs locally,” said Congresswoman Julia Brownley. “World Trade Week is an excellent opportunity to highlight the Port’s successes, exchange ideas, build relationships, and grow business trade opportunities for our region. As Ventura County’s representative in Congress, I look forward to continuing to work with the Port and our local community to ensure the Port’s continued success.”

District Representative, Carson Link, from the office of Senator Monique Limón, attended the World Trade Week event in person for the first time and thanked the Port of Hueneme for the experience. “We are fortunate to have a port within Senate District 19 who is on the forefront of green technology implementation and sustainable practices,” he said.

READ MORE ABOUT THE OXNARD WORLD TRADE CENTER HERE:
https://www.portofhueneme.org/business/world-trade-center/

About the Port of Hueneme/Oxnard World Trade Center: The Port of Hueneme is one of the most productive and efficient commercial trade gateways for niche cargo on the West Coast. The Port is governed by five locally elected Port Commissioners. The Port consistently ranks among the top ten U.S. ports for automobiles and fresh produce. Port operations support the community by bringing $2.2 billion in economic activity and creating 20,032 trade-related jobs. Trade through the Port of Hueneme generates more than $173.2 million in direct and related state and local taxes, which fund vital community services. In 2017, the Port of Hueneme became the first port in California to become certified by Green Marine, a third-party verifier.

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