EXCELLENCE IN OCEAN CONSERVATION AND RESEARCH CELEBRATED AT COASTAL OCEAN AWARDS

Vancouver, B.C. – Ocean leaders made waves at the Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre, as British Columbia's best and brightest gathered at the 22nd Annual Coastal Ocean Awards.

"The awards winners are extraordinary British Columbians," said Dr. Andrew Day, Executive Director of the Coastal Ocean Research Institute and producer of the event. "Oceans and sea life need our help, and these are the people doing the most interesting and inspiring work."

The award ceremony was a splashy event featuring canapés and a three-course dinner by Ned Bell, Ocean Wise ambassador and Executive Chef of the Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre. Guests were treated to music, comedy and art as they learned more about the lives and accomplishments of the award winners. In total, seven awards were given.

The **Murray A. Newman Award for Significant Achievement in Aquatic Research** was awarded to Dr. Chris Harley of UBC for his exceptional research on coastal marine ecology and the impacts of climate change. The **Murray A. Newman Award for Significant Achievement in Aquatic Conservation** was awarded to Mr. Graeme Ellis for his exceptional lifetime contributions to killer whale research and conservation.

The **Coastal Ocean Communication Award** was awarded to guud san glans (Mr. Robert Davidson), one of Canada's most respected and important contemporary visual artists.

The award for **Innovative Use of Technology** was given to Mr. Glen Dennison for his invaluable and inventive design and application of technologies that have contributed to understanding, conserving, and communicating the irreplaceable glass sponge reefs in Howe Sound and the diverse species that inhabit them.

The award for **Conservation Volunteer** was awarded to Mr. Peter Mieras, who designed and implemented the "Derelict Gear Removal" program in the Barkley Sound. The program entails removing nets from the ocean floor to prevent sea creatures from becoming entangled in lost and discarded nets.

Dr. Lucas Brotz received the **Michael A. Bigg Award** for student research, for his exceptional contributions to the understanding of jellyfish in waters around the world.

The **North Medal for Contribution to Research and Conservation** was awarded to Mr. Tony Allard, a remarkable promoter for a sustainable future for BC's coastal ecosystems and for active engagement of local indigenous communities in pursuing this goal.

Coastal Ocean Research Institute
Established to measure and monitor the health of coastal ecosystems, the Coastal Ocean Research Institute produces and communicates scientific knowledge and understanding about Canada's West Coast. The Research Institute is housed at the Vancouver Aquarium and is grateful for its generous founding partners the Sitka Foundation and North Growth Foundation.

Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre
The Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre is a non-profit society dedicated to the conservation of aquatic life. www.vanaqua.org.

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