

Join us for CEO Works on September 24: Navigating Change & Building a Thriving Work Culture

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J. Nichols: A Champion of the Blue Mind



Santa Cruz and the world have recently lost a profoundly influential figure, Dr. Wallace J. Nichols, known affectionately as “J” to his friends, colleagues, and countless individuals touched by his work. A pioneering marine biologist, J was the founder of the global “Blue Mind” movement, and the inspiration for Santa Cruz Works’ Blue Innovation event. His groundbreaking work has emphasized the vital importance of water, not just in ecological terms but as a crucial component of our psychological well-being.



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However, J's legacy extends far beyond his written work. He was a connector of people and ideas. At the Blue Innovation events, J brought together environmentalists, tech innovators, policymakers, and community leaders, all united by a common thread—water. These events not only highlighted cutting-edge water-related technologies and initiatives but also fostered a community that shared a deep commitment to preserving our most precious resource.

J's belief in the power of water to calm, connect, and inspire led to the formation of the "Blue Mind" movement, which has been instrumental in promoting public awareness of water's psychological and ecological importance. His vision was clear: to create a world where everyone understands the value of water and is committed to caring for it. Through workshops, speeches, and community events, J educated and inspired people around the globe to look at water differently—not just as a resource but as a source of life, joy, and inspiration.



J developed a meaningful practice related to his "Blue Mind" philosophy, involving the giving of a blue marble to people as a token of gratitude and connection. This gesture was part of his broader efforts to create and promote awareness about the importance of water in our lives.



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Lebaron Meyers holding the first blue marble ever given out by Wallace J. Nichols.

experience, became a bonding experience for everyone.

His loss is deeply felt by the Santa Cruz community, a place he cherished and worked tirelessly to improve. J was a familiar face at local beach clean-ups, a passionate speaker at community forums, and a dedicated mentor to young scientists eager to make their mark on environmental conservation. His enthusiasm was infectious, his knowledge profound, and his capacity for hope and joy boundless.

As we mourn the loss of Dr. Wallace J. Nichols, we also celebrate his incredible life—a life lived in relentless pursuit of knowledge, understanding, and connection. We find comfort in knowing that his legacy will live on through the Blue Mind movement, continuing to inspire and unite people around the shared love of water.

In honor of J, let us each find our own way to connect with and protect our blue spaces. Whether it's a walk along the beach, a paddle on a quiet lake, or simply a moment spent by a city fountain, we can all embrace and promote the tranquil, sustaining presence of water in our lives. Let's carry forward J's vision and passion, ensuring that his blue legacy endures, ripple by ripple, across the waters he loved so dearly.

Dear J, we wish you water wherever your next life may take you.

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As a teacher for his two daughters, I know that J was a deeply loving and caring father to them. They were blessed to be your children. P. Lucas



Cathy Church A year ago · 0 Likes

Cathy Church

Although I did not know him personally as a friend, his work changed how I felt about diving. I still have my blue marble and his book. He was unique. May he rest in peace.



Tami Kempton A year ago · 0 Likes

A friend, a mentor, an observer and teacher, an ocean/wildlife/forest conservationist and human wellness advocate, an earth and ocean angel. J, we will remember and honour you. We wish you water.



Corinna Bellizzi A year ago · 0 Likes

I am heartbroken. J - I wish you water, forevermore.

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grateful for how ever-present his spirit and mission are here along the slow coast ❤️



Jared Brick A year ago · 1 Like

A Go Fund Me to keep his work going: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/nichols-memorial-fund>



Malina Long A year ago · 0 Likes

Thanks Jared. We'll add it to the article!



Jared Brick A year ago · 1 Like

Thank you for sharing this memorial and we were planning to have J speak this year at an upcoming event. This is so tragic and so sorry to hear this sad news.



Suz Howells A year ago · 1 Like

This must have been difficult to write, Doug. Thank you.

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