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Tobacco Free Florida in Miami-Dade County Participated in Annual Coastal Cleanup Event with Community Volunteers



Contact:

Office of Communication

MediaDOHMiamiDade@FLHealth.gov

Miami, Fla. – Tobacco Free Florida in Miami-Dade County partnered with Volunteer Clean-up to participate in an annual beach cleanup day, mobilizing 139 volunteers to remove trash and raise awareness about environmental conservation. The cleanup, held at Virginia Key Dog Beach in Key Biscayne, brought together students, community members, and organizations to address the issue of coastal pollution. Among the participants were Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) chapters from Southwest High School, Barbara Goleman High School, and Turner Tech High School, along with representatives from Hope for Miami, GLT Logistics, Mandarin Oriental Hotel, and other local groups.

Volunteers worked diligently to collect a wide range of waste items, including cigarette butts, disposable vape pens, plastic, glass bottles, metal bottle caps, wood planks, and various types of plastic debris. The clean-up also uncovered larger, unexpected items such as a pineapple, a washed-up boat, and a rusted cage. By the end of the day, volunteers had collected 374 pounds of trash, not including the boat.

Throughout the event, SWAT members were interviewed to share their motivations for participating. Many expressed concerns for the impact of litter on marine life and stressed the need to prevent pollution. Their voices captured the importance of maintaining clean coastal areas and inspired fellow participants to continue environmental stewardship beyond the event. The event was also covered by Telemundo, which provided exclusive coverage and interviews with volunteers, further amplifying the message of environmental responsibility. The broadcast showcased volunteers' concerns about protecting Florida's beaches and the broader impact of pollution on marine ecosystems.

"This clean-up was about more than just removing litter," said a representative from the Tobacco Prevention Program. "It was an opportunity for youth and community members to connect, learn about the impact of pollution, and become empowered to take action toward protecting our coastlines."

The variety of waste collected reflected ongoing environmental challenges, including tobacco-related waste such as cigarette butts and disposable vape pens. These items not only degrade Florida's natural beauty but also pose serious threats to wildlife. Tobacco Free Florida's involvement emphasized the intersection of public health and environmental protection, reinforcing the need to address pollution at its source. Through events like this, participants gain first-hand experience in conservation while learning about the importance of marine protection.

and the dangers of coastal pollution. Involving students and community groups also fosters long-term environmental awareness and responsibility.

The success of the Virginia Key clean-up demonstrated the power of community collaboration. The event provided an opportunity for volunteers to build connections while making a tangible impact on the environment. As efforts to protect Florida's natural resources continue, Tobacco Free Florida remains committed to supporting initiatives that promote public health and environmental sustainability.

To learn more about upcoming events or the Tobacco Free Florida program in Miami-Dade County, visit TobaccoFreeFlorida.com/Get-Involved.

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About Tobacco Free Florida

The Florida Department of Health's Tobacco Free Florida campaign is a statewide cessation and prevention campaign funded by Florida's tobacco settlement fund. Since the program began in 2007, more than 295,000 Floridians have successfully quit using one of Tobacco Free Florida's free tools and services. There are now approximately 451,000 fewer adult smokers in Florida than there were 10 years ago, and the state has saved \$17.7 billion in health care costs. To learn more about Tobacco Free Florida's Quit Your Way services, visit TobaccoFreeFlorida.com or follow the campaign on Facebook at Facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida or on X at x.com/tobaccofreefla.