

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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“Defender Service Awards” Taps Local Nonprofit as a Finalist-Please Vote!

WILMINGTON, NC-October 2, 2024-Plastic Ocean Project, aka “POP”-is proud to announce that with their nomination from Land Rover Cape Fear, they have made it to the finals in the 4th annual “Defender Service Awards.” Presented by CHASE, the contest recognizes hard working nonprofits who give back to their communities. The overall winners from six categories will each receive \$25,000 and a fully customized Land Rover Defender 130.

In May, an unfortunate accident left Plastic Ocean Project’s van totaled and landed its director, Bonnie Monteleone, in the hospital for several days. Affectionately known as the “POP-Mobile,” it was a gift from Monteleone’s late mother and has been vital to the nonprofit’s work for the last 10 years. The little van with its distinctive wave artwork from Monteleone’s award-winning mural, “What Goes Around-Comes Around,” was a familiar sight in the Wilmington community. It crisscrossed the country countless times, visiting 22 states to share POP’s mission, which is: “to attain science-based solutions to the plastic pollution crisis that inspire all to make informed choices to improve human and environmental health.” The POP-Mobile also transported tens of thousands of pounds of trash collected at cleanups, thousands of trees earned through the “Trees4Trash” initiative, equipment for POP’s plastics debris research facility and its traveling arts and education programs. Monteleone laments that losing the van has essentially cut off POP’s “lifeline to the community and the entire country.”

Winning the vehicle would be a real game changer for Plastic Ocean Project. It’s Range Rover’s workhorse SUV, seats 8 and has expansive storage space. Winners will also have the option to customize the interior and exterior of the SUV to meet their specific needs.

Awarding six high end, custom vehicles through the Defender Service Awards serves to showcase the British adventure brand’s commitment to organizations who selflessly serve their communities. Twenty-five contestants from the US and Canada have made it to the finals which represent six categories. POP is in the “Community Service” category. Public voting begins today at noon and ends at 11:59 pm on Thursday, October 17th. POP’s entry is sponsored by the software company ei3, whose focus is on “industrial intelligence for sustainable manufacturing.” Winners will be announced on November 23rd in Malibu, CA at the luxury event venue, Calamigos Ranch.

View POP's compelling video here: landroverusa.com/defenderserviceawards
Please vote at the link above and help Plastic Ocean Project get back to work with a much-needed vehicle! Individuals can cast one vote per day per person per category, from today October 2nd at 10:30 am EST through 11:59 pm EST on Thursday, October 17th.

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