



Detroit Community Sailing

2024 Annual Report



Preparing for Our Future

Our 2024 Sailing Season saw exciting developments and collaborations to help us shape a path for our future. We have experienced substantial growth since our inception as the Challenge the Wind Youth Sailing Program in the mid-1990s, by the Grayhaven Sailing Club. The club members have contributed to the program's success, introducing sailing to thousands of Detroit area youth.

However, pass success will not guarantee our future.

To create a path forward we are expanding our educational programming while we continue to strengthen the sailing program. Our strategy has been to partner with organizations that have a complementing mission. An important partner is the [University of Michigan's Detroit River Story Lab](#). Their place-based education programming makes us perfect partners to launch and grow an education center on Belle Isle. The results, so far, have produced more engaging experiences for our participants, compared to a standard STEM approach. Another important partner is the Detroit Y's [Detroit Swims](#) program. The youth participants we serve make water safety a unique challenge. Partnering with Detroit Swims, to deliver their program at our Belle Isle docks, transforms a challenge into an opportunity. Our future will depend on attracting and growing partners like these.

Our future also depends on our ability to raise the funds needed to make sailing, water safety and educational programming accessible. The funds allow us to reduce the cost barrier for Detroit area youth. You can make a personal impact by [donating](#), helping with our [wish list](#) or with your time by [volunteering](#). For more information follow the links. To those already involved, thanks. Our results would not be possible without you. I'm pleased to share our team's 2024 results on the following pages, made possible by you.

Harry E. Jones
President, Detroit Community Sailing Center
Having Fun While Learning to Sail

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Detroit Community Sailing Youth Programs

Boat Building Workshop Education Center Initiative Launched

This spring, we launched our Education Center initiative with a pilot after-school STEM boat-building workshop. Participants not only built an Optimist Sailboat using hand tools, engineering drawings, and epoxies, but also engaged in interactive presentations that explored the river's environment, ecology, culture, and history.

The young boat builders held a contest to name and decorate their new boat, as shown in the accompanying picture. Additional pictures taken during the building process and Ocean Cruiser's maiden voyage can be viewed at this [link](#).

The workshop was conducted in partnership with:

- [University of Michigan's Detroit River Story Lab](#)
- Michigan Department of Natural Resources [Outdoor Adventure Center](#)
- Jamon Jordan [Black Scroll Network](#)

Also University of Michigan [ArcPrep](#) provided our facility and Skillman Foundation partial funding.



In the News

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Students build their boat, prepare to set sail on river

Detroit Community Sailing Center program provided opportunity

Right middle school students will participate in the program for the first time. They will be building their own Optimist sailboats. The program is a partnership between the Detroit Community Sailing Center and the University of Michigan's Detroit River Story Lab. The program is a pilot program and will be expanded in the future.

https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2024/07/19/belle-isle-students-build-boat-sailing-lessons/74292176007/

Detroit Community Sailing Youth Programs

Water Safety: A Unique Approach

We place a special emphasis on water safety because of the demographics of many of our participant. In partnership with the Detroit YMCA's "Detroit Swims" program we integrated a Detroit Swims water safety course into the sailing program.

The program is specifically designed for sailors with limited or no swimming skills. It is unique in that it teaches water safety, not in a swimming pool, but in the open water environment where we sail. Our sailors learn and practice methods for staying safe in a variety of open water situations.

The four-day program is conducted in the same location as the sailing program, during the final hour and a half of the sailing session. This makes it convenient for the sailor and parent.

Best of all it's a fun activity for the sailors while they are learning lifesaving skills.



Detroit Community Sailing Youth Programs

STEM Schooner Outing

We again took part in a half day outing on the Inland Seas schooner. The University of Michigan Detroit River Story Lab and the Inland Seas Educational Association in Sutton Bay MI made this wonderful program available to our participants.

The program emphasized marine biology, the Detroit River's African American history, protecting our marine environment and tall ship seamanship while sailing on the Detroit River.



New Fleet Addition

We added Open Bic sailboats to our fleet this season, thanks to a generous donation of boats from the Bayview Yacht Club and sails and rigging from a generous donor. These boats proved to be a huge hit with our sailors. The Bics are an excellent bridge to larger dinghies, for young sailors who have outgrown the single-sail Opti but are not yet ready for a larger boat with two sails.

Providing Access to Detroit's Waterways

In 2024 we provided access to Detroit's waterways and education opportunities for over 100 youth who otherwise may not have the opportunity.

Detroit Community Sailing

Adult Programs

A Welcoming Environment for New Adult Sailors

Our adult program is ideally suited for individuals looking for a new adventure, learning lifelong skills, and best of all, meeting and socializing with others that have a similar interest.

The Learn to Sail program, located on Belle Isle, is convenient for adult individuals and families living or working near downtown. Not only will our participants enjoy being out on the water, but they will also know that their participant fees support the youth sailors who otherwise would not have the opportunity to sail.

We love being able to introduce sailing in a welcoming environment. We also provide pathways to explore various sailing alternatives and facilitate a chosen path to staying engaged. Beyond taking the beginning course, we offer participants the opportunity to practice their newly acquired skills. It doesn't stop there.

For those wanting to learn additional sailing skills, we offer an intermediate course and a race crew training course. After these courses, our sailors are prepared to explore many opportunities to continue sailing, including crewing on others' cruising or racing boats or boat ownership.



Adult Sailing Programs

Beginner Learn to Sail – These classes are designed for both the novice who has never been in a sailboat as well as for sailors with some experience who want to learn how to sail on their own. New sailors learn the parts of a sailboat, steering, setting sails, docking, wind awareness, etc. in a friendly, welcoming environment. At the end of the course the new sailors have the confidence to safely sail a boat on.

Intermediate Sailing – The next step in learning a new range of sailing skills. This class covers techniques on the finer points of sailing, racing techniques and rules, as well as spinnaker sailing. It is designed to prepare our sailors to join the crews of race boats throughout Detroit and feel more confident with sail trim and heavy weather sailing.

Keelboat Race Crew Training – Designed for our sailors to learn how to crew on our Tartan10, 33-foot keelboat. Participants learn like a boat owner without the expenses of ownership, while learning all crew and skipper positions including maintenance issues, rules of racing, teamwork, and safety.

Crew Connection Events – These social events match boat owners looking to expand their crew roster with our new sailors. The events are put on in partnership with the Detroit Regional Yacht-racing Association and the Lake St Clair Facebook group.

Instructor Training – After demonstrating the required skill level and with additional sailing experience, we invite our sailors to join our instructor team to share the passion with new sailors.



Detroit Community Sailing

2025 Plans

In 2025 we will continue to expand access to on-water and educational programming. In addition to another planned boat building project, we are exploring a project to update our 33' Tartan 10, Macho Duck's powertrain including possible electrification. The boat building and Tartan 10 project will become a part of our education center.

Detroit River Education Center

Detroit River Education Center is a partnership between the [Detroit Community Sailing Center \(DCSC\)](#) a 501(c)(3) and the University of Michigan - [Detroit River Story Lab](#). The Detroit River Education Center will provide river-themed experiential learning programs and opportunities for the greater Detroit community, with an emphasis on water access, local environmental and cultural heritage, and career pathways exploration. The center will expand existing programming and add new programming.

This summarizes our Detroit River Education Center vision.

Program Vision

- Place-based learning programs and opportunities.
- Programming will include river-centered STEM, local history, environmental, career/education pathways exploration, and water safety.
- Open to public and focus on reaching underserved youth.
- Year-round with accessible fees.
- Delivered in classrooms, workshops and on the water.

Facilities

We are working on several facility options to realize our vision of year-round program and on-water growth. The Belle Isle Boathouse project proposal is working its way through approvals and is an attractive option for us. However, we are mindful of a shifting environment and therefore continue to explore additional options. Those options include keeping the sailing program in the same general area on the river. Specific options we are exploring include the historic Police Station/North Fishing Pier and new construction/North Fishing Pier option. Shortly we hope to make an announcement on our facilities direction.



Detroit Community Sailing

How You Can Help? Donate

We are a 501(c)(3) Federal Non-Profit organization.
100% of your tax-deductible donation goes to the program.

“Give a young person an alternative this summer”

Our fund raising is focused on sustaining our youth program. You can provide a life-changing experience for a Detroit area young person. Your contribution will help a participant learn the skill of sailing and use math, physics, problem solving, teamwork and conflict management skills.

Donate

By Check

Made out to “Detroit Community Sailing Center” and it to:
Detroit Community Sailing Center
PO Box 15065
Detroit, MI 48215

By Credit Card or Paypal
(credit cards are accepted at PayPal site)

PayPal site www.PayPal.com
email ID pay@challengethewind.org

Stock/Equity Donations
Contact us at info@sailingdetroit.org for instructions



For more Information on donating or volunteering
Visit: www.sailingdetroit.org
email: info@sailingdetroit.org

Detroit Community Sailing

Additional Ways to Help in 2025 – Wishlist and Volunteer

Wish List and Volunteer

Our wish list that may include some long-forgotten item stashed in your garage or lazarette. We also have volunteer opportunities where you can give back, use your skills and meet new interesting people. Follow these links to take the next step with our [wishlist](#) or [volunteering](#).

Specifically Needed in 2025

- **Top 3 Items on our Wish List:**
 - **Club 420 sailboat** to support the demand for sailing this fun boat.
 - **Inflatable or RIB Dinghy** ours reached the end of its life. The motor was recently replaced so we just need a 7-10' dinghy.
 - **16' Center Console Safety/Coach Boat.** We recognize this is a big ask., but we really need a second boat, with motor, to support our 420 activities. Other, less ambitious, wish list items can be found on [our website here](#).
- **Repairing Boats, Equipment and Docks** - We need skilled fiberglass and painting help to address the wear and tear experienced with training boats. We also have additional docks and equipment in need of skilled repairs.
- **Additional Volunteers** in these areas:
 - a) Sailing Instructors (prefer US Sailing Level 1)
 - b) Science and Math Teachers to help our STEM in sailing.
 - c) Woodworking or fiberglass experience to help with the boatbuilding.



Detroit Community Sailing

Our Valued Sponsors, Partners and Volunteers



Detroit Community Sailing

About Us

Detroit Community Sailing Center, a 501(c)(3), was originally founded as Challenge the Wind Youth Sailing Program in 1994 by the Grayhaven Sail Club of Detroit. Its mission, then, as it is now, is to teach sailing to people who would not otherwise get exposure to the sport. In 2021 we changed the name to reflect our desire to broaden the community we serve and sustain our youth programs.

Board of Governors

Name	Board Position	Professional Affiliations
Cliff Papin	Chairman	Retired, Engineer, Ford Motor Co.
Harry Jones	President	Retired, Director, Human Resources, Asia Pacific and Africa, Ford Motor Co.
Larry Breskin	Treasure	Owner and Attorney at Breskin Law Firm, past Commodore, Detroit Boat Club
Deneen Garrett	Volunteers	Founder & CEO of Deneen L Garrett LLC, Talent & Leadership Development at AT&T, Podcast Host
Tanagra Weaver	Secretary	Retired, HR Manager, Province of St. Joseph of the Capuchin Order, Commodore, Grayhaven Sail Club
Graziano Galloway-Gooden	Member	Owner, Graziano Galloway-Gooden Design Team
Jon Aubuchon	Member	Owner and Attorney at Aubuchon Law Firm, Commodore Detroit Boat Club
Michael Dixon	Member	Retired, Commercial Banker, Author, past Commodore Detroit Boat Club
Gwen Gipson	Member	Owner, Chargwn Design
Ellen Lewis	Member	President, Lewis Manor Homes, LTD, Regina Homes, Inc., Interlude, Inc.
Jim Neumann	Member	Youth boats and yachting equipment consultant, yacht manager and consultant, former Director of Membership and Marketing at Detroit Yacht Club
Tim Prophit	Member	President at Maren & Associates, Commodore Detroit Regional Yacht Racing Association, past Commodore Bayview Yacht Club
Dave Simon	Member	Retired Chief Administrative Officer at Altair, past Commodore Crescent Sail Yacht Club

Having Fun While Learning to Sail





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To: