



For Immediate Release  
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New England Science & Sailing

**NESS Awarded 2013 Outstanding Community Sailing Center by US Sailing at Sailing Leadership Forum.**

STONINGTON, CT - The New England Science & Sailing Foundation (NESS) has been named the Outstanding Community Sailing Center for 2013 by US Sailing, the National Governing Body of sailing in the United States, at its Leadership Forum held in San Diego, California last week.

The award is given annually to a sailing program that has made notable contributions to promote public access by demonstrating growth in program offerings, including partnerships, or community involvement and awareness. US Sailing Executive Director Jack Gierhart remarked, "NESS has done an amazing job of introducing more and more students to the sport of sailing through innovative programming and partnerships, all while advancing community and environmental stewardship." The award was presented to NESS President Spike Lobdell, Executive Director Cindy Nickerson, and Sailing Program Director Mark Zagol at last week's Training, Community Sailing, and One Design Awards dinner.

"This honor is the direct result of the investment of our friends and donors, the hard work of our program staff, board, and educational partners whose support empowers us to make a difference in our community," said Spike Lobdell. In 2013, NESS served 2,700 participants through its experiential hands-on science and sailing programs. Of these, more than 900 were sponsored by scholarship gifts and grants for underserved regional school children.

In addition to an array of summer science and sailing programs offered to the community, NESS offers after-school and in school partnerships. NESS was recently named the official Community Partner of New London's Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School in 2013 "because of their unwavering commitment to serving our students," said Alison Ryan, Principal. The New London STEM Leadership program at NESS promotes interest in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) through hands-on learning opportunities for middle school students. In addition to learning to be safe and comfortable sailing boats and exploring local ecosystems, students gain life skills such as teamwork and self-confidence.

NESS was previously recognized by US Sailing in 2011 as one of the first nine accredited Community Sailing Centers in the United States, and again in 2012 as a leader in STEM education through the US Sailing REACH program. "NESS is one of the few places in the country that combines a strong marine science foundation with the great sport of sailing," according to Jessica Servis, US Sailing's REACH Program Manager. "NESS's ability to connect students to their local water sheds through outdoor education and exploration exemplifies best practices and gives these children an amazing opportunity," she added.

NESS Executive Director Cindy Nickerson commented, "More and more parents and teachers are turning to NESS because we offer high quality, innovative programming that fosters students' personal growth. We're incredibly proud to be named US Sailing's 2013 Outstanding Community Sailing Center. It's a testimony to the many donors, friends, teachers, parents, and partners who share in our vision of inclusive, STEM-based adventure education," she said.

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