



For Immediate Release

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Cohen SoundWaters Harbor Center Launches

Completing Four-Year \$17.5 Million Campaign, SoundWaters Opens Environmental Education and Youth Development Facility on Stamford Harbor

Stamford, CT – In a ceremony on Thursday afternoon at Boccuzzi Park in Stamford’s Waterside neighborhood, SoundWaters officially opened the Cohen SoundWaters Harbor Center.

In keeping with SoundWaters maritime heritage, SoundWaters Chair, Doug Bora, flanked by federal, state, city and SoundWaters officials, launched the Harbor Center as one would launch a new ship, by smashing a bottle of champagne on the front of the new building. Guests then streamed into the building to get their first look at the sparkling, 12,800 ft² two-story educational facility.

Leigh Shemitz, SoundWaters president said: “The Harbor Center has been a dream of SoundWaters and for the former Young Mariners Foundation – which merged with SoundWaters in 2016 – for close to two decades. This location on a thriving Stamford Harbor offers unrivaled access for students from Stamford and surrounding communities to learn about, learn from and learn to protect Long Island Sound. Our community is stronger when we are connected to - and learning - from the Sound. The new Cohen SoundWaters Harbor Center will provide a new generation of students that means to access, train, learn and explore the natural world.”

Shemitz thanked the assembled donors whose unwavering support raised \$17.5 million to construct the Harbor Center and provide on-going support for the educational, sailing and maritime workforce development programs that will take place there.

“We are so deeply grateful to the Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation for providing their leadership gift of \$3 million and giving us the confidence to seek support from the community through an unprecedented pandemic and economic uncertainties. Our goal to provide programs offering life skills, college skills and job skills resonated with supportive and caring families across the community,” Shemitz added.

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“SoundWaters is more than a neighbor to us, they are an important part of our community. We are proud to be a partner and to support their new Harbor Center,” said Alexandra Cohen, President of the Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation. “The new Harbor Center will provide education and job training opportunities for our local youth while continuing SoundWaters mission of protecting our local waters.”

Stamford Mayor, Caroline Simmons, lauded all involved in bringing this new resource to Stamford’s waterfront. “SoundWaters has served Stamford students and families for over three decades and the new Harbor Center will serve our young people for decades into the future. Thank you to Leigh Shemitz and her team and to the Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation and all the donors who made this possible. This center is a critical investment in the youth of our community and will provide valuable educational and learning opportunities for Stamford students.”

About the Cohen SoundWaters Harbor Center

The Cohen SoundWaters Harbor Center is located on Stamford Harbor in John J. Boccuzzi Park at 200 Southfield Avenue. The 12,800 ft² building was designed to meet the needs of three anchor SoundWaters programs:

- Young Mariners Academy: Direct water access for sailing and classroom space for life skills and academic skills development for middle school students.
- SoundWaters Research Intensive: 12-month access to the SoundWaters research vessel and ample lab space specially designed for advanced marine research to prepare high school students for science as a focus for college or career.
- Harbor Corps: Custom-designed and fully equipped workshop to train and prepare young people for entry level jobs and careers in the maritime trades.

During the summer, the Harbor Center will also include launch access for SoundWaters’ fleet of sailboats, and publicly available kayaks and paddleboards, as well as the organization’s iconic three-masted schooner.

About SoundWaters

SoundWaters, a 501(c)3 organization founded in 1989, is the region’s premier environmental education organization focused on the protection of Long Island Sound. Annually, SoundWaters hosts shipboard and land-based education and development programs for more than 30,000 students from pre-K through high school. SoundWaters works in partnership with schools, communities, civic organizations, businesses and other environmental and educational organizations to create broad access to Long Island Sound to develop experiences that foster a sense of responsibility for the environment and encourage actions that ensure a sustainable future for the Sound and our community. Our community is stronger when we are connected to and learning from Long Island Sound. For more information, visit SoundWaters.org.

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About the Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation

The Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation is committed to inspiring philanthropy and community service by creating awareness, offering guidance and leading by example to show the world what giving can do. Since launching the Foundation in 2001, Steven and Alexandra Cohen have generously funded local and national nonprofit organizations that uplift the communities in which they serve. The Cohens' giving reflects their personal connection with the causes that inspire them. To learn more, please visit steveandalex.org or follow @CohenGive on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

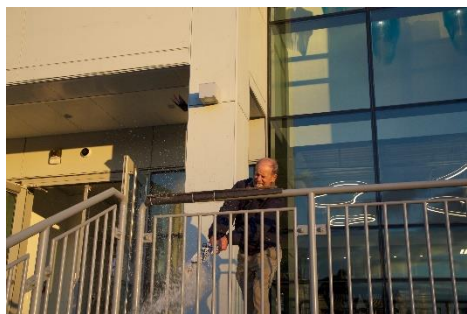


PHOTO CREDIT: Aviva Maller

CAPTION: SoundWaters Board Chair, Doug Bora, in true maritime fashion, officially launches the Cohen SoundWaters Harbor Center by smashing a bottle of champagne on the front of the building in a ceremony at Boccuzzi Park on Thursday, November 17.



PHOTO CREDIT: Aviva Maller

CAPTION: Stamford Mayor, Caroline Simmons (front row, 7th from left), joined federal, state and local officials along with representatives of the Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation and SoundWaters supporters in a ceremony on Thursday November 17 to officially open the Cohen SoundWaters Harbor Center in Boccuzzi Park in Stamford.