



FALL FORWARD

A recap of 2019 Fall Programs

November 2019



6th grade students from Stamford's Dolan Middle School gather around the 16,000 bottle caps they have collected in just one month as part of the Million Bottle Cap Challenge!

We Train Future Leaders So the Earth Has a Future

What a fall! Thousands of students converged on SoundWaters in September to learn about their local environment just as millions of students were demonstrating around the world, giving voice to their anxiety about the global environment. Never has the need been more urgent to train, educate and collaborate with students so that they are prepared to manage the future of our planet.

Locally, our students are learning, becoming aware and finding their collective voice. As the ground shifts under their feet, we are teaching them and training them so they have the tools to adapt to constant change. How important is this? Our earth depends on it.

Read about what our students have achieved this summer and fall and catch a glimpse of what's coming up.



Timeless Teaching

SoundWaters made memories that the children will not forget. Thank you so much for making the trip possible for many children who would never have had an opportunity to experience the Long Island Sound in such a spectacular way.

Science Specialist, Six to Six Magnet School, Bridgeport



The Floating Classroom

At SoundWaters we are fortunate to have an exceptional resource for teaching on the water. The schooner *SoundWaters* just completed its season, sailing with 4,285 students from 75 schools in seven different ports on Long Island Sound. For almost all of these students, this sail was their first time on a boat.

6th Graders are Everywhere! We Love it.

1,300. That's how many 6th graders have come to SoundWaters since the start of the school year. And they don't sit around; they're in canoes, in waders, in the lab and on the shore. They're active and totally immersed in the study of Long Island Sound. When they learn "what's out there," the mystery of Long Island Sound transforms into understanding and "so what?" becomes "we need to."



Really Sound Science

Sound Generation, a high school internship program, welcomed 25 new students to SoundWaters this fall. Sound Generation addresses this opportunity gap for local high school students by offering them advanced research opportunities in aquaculture, marine debris, animal adaptations and water chemistry in our local waters. In January, the students will present scientific posters on their conclusions.

Innovation and Growth

SoundWaters keeps innovating to find new ways to reach and teach the next generation. This fall we launched three new programs. Harbor Corps is job training in the marine trades. The Million Bottle Cap Project is a year-long challenge to middle school students to learn about and help solve the problem of plastic pollution. Our new trash skimmer will help clear debris from the water and focus students and adults on the source of the problem.

Long Island Sound: A Pathway to Success

It's cold and people are turning away from the Sound, but there's a huge part of our economy that keeps moving on Long Island Sound year round. The tugs are still pushing barges, the oystermen are still cultivating their product and when boats come off the water, they need maintenance. The people who fill these jobs make good wages. SoundWaters launched Harbor Corps this fall to help young people develop the technical skills, contacts and confidence to gain a foothold in the maritime industry.

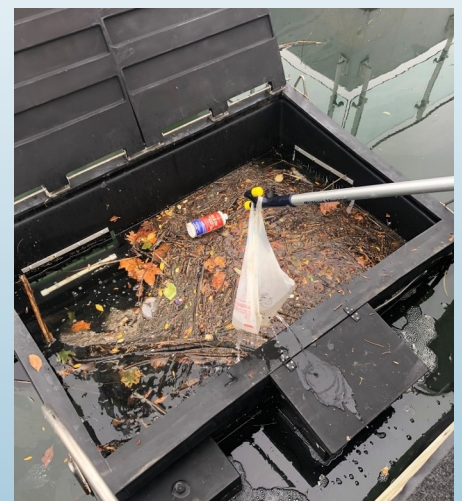


Keeping Two Tons of Plastic From the Water

As the saying goes, "if it hits the ground, it will flow into the Sound." That has been the call to action for Stamford students as they take on the problem of plastic pollution in Long Island Sound by collecting one million plastic bottle caps. By June, students will have prevented over two tons of plastic from ever reaching Long Island Sound. They're recruiting their families, neighbors and local businesses to their quest, finding their voice as stewards of their natural world.

But, If Anything Slips Through ...

We'll be ready for it. In October, SoundWaters, with support from Clean Ocean Access, launched the Sound's first marina trash skimmer into Stamford Harbor. It looks like a dumpster, but does the work of an enormous pool filter, drawing in and trapping surface debris from the water 24 hours a day. Students and volunteers will do the job of cleaning out the skimmer and sorting and counting what they find. This on-going research project will open the community's eyes to the size of the marine debris problem and motivate us to better manage our trash.



A Look Back at Summer!

At SoundWaters, Summer is more than the absence of school; it's a time of personal growth through challenge, exploration and discovery.



Outdoor learning on the water is powerful, but also hard to find. In our community, there is an opportunity gap for summer fun – access to sailing on Long Island Sound is expensive and excludes most families. Your support helps us bridge that gap. We provided over \$275,000 in summer funding so a family's ability to pay was not a barrier to the opportunity to explore, learn and grow in the natural world.

Kids get gritty at SoundWaters. They get wet and dirty and realize it's OK. They sail a more complex boat and face their fears head-on. They have time to sit and wonder...and let go of their screens. Their tenacity and motivation makes them successful.



Summer is about growth. Our goal is to launch kids into their next school year with momentum. Here are some of the results from our Young Mariners:

- 35% increase in understanding science concepts
- 31% increase in understanding math concepts
- 85% more confident in reading skills
- 85% more likely to participate in class