



BAY CROSSINGS

"The Voice of the Waterfront"

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The Power of Sailing
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Photo by Joel Williams

A group of around 40 students from Oakland's Envision Academy prepares to set sail from the OCSC headquarters in the Berkeley Marina.

Teaching Teens the Power of Sailing

BY JOEL WILLIAMS

In 1979, Anthony Sandberg founded Olympic Circle Sailing Club (OCSC), a San Francisco Bay sailing school and club, with one boat, a shed and the simple



Photo by Joel Williams

OCSC instructor Thomas Perry shows the ropes to Jack Neil, an eager young sailor from Envision Academy.

idea of sharing the joy of sailing and servicing clients the way they would want their friends and family treated.

OCSC now occupies three docks and over 50 boats in the Berkeley Marina, along with state-of-the-art classrooms, a pro shop, gear rental and service department and a club room with a spectacular view of the Bay and Golden Gate Bridge. And Sandberg has set a new goal—to offer the experience of sailing to hundreds of Oakland teenagers.

Sandberg chose to work with Envision Academy of Arts & Technology, a tuition-free charter high school in Oakland, after meeting Principal Kirsten Grimm. “I was amazed by her,” said Sandberg in a recent interview. “Oakland has a dropout rate of something like 40 percent, and Grimm had 98 percent of her seniors accepted at college last year. I’ve committed

to getting Envision’s students sailing this year as a first step toward creating a sailing team at the school.”

The program, which has been named EAST (Envision Academy Sailing Team), is in its initial stages, but the goal is to create an extra-curricular sailing program for the students that will have a profound effect on their lives and positively affect college acceptance of Envision students.

Recently, *Bay Crossings* was invited to spend an afternoon sailing with a group of Envision students. Everyone had a great time; some students seemed eager to learn about sailing, while others just enjoyed the ride.

And that’s fine with Sandberg. Every one of the school’s 350 students is offered the opportunity to come to OCSC for an afternoon of sailing. If they are interested in continuing the learning process, all they have to do is send a personal letter to Sandberg thanking him for the sail and showing an interest in learning more.

Once everyone who wants to sail



Photo by Joel Williams

OCSC is giving every student at Envision Academy the opportunity to sail on the Bay.

has done so, Sandberg will enroll the interested students in summer sailing camps at Treasure Island Sailing Center (TISC), which specializes in teaching



Photo by Joel Williams

Students can either participate in the sport of sailing or just relax and enjoy the views.

teens how to sail. After that has been completed, tryouts will determine who will qualify for the team. The team will form by fall of this year and EAST will hold weekly practices at TISC throughout the school year, with the team competing in three inter-high school regattas during the 2014-15 school year. The long-term goal, or as Sandberg puts it, his “evil plan,” is to have these young people “competing with private schools and prep school kids—and winning!”

As for funding the project, Sandberg said that the first thing he did was ask for help from the OCSC club members. “My boat owners are saying, ‘You can use my boat for free.’ I went to my 45 instructors and they are saying, ‘Sure, count on me.’” He is also asking OCSC members to put in \$25 each. Anything else that he can’t raise himself, Sandberg will pay out of his pocket.



Photo by Joel Williams

The ultimate goal of the EAST program is to establish a sailing team of Envision students that can compete with private and prep school teams. The team will be formed by fall and begin competing during the 2014-15 school year.

To help out by making a donation to TISC for the EAST program, visit tisailing.org/donate-and-volunteer/make-a-donation and choose Envision when you donate.

Look to the pages of *Bay Crossings* to keep up to date on the progress and development of EAST, as we will be checking in periodically on Sandberg’s efforts to establish this special team. With America’s Cup gone, it looks like we may now have a new home sailing team to follow.



Photo by Joel Williams

Several boats filled with students took to the Bay when Bay Crossings visited OCSC.

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