

2025 Impact Report

Community Boating, Inc.

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The mission of Community Boating: To build a diverse community, promote personal growth, and inspire appreciation of the natural environment through sailing.

Our vision:

Sailing for All!



Our values: ***Learning | Volunteerism | Community | Inclusivity | Excellence | Fun***

Letter from the Executive Director

When you learn to sail, you learn more than a sport.

Sailing teaches judgment, teamwork, and self-reliance. It asks you to pay attention, to communicate clearly, and to stay calm when conditions change. Those lessons translate far beyond the water, and they develop capable people. That is why CBI exists: to make that opportunity accessible and durable, season after season. Sailing for All is not a slogan. It is the standard.

In 2025, CBI put that kind of learning within reach for more people, especially in the places where it can change a life's direction.

Youth sailing remained a cornerstone of that pathway. Young sailors built seamanship and safety skills, while also building focus, resilience, and pride. They learned to work as a team, solve problems in real time, and to see the city from the water with a stronger sense of belonging.

At CBI, that sense of belonging becomes opportunity through **youth jobs development.** CBI offers first jobs with real responsibility. Teen and young adult staff lead lessons, support safety, and model professionalism for younger sailors watching closely. They earn wages and references, but also something harder to measure and more durable: the confidence that comes from being trusted, being accountable, and being part of a team.

Our **Universal Access Program** reflects the same principle at the heart of CBI: there is a place for you here. Through adaptive sailing, sailors of all abilities can participate fully and build confidence on the water. The program strengthens our community because it makes access real in practice, not just in principle. Access is not an add-on. It is the mission.

Taken together, these programs point to what makes CBI distinctive. CBI is a true **third space**: a steady community outside of home, school, and work where people return, belong, and grow. For young people, that continuity is especially powerful. It is where learning becomes confidence, and confidence becomes leadership. The pathway is visible and attainable, from first sail, to mentoring, to real responsibility.

In 2025, CBI continued to be more than a place to sail. It was a place to return to, where adults build skills and connections through shared practice, and where many also **chose to give back** as part of belonging to this community. Volunteers show up on the dock, on the water, and behind the scenes, strengthening safety, supporting programs, and sustaining the shared standards that make CBI what it is.

That **sense of belonging** is the thread that connects everything we do: youth learning to lead, teens taking on responsibility through meaningful jobs, and sailors of all abilities experiencing independence and joy through Universal Access. In 2026, we're committed to strengthening the behind-the-scenes work that makes that possible: including safe boats, well-trained staff, and the access supports that keep this community open and welcoming.

Thank you for making this work real. Your membership, volunteer time, advocacy, and philanthropic support directly sustain readiness behind every lesson and every safe day on the water; from trained staff and reliable boats to the access supports that keep this community open. **If you believe in what CBI makes possible**, I hope you will stay close in 2026. Invite someone new to the dock, share our story, and help fuel the community that keeps the Charles River full of learning, leadership, and belonging. Sailing for All is not self-sustaining. It is a shared commitment.

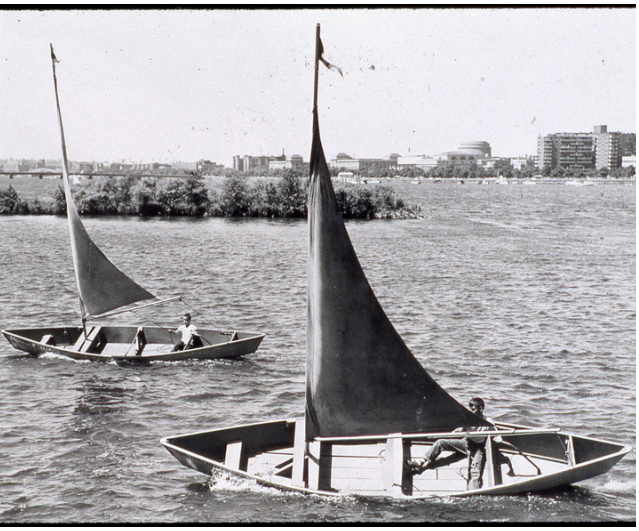
With gratitude,



Kate Ferris Richardson
Executive Director
Community Boating, Inc.











A Legacy of Inclusion: Sailing for All Since 1946

As the oldest and largest public sailing center in the country, Community Boating, Inc. (CBI) is built around one simple vision: Sailing for All. How we achieve that goal is much more complicated than those three short words would suggest. Our mission, in full, is to build a diverse community, promote personal growth, and inspire appreciation of the natural environment through sailing.

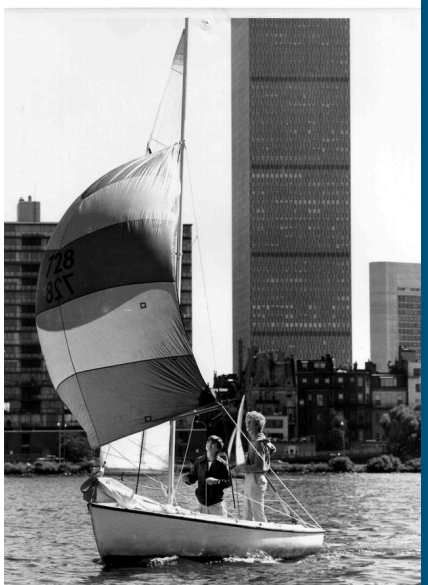
Founded in 1946, with roots going back to the 1930s, CBI is built around a transformative vision to make the Charles River - at the time a playground for Boston's elite - accessible to all. As definitions of accessibility have evolved through the decades, we have expanded our operations and today run three distinct programs.

The Adult Program offers beginner to intermediate level sailing instruction to any individual who is at least 18 years old, through modestly priced memberships that include both classes and boat usage.

The Junior Program runs ten weeks each summer and, like the Adult Program, is built around all-inclusive memberships that include classes and boat usage. We have a formalized income-based sliding scale that provides memberships for as low as $1.

The Universal Access Program, founded in 2007, is built around serving the needs of individuals living with physical or cognitive disabilities and requiring any special assistance. Keeping in mind that those living with disabilities often incur expenses in their lives that others do not, we only charge $50 per season for participation in the Universal Access Program. For those unable to afford that, we charge $1.





ADAPTIVE SAILING

At Community Boating, Inc., access to the water includes ensuring that individuals of all abilities can participate fully in the experience of sailing. The Universal Access Program is designed to remove barriers and create a structured, supportive environment where sailors with disabilities can build skills, develop independence, and engage as active participants on the water.

Through a combination of adaptive equipment, specialized instruction, and individualized support, participants are able to take on real responsibility in their sailing experience. From first-time orientation sails to ongoing lessons and recreational outings, the program provides multiple entry points while allowing each sailor to progress at their own pace.

In 2025, the Universal Access Program served **221 members, delivering 459 on-the-water appointments and more than 725 hours of adaptive sailing**. These numbers reflect not only the scale of the program, but the consistency of engagement and the depth of experience provided to each participant.

725+ hours
of Adaptive Sailing

100% **of Adaptive Sailors receive a subsidized membership**

"CBI offers far more than sailing to someone who is struggling. For me it makes dark clouds go away every time. For someone like myself with a rather serious illness, CBI reframes dark thoughts to bright sunshiny days, no matter what the weather. CBI offers magical gifts no doctor alone can provide!" - Universal Access Program member



Adaptive Equipment: Promoting Inclusive Sailing

At Community Boating, Inc. (CBI), we are committed to making sailing accessible to everyone. Our adaptive equipment is designed to empower sailors of all abilities, ensuring a safe and enjoyable experience on the water. From our versatile fleet of boats to specialized features that enhance maneuverability and comfort, we strive to create an inclusive environment where all participants can thrive. Below, we highlight key pieces of adaptive equipment that support our mission of accessibility and empowerment.



Cape Cod Keel Mercury

This fleet of 15-foot boats is a cornerstone of CBI's offerings, featuring sliding benches for easy side-switching, modified tillers to alleviate shoulder strain, and adjustable rigging controls for accessibility from a central point.



Sonar

The 23 foot Sonar boasts a spacious seating area for comfort and includes adaptable features. These consist of insertable race car chairs secured with seat belts for safety, a rotating skipper chair for improved maneuverability, and an extendable tiller designed for those with limited mobility. The Sonars offer longer tiller extension options to accommodate individual needs.

RS Venture Connect

With a grant from the Veterans Affairs Office in 2017 we acquired two RS Venture Connect features easily adjustable rigging, allowing all control lines to lead to a central point. It offers several steering options, including tiller-style, mechanically assisted, and sip-and-puff steering, enhancing accessibility for all sailors.



Additional Adaptive Equipment

Custom-made sliding bench inserts enhance sailors' mobility throughout the boats. These adaptations ensure that each vessel is equipped to meet the diverse needs of our participants, promoting a safe and enjoyable sailing experience.

We also provide a mechanical Hoyer Lift system mounted on the dock to assist individuals in getting in and out of the boats from wheelchairs. This feature enhances accessibility and ensures a smooth transition onto the water. To cater to diverse needs, we offer a variety of sling sizes for safe and comfortable transfers, and participants are welcome to bring their own slings as well.

Building Access Through Community Partnerships

The Universal Access Program extends beyond individual participation by partnering with organizations that serve individuals with a wide range of disabilities and support needs. Through these outreach efforts, Community Boating, Inc. brings adaptive sailing to new communities, creating opportunities for individuals to engage with the water in ways that are structured, supportive, and meaningful.

In 2025, we worked with a diverse group of partners, including organizations serving individuals on the autism spectrum, people who are blind or visually impaired, veterans, and those navigating physical and cognitive disabilities. Each partnership reflects a shared commitment to expanding access to outdoor recreation and creating environments where participants can build confidence, independence, and connection.

Our collaboration with **Spectrum Sailing**, a national organization focused on programming for children on the autism spectrum, brought a multi-day camp experience to the Charles River. Instructors received specialized training to support sensory needs and create a consistent, welcoming environment where participants could learn and grow. Partnerships with organizations such as the **Carroll Center for the Blind** and **Boston Blind Sailing** supported sailors with visual impairments, incorporating adaptive techniques and technology to promote independence and skill development on the water.

We also worked with community-based and therapeutic organizations, including **Advocates Brain Injury Services**, **Chai Works, and the National Alliance on Mental Illness**, to provide structured sailing experiences that emphasize wellness, social connection, and active participation. Through our partnership with the **Veterans Administration**, we welcomed veterans for adaptive sailing sessions that offered both recreational and restorative benefits.

Additional collaborations with groups such as **New England Adaptive Sports, United Cerebral Palsy, and Yachad New England** expanded access for individuals with physical and developmental disabilities, while partnerships with local recreation departments, including **Westwood Recreation**, connected us with broader community networks seeking inclusive outdoor opportunities.



Across all of these partnerships, the goal remains consistent. Participants are not passive observers. They are active contributors in an environment that values effort, builds skills, and fosters a sense of belonging. By working with organizations embedded in their communities, Community Boating is able to extend the reach of adaptive sailing and ensure that more individuals can access an experience that is both challenging and transformative.



YOUTH SAILING

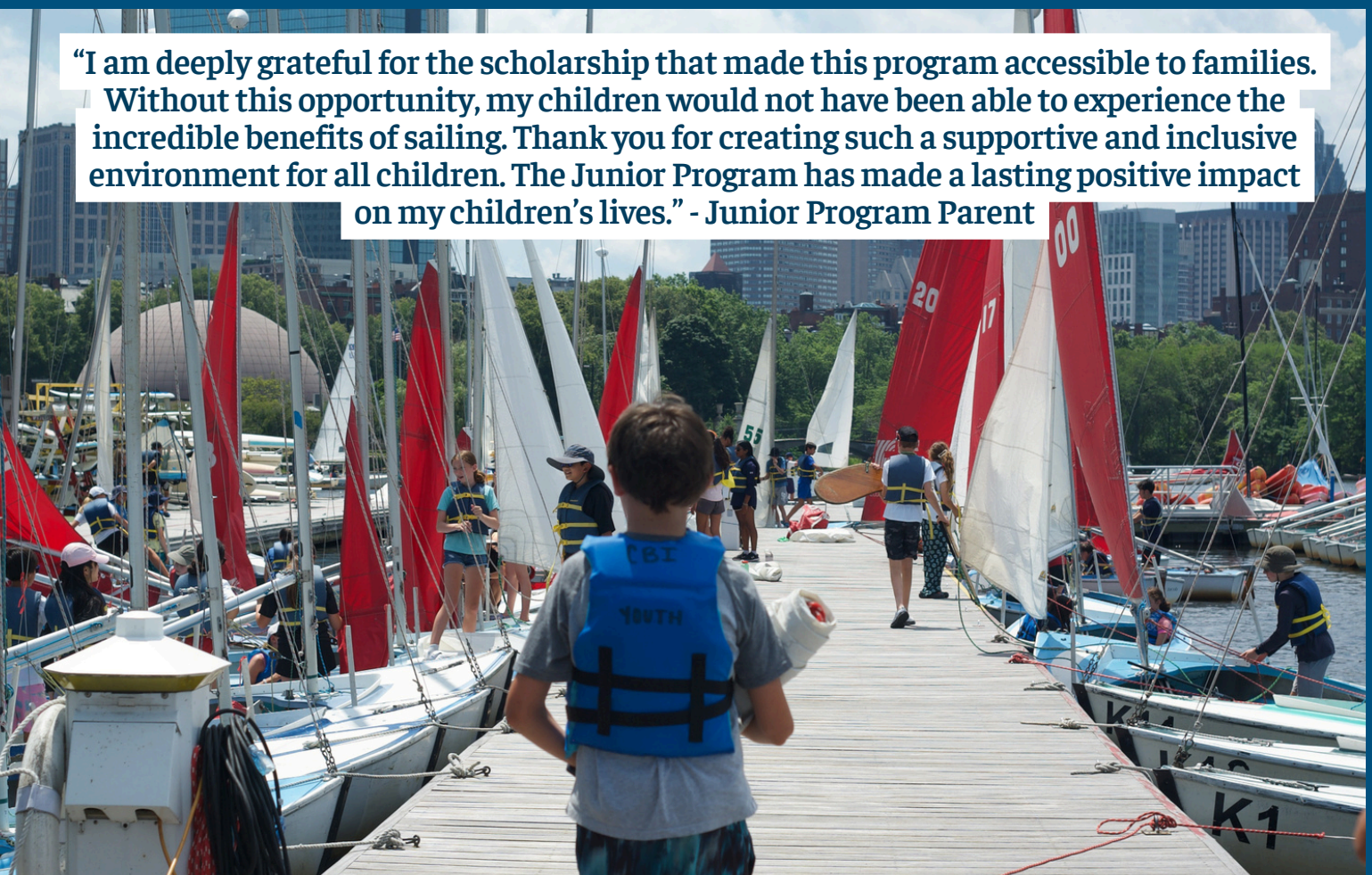
In 2025, the Summer Junior Program welcomed **935 young sailors** to the Charles River, providing more than **3,200 class enrollments across sailing, STEM, and leadership programs.** From first-time sailors tc competitive racers, the program continues to offer a place where young people build confidence, develop skills, and form lasting connections to the water.

Access remains at the heart of the program. Through our income-based sliding scale membership model, **39% of youth participants** received discounted memberships, continuing a steady rise in participation from families across Greater Boston. This commitment ensures that sailing on the Charles River remains open and accessible to all.

Learning at CBI extends beyond the boat. Youth explored the science of the river through hands-on STEM classes such as Environmental Science, Intro to Microscopy, RoboSub, and the new Climate Science course. At the same time, 74 Instructor-in-Training participants developed leadership skills by assisting instructors, supporting dock operations, and mentoring younger sailors.

Together, these experiences reflect the full spirit of CBI's mission of Sailing for All: providing youth with opportunities to learn, lead, and discover the river in new ways.

$160,000+ **sliding scale scholarships**



"I am deeply grateful for the scholarship that made this program accessible to families. Without this opportunity, my children would not have been able to experience the incredible benefits of sailing. Thank you for creating such a supportive and inclusive environment for all children. The Junior Program has made a lasting positive impact on my children's lives." - Junior Program Parent

Sailing into STEM: Nurturing Curiosity and Skills

At Community Boating, the river is more than a place to sail. It is also a living classroom. Through our growing STEM curriculum, youth explore the science behind the environment they sail in, connecting hands-on discovery with real world learning.

Throughout the summer, **Environmental Science** classes introduced students to the ecosystems of the Charles River and the broader natural world. Each week focused on a different topic, ranging from the evolution of cyanobacteria and its role in shaping Earth's atmosphere to the plants and wildlife found along the banks of the river today. Youth participated in experiments and field observations both on and off the water, guided by instructors and STEM interns who helped turn curiosity into discovery.

Our **Intro to Microscopy class** offered another way to explore the river up close. Students collected water samples from the lagoon and returned to the lab to examine them under microscopes. With guidance from instructors and scientist Dr. du Moulin, youth learned how to operate microscopes and identify plankton and other microscopic organisms living in the Charles River ecosystem. For many students, it was their first opportunity to see the hidden world within the water they sail on every day.



Behind the scenes, five **STEM interns** supported these learning experiences while contributing to CBI's cyanobacteria monitoring program. Each weekday they collected and analyzed water samples using laboratory techniques and microscopy, gaining hands-on experience with scientific equipment and data collection. Their work became especially important in August when the Massachusetts Department of Public Health issued a cyanobacteria advisory for the lower basin of the Charles River. By monitoring conditions locally, the interns helped provide timely information that supported operational decisions and allowed programming to continue safely.



Together, **these programs demonstrate how sailing can open the door to scientific exploration.** By combining environmental education, laboratory skills, and real world problem solving, CBI's STEM initiatives help juniors develop curiosity, confidence, and a deeper understanding of the river they call home.

"Working in the cyanobacteria lab gave me hands on experience collecting samples, using microscopes, and analyzing water from the Charles River. It was an incredible opportunity to build real scientific skills while contributing to the safety of our sailing community" - Junior Program Member

Cultivating Leadership Through Sailing

Our Junior Program remains a cornerstone of Community Boating's mission, developing not only skilled sailors but also confident, capable young leaders. Through hands-on experiences on and off the water, youth learn responsibility, teamwork, and problem-solving while contributing to the daily operations of the program. From assisting with boat launches to mentoring peers and supporting community events, these experiences give participants practical leadership skills that extend far beyond sailing. By providing structured opportunities for mentorship, collaboration, and real-world responsibility, the Junior Program cultivates the next generation of leaders.

Instructors in Training

At the heart of this leadership development is the Instructor-in-Training (IIT) Program. In 2025, 74 youth dedicated their summer to learning how to lead, mentor, and support their peers. IITs rotate through classroom shadowing, dock management, informal peer instruction, and event support, gaining practical experience while building confidence, communication skills, and problem-solving abilities. Beyond logistics, they help shape the culture of the Junior Program, ensuring that events like Theme Days and Kids Sail the Stars run smoothly and joyfully. By modeling teamwork, inclusion, and responsibility, IITs create a welcoming environment where all participants can thrive.

2,900+ hours  **74 IITs**

Paid Instructors in Training and Workforce Preparation

The Paid IIT program offers an early employment opportunity for youth aged 14–15, bridging the gap between the legal working age and the Adult Program's standard hiring age of 16. In 2025, five youth participated in this program, which requires at least a Yellow Mercury Rating and enrollment under our sliding scale membership. Paid IITs gain valuable work experience while staying connected to sailing and the CBI community.

More broadly, all IITs gain the skills, confidence, and professionalism that prepare them for future employment at CBI and beyond. This approach has proven highly effective: in **2025, 71.6% of Adult Program staff were current or former Junior Program participants**, demonstrating how the Junior Program develops a pipeline of leaders and employees, fostering long-term engagement with sailing and the Community Boating community.



Through the IIT Program and related initiatives, the Junior Program proves that sailing is just the beginning. By nurturing leadership, responsibility, and collaboration, we are building the leaders of tomorrow — confident young people ready to make an impact on the water, in their communities, and beyond.

Expanding Horizons Through Sailing

At Community Boating, Inc., access to the water begins with a simple but powerful idea. Young people are trusted with real responsibility. Through our Junior Program outreach, we extend that experience beyond our core membership by partnering with schools and community organizations to ensure more youth can step onto the dock, take the tiller, and discover what they are capable of.

Each partnership creates an entry point into an environment where participation is expected and growth is earned. Students from **Boston Green Academy** returned for a fourth year, with experienced sailors stepping into Instructor in Training roles while new participants learned to read the wind, rig their boats, and make decisions on the water. At **Esperanza Academy**, a Lawrence middle school, students took part in a two week sailing course, building confidence through hands on learning and shared challenge.

For many participants, outreach programs offer a first introduction to both the Charles River and the expectations that come with being on it. Through partnerships with **East End House** and **Youth Enrichment Services**, young people engaged in sailing and kayaking experiences that emphasized focus, independence, and resilience. With the **Nazzaro Community Center** and **Volo Kids**, students joined us for day trips and introductory sessions, gaining comfort on the water while actively participating in a new and unfamiliar environment.

140+ youth served through partnerships

We also continued to deepen and expand access through evolving partnerships. Through **Wonderfund**, youth involved with the Department of Children and Families accessed reduced rate Junior memberships, creating a pathway to sustained participation beyond a single visit. Our collaboration with **Chelsea Recreation** brought families to the river week after week, building familiarity and confidence over time. Through **FHI 360's** Sports Visitor Program, we welcomed international students to the Charles, where sailing became a shared language for leadership, exchange, and connection.



Across all of these partnerships, the impact extends beyond a single day or session. Young people are not simply introduced to sailing. They are invited into a culture shaped by responsibility, effort, and mutual respect. By expanding access to this kind of experience, we are not only growing participation. We are strengthening a community where more young people can learn, contribute, and belong.



Junior Program x Universal Access Program Crossover

At Community Boating, Inc., access to the water also means ensuring that young people of all abilities can fully participate in the experiences that define our Junior Program. Through our Universal Access Program and Junior Program crossover initiative, sailors who need additional support are integrated directly into Junior Program classes, with an adaptive sailing instructor embedded to provide individualized guidance.

The crossover model brings together the strengths of both programs, pairing the adaptive expertise of the Universal Access Program with the structure and social dynamic of the Junior Program. This ensures that accessibility is not separate from the core experience, but part of it.

This year, four sailors participated in crossover classes, including youth who are blind, on the autism spectrum, and with Down syndrome. Each sailor gained not only technical skills on the water but also the confidence and independence that come from being fully included in the life of the program.

"My child has Down Syndrome, and I have been incredibly impressed with the way CBI has accommodated her unique needs. The staff's patience, understanding, and commitment to inclusivity have created a truly welcoming environment for her. I am particularly grateful for the difference I have seen in [my child] since receiving direct support this summer to accommodate her needs. That support made her feel fully included in the program, like any other child."





Sailing for Schools: Spring & Fall Programs

We are proud to offer a range of sailing opportunities to local grade schools and high schools, fostering a love of sailing and providing hands-on education both on and off the water.

Through our spring and fall School Sailing programs, students from across Greater Boston take part in both competitive racing and Learn to Sail instruction. Whether representing their school in regattas or stepping into a boat for the first time, participants are part of a shared experience that emphasizes teamwork, accountability, and personal growth.

In 2025, we partnered with **11 schools, including 5 public schools and 6 independent schools,** ensuring that students from a range of backgrounds could access the water as part of their school community.

Participating schools included:

- Cambridge Rindge and Latin School
- Newton North High School
- Needham High School
- Quincy High School
- Advent School
- Park Street School
- Commonwealth School
- The Newman School
- Buckingham Brown and Nichols
- Beaver Country Day School
- The Winsor School

Across both seasons, students sailed in Mercuries and 420s, developing technical skills while learning to work together under changing conditions. For many, school sailing offers a rare opportunity to be part of a team where individual responsibility and collective success are closely connected.

By supporting school partnerships, Community Boating helps ensure that more students have access to meaningful extracurricular experiences that build skills, strengthen connections, and keep them engaged both on and off the water.







ADULT SAILING

The Adult Program continues to uphold Community Boating, Inc.'s tradition of delivering award-winning, world-class sailing instruction to the greater Boston area. Through a combination of paid instructors and certified volunteers, we provide high-quality, accessible instruction alongside robust racing opportunities across a range of boats and skill levels. Adult memberships also play a critical role in sustaining our mission, helping to subsidize the Junior and Universal Access Programs and ensuring that access to the water remains open to all.

At the same time, the Adult Program offers something increasingly essential in today's world. It provides a true third place, a space outside of home, school, or work where people can gather, connect, and feel a sense of belonging. **We welcomed over 2,690 members in 2025 season.** On the docks and on the water, members form friendships, learn from one another, and become part of a community built around shared experience and mutual support.

21,000+
sign-outs



"CBI is accessible, affordable, and tailored to teaching. Until I joined, I had no experience sailing; at the end of this season - my first season - I'm confident on the water."
Adult Program Program member

Adult Sailing: Community & Volunteerism

Sail, Learn, Connect: Exploring Community Boating's Adult Program

Community Boating challenges traditional barriers to entry in the sport. With drop-in introductory classes, individuals can become members and begin learning to sail in the same day, without prior experience or planning. Daily orientations, free and open to the public, further lower the threshold for participation by welcoming new visitors into the space and introducing them to the possibilities of the river.



For a modest fee, reduced when needed to ensure accessibility, members gain more than technical skills. They gain confidence, a connection to the natural environment, and a place to return to throughout the season. Through expanded social programming, including dockside gatherings, regattas, and community events, we continue to strengthen this sense of connection, ensuring that Community Boating is not only a place to learn how to sail, but a place where people feel they belong.





Volunteers Support the Community

Adult Program volunteers play an invaluable role in furthering our mission and improving access to sailing for individuals of all skill levels. **Over 130 volunteers contributed 1,973 hours of class instruction, fleet and facilities maintenance, race committee, and more.** Volunteers led 451 guided sails, small-group, on-the-water sessions where newer members practice core sailing skills alongside an instructor, allowing over 900 beginner sailors to build confidence and develop their abilities. In 2025, we welcomed 25 new volunteers to the team who quickly stepped into teaching, supporting programs, and helping to create a welcoming and supportive environment for new members.

1900+ volunteering hours

GRANT SUPPORT

Community Boating's grant strategy focuses on our core charitable programs: the Junior Program and the Universal Access Program. In line with current funding priorities of many foundations and grantmakers, we target funding sources to support the STEM education and leadership building components on the Junior Program, and the inclusivity and empowerment of the Universal Access Program. When alignment exists, Community Boating will also seek out grant funders to support capital or fixed asset expenditures. During 2025 we received funding from the following sources:

The **Cambridge Community Foundation** is a 501(c)3 public charity that is the local giving platform for the city of Cambridge. Through its Community Fund it invests in organizations that provide arts and culture, child and youth development, community building and engagement, economic security, education, environment, food, health and wellbeing, and housing to the residents of Cambridge. In 2025 Community Boating received $3000 to support the Junior Program's **Environmental Science Program.**

The **Frederick A. Bailey Trust U/Will** was established to make grants "to pay to and among such Massachusetts corporations organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes, including the encouragement of art and the prevention of cruelty to children or animals." A perennial supporter of Community Boating, in 2025 we received $5000 for the **IIT Leadership Program.**

The **Peter and Carmen Lucia Buck Foundation** was formed in 1999 by Dr. Peter Buck and Carmen Lucia Buck as a private family foundation. Its funding focuses on "giving motivated people the tools they need to help themselves," supporting organizations that show initiative, leadership, and innovation in solving issues that are meaningful to the Buck family and the communities where they live. For the third year in a row Community Boating was invited to apply for funding from the PCLB Foundation, receiving $5000 in General Operating support.

The **Humane Society of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts**, modeled after the British Royal Humane Society, was established in 1786 by a group of Boston citizens concerned about needless deaths resulting from shipwrecks and drowning. Community Boating previously received funding in 2019 for the purchase of digital VHF radios, 2023 Community Boating received $25,000 towards the purchase of a brand new, customized Maritime 1890 Skiff. In early 2025 we received $18,619.48 for the replacement and implementation of new, Mast Head floats for the mercury fleet resulting in a significant reduction in turtled capsizes with only two during the whole 2025 season.



