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ALAESTRA

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Alle gante

Therapy on the Water

Universal Access Sailing at Boston's Community Boating

Gary C. du Moulin

Genzyme

Marcin Kunicki Charles Zechel Community Boating Inc.

Introduction

Since 1946, the mission of Community Boating, Inc. (CBI), the nation's oldest community sailing organization, has been the advancement of the sport of sailing by minimizing economic and physical obstacles. In addition, CBI enhances the community by offering access to sailing as a vehicle to empower its members to develop independence and self-confidence, improve communication and, foster teamwork. Members also acquire a deeper understanding of community spirit and the power of volunteerism. Founded in 2006, in cooperation with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the Executive Office of Public and Private Partnerships, and the corporate sponsorship of Genzyme, a biotechnology company the Universal Access Program (UAP) is the youngest of CBI's programs. The mission of UAP is to enhance rehabilitation, promote the healing process, encourage self sufficiency and independence, and foster the competitive spirit among those with special needs or disabilities. Today, UAP sailors and their families have the use of specialized, accessible sailboats and transfer equipment, dedicated staff assistance, and sailing instruction. Several seat configurations in the boats are available for people with various disabilities. Reserved sessions, usually one to two hours in length, can be customized to meet individual needs and can consist of a short sailboat ride for therapeutic recreation or a more rigorous learn-to-sail class structure, leading to ratings and expanded sailing privileges. Since it's founding, UAP has become a nationally-recognized, award-winning sailing program, serving hundreds of sailors with special needs each year.

Sailing and Disability: A Philosophy for Therapy

While the sport is less well known as a therapeutic activity, sailing engenders all the physical and psychological components important to the rehabilitative process (McCurdy, 1991; Burke, 2010). The benefits of this therapeutic and recreational rehabilitative activity can offer the experience of adventure, mobility, and freedom. Improvement in motor skills and coordination, self-confidence, and pride through accomplishment are but a few of the goals that can be achieved (Hough & Paisley, 2008; Groff, Lundberg, & Zabriskie, 2009; Burke, 2010). Instead of acting as the passive beneficiaries of sailing activities, people with disabilities can be direct participants where social interaction and teamwork are promoted in the environment of a sailboat's cockpit. The integration of these fundamentals reinforces the goals of rehabilitation: independence, communication, identity formation, comprehension, concentration, focus, and problem solving in a demanding environment (Groff & Kleiber, 2001). Sailing promotes the integration of individuals with disabilities into society and teaches able-bodied people to better understand disability (Burke, 2010). Sailing is one of the few sporting activities where physical abilities and disabilities, gender, or age does not necessarily divide or differentiate the competitors. In many classes of sailboats today, anyone can participate, compete, or crew on an even playing field (Vardy, 1996).

As an adaptive activity, sailing is a unique sport, less well known and with fewer participants than other therapeutic activities. It requires the safe handling of large-scale equipment. It takes place on water where the platform is not stable, and control of the environment is less predictable. Sailing requires consummate teamwork and individual strength. A close relationship is developed among the crew with allegiance to the "skipper" who mentors the crew and is responsible for their safety and the safety of the vessel. Success and failure can be experienced on a moment-to-moment basis as movement due to the wind and water are defined by the tacks, jibes, and adjustments in sail trim and rudder position. All aboard must be aware of their surroundings and cognizant of the direction of the wind and direction of the sailboat through the "points of sail." Focus must be maintained at all times, and each sailor must listen carefully for the next command. Safely reaching one's destination is cause for celebration, and all crew members, able bodied and those with disabilities alike, can share in the success of the voyage. When the wind freshens and boat speed increases, the sensations and activities intensify enhancing the sailing and therapeutic experience.

Universal access or adaptive sailing programs have been established in many parts of the country and are operating in many parts of the world. Table 1 lists a number of such programs. (McCurdy,1991;Vardy, 1996.

Table 1

Examples of Programs for Adaptive Sailing (Harrison & Vardy, 1996)

- Sail to Prevail, Newport, RI
- Shake-a Leg, Miami, FL
- Bay Area Association of Disabled Sailors, San Francisco, CA
- Sail Habilitation, Toms River, NJ
- Disabled Sailing Association of S. California, Long Beach, CA
- Robie Pierce One Design Regatta, Larchmont Yacht Club, Larchmont, NY
- Adaptive Adventures "Broad Reach" Adaptive Sailing Program, Chicago, IL
- Challenged America, San Diego, CA
- Courageous Sailing, Boston, MA
- Piers Park Sailing Center, Boston, MA
- Downtown Sailing Center, Baltimore, MD
- Judd Goldman Adaptive Sailing Program, Chicago, IL
- Chesapeake Region Adaptive Boating, Annapolis, MD
- Footloose Disabled Sailing Association, Seattle, WA
- Disabled Sailing Association of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC
- Heart of Sailing (national program- autism)
- Sailability, Australia (national program-disability)

There are also a number of organizations specializing in providing guidance and direction in developing and in operating adaptive sailing programs (Table 2) (Harrison & Vardy, 1996).

Table 2Organizations Devoted to Adaptive or UniversalAccess Sailing Programs

- International Foundation for Disabled Sailing (IFDS)
- Special Olympics International (SOI)
- International Sailing Federation (ISF)
- International Paralympic Committee (IPC)
- Blind Sailing International (BSI)
- U.S. Sailing

Therapeutic Goals

A number of physical, cognitive, and social goals can be achieved through sailing (McCurdy, 1991; Batcheller, 2004; Adaptive Adventures, 2005; Hough & Paisley, 2008). These have been organized in Table 3. Achievement of these goals is dependent upon the severity of the disability, commitment of the patient and caregivers, and the time allocated for the sailing experience. Goals may be achieved in dramatic or subtle ways. The bond between the sailor and sailing instructor is also crucial if full advantage of the therapeutic sailing experience is to be gained. Therapeutic benefits possible through an adaptive sailing program are also listed in Table 3.

Program Implementation

Instructor Training and Certification

Program Instructors in universal access are first and foremost professional sailing instructors, capable of handling any boat in the fleet in all conditions with a wide array of students as crew. Minimum prerequisite certifications for an instructor are first aid/ CPR and the US Sailing Level 1 certification, a professional instructor certification and the national standard for sailing instructors in youth and club programs. Prior to the opening of each sailing season, a thorough staff training seminar is conducted for the UAP instructors on all standard equipment, safety procedures, and disability-specific procedures/methods. Most instructors do not have a great deal of direct previous experience in universal access. However, we have found most to have some experience gained elsewhere with individuals with special needs through a previous volunteer or school experience or other program such as Special Olympics-sponsored programs. A goal for our program has been to recruit instructors who have been or are professional therapists, American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters, or have degrees or training in special education. During the 2012 season, our program recruited a certified recreational therapist who was a master's degree candidate in speech language pathology. The students (mostly children with autism spectrum disorder [ASD] who sailed with her demonstrated gains in self-confidence, communication, and sailing skill.

Table 3

	PHYSICAL	COGNITIVE	SOCIAL
	Improves independence	Develops character	Identity formation
	Improves balance	Improves communication skills	Improves social interactions (inclusion)
Developmental Disability	Promotes health	Improves sense of accomplishment	Connectiveness with others with a disability
	Promotes physical fitness	Joy of being outside	Improves family relationships
	Improves functionality	Decreases awareness of a disability	Improves quality of life
	Improves independence	Improves sense of accomplishment	Improves quality of life
	Improve functionality	Joy of being outside	Improves physical appearance
Physical Disability	Learning sports- related skills	Increases confidence/self- esteem	Increases participation and involvement with others
	Promotes physical fitness	Sensory integration	Improves family relationships
	Improves motor skills	Improves comprehension	Reintegration into the community

Therapeutic Benefits Achievable through Universal Access Sailing Programs

Dockside Instruction

Effective instruction in recreational education always involves some component of classroom time to reinforce intricate or theoretical concepts and procedures. However, since classroom space and total 'class time' (appointment time) are limited resources in



Sailors with visual impairments are developing the "feel" of the sailboat and its parts on the dock prior to setting sail.

the busy summer season, these concepts are primarily reinforced on the water. Instructors have used portable white-boards as well as models to accomplish these ends. Since sailing is also largely a kinesthetic or motor-skill sport, it is typically much easier to teach the concepts of tacking or gibing (turning the boat) while in the boat, rather than through definitions, diagrams and classroom learning. This approach works especially well with children with learning disabilities or cognitive disorders. These sailors may not be strong audio and/or visual learners, so the act of doing is much more effective than time spent in a 'traditional' learning environment. We discovered that classroom time was necessary in two areas: for the visually impaired and for the children who are deaf and hard-of-hearing. In these two groups, more time was needed to introduce and reinforce some of the specific technical or complicated concepts. For visually impaired students, instructors pair up with teachers and aides and use boat models with moveable parts as well as the dockside demonstration rigging boat used for all adult and youth rigging classes. The rigging boat is a full-size 15' sailboat mounted to the dock with all the standard hardware and components used on the water (see photo at left). This provides a great model to get students in the boat, manipulating the tiller or steering mechanism, sheets or lines, and other hardware such as blocks or cleats. When students cast off for on the water training, they were already aware of how the individual parts work and their location in order to sail. Those with hearing impairments required another approach. Utilizing small sailboat models and the full sized dock mounted rigging boats, UAP instructors paired up with ASL interpreters in the classroom to introduce the intricate concepts of steering and controlling the boat. Our instructors need to work with the students to develop specific signs for these concepts of tacking or gibing, "heading up" or "bearing off." Signs were created depicting the maneuver. For example, to head up a sailboat, the skipper pushes the tiller toward the sail to steer the bow (front) of the boat toward the wind. The sign developed was a clenched fist (holding a tiller) pushing away from the torso-exactly what the skipper would do. One particular challenging obstacle was how to get the students' attention when on the water. With a visually impaired student, his or her name can be called to convey an instruction or warning. This is not effective for a student with a hearing impairment. The classroom instructors and interpreters created a general sign for "look at me" (waving of arms), but that wouldn't work if the student were not facing the instructor. With the students' permission, the problem was solved by instructors armed with soft and light "Nerf" balls that would be tossed in the direction of the student to gain his or her attention.

On the Water Instruction

Nearly all instruction in the Universal Access Program takes place on the water. Instructors are encouraged to take instructional aids that may help such as portable whiteboards (paper and pen do not work well in water environments) or models. For safety and comfort, the Universal Access Program largely utilizes keelboats such as the 15' keel Mercury (below) or the 23' Sonar (at right). Because of their construction, keelboats provide a level of stability, security, and comfort. When stepping aboard for the first time, students can "feel" the stability, because sailboats with keels do not heel alarmingly or capsize. Moreover, there is no centerboard trunk in the middle of the boat, obstructing maneuverability in the cockpit. This open cockpit is critical when sailing with students with physical mobility issues. Some may require the installation of an adaptive seat or harness. The 23' Sonar, with its large, openseating cockpit is ideally constructed to accept a wide variety of



adaptive seats for a number of forms of disability (see photo next page). Keelboats can be sailed in almost all wind conditions without fear of capsizing. Some members with more ambitious goals and physical abilities will eventually use other types of sailboats; for example, the Mercury with a centerboard or a class of highperformance, lightweight racing boat, such as the 420. These are significantly smaller and lighter boats and provide students an enhanced sailing experience that includes the possibility of "swamping" (taking on water) or even capsizing. The "fear factor" of capsizing a small boat is motivational and provides our students with the adrenaline rush and added excitement that further challenges their ability. Program staff will not take students on the water in one of these craft until all safety procedures have been reviewed



The 23-foot Sonar provides a large cockpit for the crew and is ideally suited for universal access. The boat is self-bailing, has a large sail area and an inboard tiller. The Sonar features a high boom, angled backbench seats, and high coamings.

and the sailor is fully aware of every eventuality. It is important to note that capsizing is not always an emergency situation, but rather a necessary part of challenging one's skills. One factor that helps make a capsize "safe" at our facility is the nature of our unique location—the Charles River Basin is nearly a rectangle, locked between two bridges a mile apart and two shores. UAP Program staff can see all craft on the water at all times and are trained to respond to capsized sailboats—utilizing an extensive fleet of safety launches to pluck sailors from the water and other larger craft capable of towing a capsized sailboat to shore.



Sonar cockpit showing the dune buggy seat fixed to gunwale. The seat provides a sturdy support for sailors with diminished upper-body strength. Sailors who use wheelchairs would be further supported in the chair with seatbelt attachment points to hold them steady when the sailboat is heeling.

Safety

Our safety procedures require that personal floatation devices (PFDs) are to be worn by all sailors on the water at all times. For most participants in the Universal Access Program, PFDs are required to be worn on the dock as well. Moreover, instructors are required to wear them when interacting with students on the dock so as to encourage all members to do the same. In accordance with our standard operating procedures, once a member is first greeted at the facility for training, the first activity is to don a PFD before advancing to the dock. The transfer of a sailor with paraplegia into a sailboat from the wheelchair mandates a PFD being worn by every person involved in the transfer, including the sailor. We provide Type II and III Coast Guard-approved vest lifejackets in all sizes. Sailors in our program with high-spinal, neck, quadriplegic, or stroke/paralysis conditions, Type II style lifejackets are preferred.

Progression to Independence

The founding mission of the Universal Access Program is "sailing for all." This mission means more than showing our members how to sail or taking them for a boat ride. We have a commitment to ensure these sailors experience sailing to the fullest extent their abilities allow. Another hallmark of the accessible sailing program is how the goals and capabilities needed for the sailing experience are tailored for each sailor. Each encounter often starts simply with a conversation to determine the sailor's goals and expectations. Some members may propose very defined and ambitious goals, such as the ability to sail independently. Such was the case of one sailor who achieved her goal despite crippling arthritis and severe visual impairment. As is more often the case, our members are sailing for the first time or are returning to a recreational activity after a period of inactivity following a disability. The simple act of placing the tiller in the hand of a disabled sailor and providing the full realization that they are in control of the vessel can be an empowering moment for all aboard.

The program staff and instructors are constantly evaluating safety and assessing risk on the water. The staff is cognizant that for any new activity, fear, anxiety, or stress may accompany each new experience. The staff attempts to convert these feelings into excitement and accomplishment. Sometimes, the greatest barrier to overcome is the few inches between the wheelchair seat and the sailboat. The instructors are trained to constantly evaluate each member's comfort zone and be attentive to the sailor's reaction to the experience. Those sailors who have made it their goal to become truly independent are gradually advanced under watchful eyes. Instructors never give up full control of the boat until they are certain the sailor is ready. When the student is at the helm or skipper's position, steering the boat, the instructor typically maintains control of the sheets and sails. If the crew is trimming the sails, the instructor is at the helm. Students who have progressed to a point that their skills afford them complete control of the sailboat still demand the instructor's continued vigilance. Members who overcome the many challenges to raise their level of ability can begin to earn sailing "ratings," earning the right to sail independently. Some accommodations can be made, however, to earn a rating all sailors must demonstrate the skills needed to tack, gibe, control direction, and bring the boat back for a safe landing. The goal of one visually impaired sailor was to sail a 15' centerboard boat on a windy day, sufficient to pass the test for a "Helmsman" rating. This on-the-water test is typically conducted with wind speed between 10-12 knots. In the case of this visually impaired sailor, the program staff allowed him to take aboard a sighted crew member as a navigator for this typically solo test. The skipper demonstrated all the necessary skills as an able-bodied sailor and was granted the rating.

A partnership with the Carroll Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired provided two groups of eight teenagers the opportunity to sail. Before casting off, these groups participated in "shore school" learning about the parts of the boats, knots, and general lessons regarding sail trim, wind awareness and steering. After shore school the groups set sail aboard two Sonars, skippered by UAP staff. Skills were developed in steering and sail trim. Once sailors became comfortable in a vessel under sail, the groups were introduced to the competition and fun of sailboat racing. The boats, under the full control of UAP sailors and their skipper-coach, engaged each other in a race back to the dock.

Role of the Family

A key component of the UAP is the role of the sailors' family. Sailing is an activity for the whole family and not just an instructional opportunity for the special needs child (Scholl, McAvoy, Rynders, & Smith, 2003). Especially for children with severe developmental or communication disorders, the family is able to provide the UAP instructor insights into the child's behaviors, special needs, learning style, or even tips for effective communication. UAP instructors encourage as much parent and family involvement and input in the program as invaluable assets to our own professional development and program strengths.

In addition to serving that individual with the recreational and physical benefits of activity and adventure, the family that participates in the activity can bear witness and share in the successes gained by the child. A nonverbal child with autism interacting with siblings or parents in the boat is apt to react to the ever-changing environment as the sailboat glides through the water. There are cognitive advantages as well as emotional benefits to be gained by all those in the cockpit. A dozen families with children with autism sailed last summer as part of their regular routines, some sailing on a weekly basis. One sailor with autism earned his Helmsman rating and the right to skipper a Mercury class sloop with his parents as crew. Another nonverbal 12-year-old boy was able to gesture or sound out a dozen parts of the boat after a season of sailing.

Dock and Facility

In 2005, we began the process of identifying boats, facility needs, and equipment required for successful operation of an accessible sailing program. The boathouse and dock facility were already handicap accessible, and while not 100% ADA compliant (in 2005), provided a generally safe and easy to use environment for individuals with physical disabilities. (Rimmer, Riley, Wong, Rauworth, & Jurkowski, 2004; Bauman, 2004; Temple, 2007) (see

below). However, while CBI's facility is large by almost any standard, adding an accessible sailing program presented challenges. CBI's three programs routinely compete with each other for resources such as boats, equipment, and dock space during peak usage times.

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation and CBI began design work for the complete replacement of CBI's over 50-year-old wooden dock structure. Central to the new design was full ADA compliance, no barriers for persons with disabilities, and dedicated slips for the UAP fleet with Hoyer lift mounts strategically located to transfer sailors from wheel chairs into sailboats. Providing a dedicated slip and dock space meant that the UAP would be able to operate without having to compete with CBI's other programs (see image on page 15).

Selecting the Sailboat for Universal Access

CBI conducted a survey of sailing programs serving sailors with disabilities to identify suitable boats for CBI's accessible fleet.(McCurdy, 1991; Harrison & Vardy, 1996; Vardy, 1996; Adaptive Adventures, 2005) The boats evaluated included Sonar, Access Dinghy, Martin 16, International 2.4mR, Freedom 20, Ideal 18, and Cape Cod Mercury (keel). Additionally, some programs used other boats that were either custom built (homemade) or were highly modified versions. To assist in identifying suitable boats for accessible sailing, we developed a list of criteria based on our previous sailing program management and fleet maintenance experience, along with feedback from other programs. These criteria are shown in Table 4.

Using these criteria, we chose the Cape Cod Keel Mercury based on recommendations from other programs and our own understanding of the boat, and adaptations we knew were within our capabilities to execute without much additional cost. The Sonar was chosen because of its proven track record as an adaptive boat and CBI's prior experience with it.



Community Boating is located on the banks of the Charles River with Boston's skyline in the background. The photograph depicts the sailing facility prior to the dock renovation.



Architectural rendering of the dock renovation. The Universal Access Sailing area is depicted to the right of the facility. Note: Arrow indicates location of UAP docks and location of Hoyer Lift for transfer ability.

Table 4

Criteria to consider when selecting a sailboat for Universal Access

- Ease of transfer between wheel chair and cockpit
- Dry and comfortable due to high freeboard and forward helmseat with spray deck
- Capsize resistance
- Unsinkable
- All-purpose design suitable for both teaching sailing and competitive racing
- Suitable design and size for both adults and children
- Ease of maintenance
- Cost of acquisition
- Cost of maintenance
- ^a Adaptability (Ease of modifying seating and sail/helm controls)

Adapting the Sailboat for Universal Access

The Cape Cod Keel Mercury

Keel. While the keel version of the Cape Cod Mercury is resistant to capsize we fabricated an extended steel keel with a lead bulb. The total weight of the keel remained unchanged, however, by extending it 12 inches and configuring it with a lead bulb at the end, the Mercury's righting moment and therefore resistance to capsize was increased beyond its original design specification. In order to insure that the attachment of the keel to the hull was structurally sound, we constructed a structural grid-work into the bilge of the hull. This reinforced the hull to prevent flexing and also provided a structure for installing the centerline seating.

Rig. We raised the gooseneck on the mast to increase head-room under the boom. By installing "lazy jacks," we insured that the boom cannot accidentally fall on a sailor's head.

Seating. Seats designed for supporting individuals lacking trunk support were available through medical equipment suppliers but were very expensive (\$1,500 to \$3,500 each). The solution became "dune buggy": seats easily purchased from catalogues for less than \$150. They wrap around the torso, providing excellent trunk support, have seat belt attachment points, and are made of a very stiff and durable hard plastic. Seats were installed such that they slide forward and back on standard jib track. Sliding the seat toward the stern makes the transfer of the sailor from a wheelchair manageable. It allows for able-bodied assistance in the cockpit of the boat during transfer. Once the sailor is seated, the fore and aft position of the seat can be adjusted.

Steering. The tiller was shortened and attached to a rack and pinion steering system leading to a steering wheel on a dash board in front of the seat (see photo below). The dash board also slides fore and aft, allowing it to be positioned for each sailor according to their comfort, strength, and body mechanics. The steering wheel includes a knob that assists with steering when only one arm may have the strength to turn the wheel. There is enough space behind the center-mounted seat for an instructor to sit in a more or less traditional orientation ("on the rail"). The instructor has the capability to take over steering at the tiller if circumstances require it.



Cockpit of adaptive Mercury was designed and constructed by CBI staff and volunteers. Boat design allows UAP sailors maximum control for independent sailing.

Roller furling jib/jib boom. We installed a custom fabricated jib boom with a traveler to allow the jib to be self-tending. The jib is also roller furling allowing the sailor with disabilities to furl or unfurl the sail as he/she wishes.

Sail control lines. All sail control lines lead through pad eyes to cam cleats on the dash board. These lines include jib roller furling line, jib sheet, jib traveler, mainsheet, and main halyard. The mainsheet, instead of dead ending at a fitting on the boom or deck, leads from the cam cleat on the dash board to the boom and then to a cam cleat at the stern which is available to the staff member positioned behind the seat.

The Sonar

In the first five years of CBI's Universal Access Program, we used Sonars in our fleet, which also served our adult and youth sailing programs. This meant that any modifications made to them had to be easily installed for use in the UAP and equally easily removed on a daily basis for use in our other programs. Therefore, modifications were kept simple: seating in the cockpit, roller furling jib, topping lift and reef points for the mainsail. Utilizing the same dune buggy seats utaablsed in the Mercury adaptations, we fixed the seats to permanent stainless steel brackets that could then be easily bolted onto the cockpit bench seats and removed as needed. This allows us to install up to two seats in the Sonar cockpit. To facilitate the transfer of sailors between the dock and the Sonar, we installed a topping lift to hold the boom above head height. Additionally, we made the attachment for the boomvang to the boom a snapo shackle. This allows us to quickly detach/reattach the boomvang. When transferring a sailor into or out of the cockpit, UAP staff raise the boom very high, and using a lanyard, secure the boom to a shroud. This keeps the cockpit fully clear of the mainsail and boom with no headroom restriction. For general convenience we installed Roller furling jibs replacing our traditional hanked-on jibs.

In 2012, CBI acquired two additional Sonars. With the addition of these boats to our fleet, we plan to dedicate two Sonars to the UAP and can now start the process of developing more permanent modifications to them. We anticipate developing seating and helm modifications for the helmsperson who sits aft of the traveller bar.

Growth of the Program (2007-2012)

During the first season (2007) of the program, sailing experiences were offered to 315 sailors. However, the second year of the Universal Access Program saw a significant increase in programming as well as in participation. Programming expanded from 21 days in year one to 61 days (106 programming hours increased to 218 hours), operating seven days a week for 11 weeks. This allowed participants more flexibility and access to programming. The number of participants during the 2008 season increased from 315 in 2007 to 417.

The new dock facility completed in 2010 provides an opportunity to expand program hours, allowing CBI to hire a staff dedicated entirely to the Universal Access Program. The UAP staff consists of two full-time dock masters and four dedicated instructors. Since 2011, sailors have been afforded the opportunity to have a dedicated instructor available to track their progress from the first sail to the last. The greatly expanded program schedule had a significant impact on program usage. There were over 100 more members in 2012, and the number of total sailing appointments expanded from 1421 in 2011 to 1729 in 2012. Not only were there more individual members, but many sailors were returning to sail more often furthering their skills and accelerating rehabilitation. Over 25% of members this year had multiple sailing appointments per week. In a continuing trend with previous years, some members logged 50, 60 or even 70 appointments over the course of a single season.

Our Sailors

Our sailors represent a wide range of conditions and disabilities. Children with the various forms of autism make up the largest group of participants in UAP. However, since our founding, UAP has provided services for a widening variety of conditions and disabilities, shown in Table 5.

Collaborations

Community Boating's UAP program have also formed strong partnerships with a number of organizations that provide services to the disabled community. These partnerships include Special Olympics of Massachusetts (SOMA), wounded veterans program such as "Home Base," a collaboration between the Boston Red Sox Baseball Foundation and the Massachusetts General Hospital, The Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, Carroll Center for the Blind, the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind and Boston's Children's Hospital.

Table 5

UAP Sailors Represent a Wide Range of Cognitive and Physical Disabilities

Cognitive Disabilities

Asperger's Syndrome Global Development Delay (GDD) Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Down Syndrome Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Physical Disabilities

blindness and visual impairment multiple sclerosis heart condition/ high blood pressure stroke recovery paraplegia leg amputation femur fracture recovery neuromuscular disability deafness muscular dystrophy hemi paresis spinal cord injury quadriplegia torn rotator cuff injury left-side immobility Myoclonus-Dystonia Syndrome



The growth of the Universal Access Program at CBI from its modest beginnings in 2007 can be seen in this graph. UAP sailors have exceeded 500 hours during the 2012 sailing season with sailing appointments exceeding 1700. Two Sonars have been added to the UAP fleet for additional capacity and program flexibility.

Recognition of Excellence

In 2008, CBI was awarded the US Sailing Community Sailing Council's "Award for Outstanding Program for Disabled Sailors." The award for Outstanding Program for Disabled Sailors is given annually to a program that has made notable contributions to promote public access sailing for people with disabilities. Since then the program has received two additional awards: the 2010 US Sailing Community Sailing Council Award for Outreach and Inclusion and the 2011 US Sailing Award for Outstanding Director of a Seasonal Program.

Community Boating looks toward the future with one overriding goal: that the Universal Access Program insures complete integration and inclusion of all sailors with a disability or special need into the fabric and culture of Community Boating.

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Gary C. du Moulin, Ph.D., M.P.H. is Senior Director of Quality Aseptic Control for Genzyme (A Sanofi Company) where he participates in the development and execution of robust quality systems for Genzyme's products. **Marcin Kunicki**, MA, joined Community Boating in 2002 as a member of the Adult Program dock staff while pursuing his Master's degree in Literature at Boston College. **Charles Zechel**, BA, has served Community Boating Inc. (CBI) as executive director since 2002.