



# ANNUAL REPORT 2019

**HUDSON RIVER  
COMMUNITY SAILING**





# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As I reflect on 8 years at the helm of HRCS, I feel certain the organization has never been stronger. The STEM to Stern campaign is enabling us to build the infrastructure and fleet we need to match our ambition. We are creating the platform and tools to deepen our impact, widen our reach, and sustain our course. In 2019 alone HRCS increased program participation by more than 30%.

HRCS has built a talented and diverse staff, a culture of service, and a strong balance sheet. We have garnered the support of a broad group of members, donors, and volunteers. Our programs are making a difference. Each year students return from college and speak about the preparation they received through Sail Academy. At the time they were unaware of its impact; they were just having fun and feeling useful and cared about. Our veterans have told us that their time sailing together is often the highlight of their week; they relax and feel connected. Similar appreciations come in from programs across the organization.

HRCS has the grit to weather storms: 8 years ago it was Sandy, this year it was the management change at Dyckman Marina. In both, HRCS has come out stronger and better prepared to accomplish the work ahead.

It is my job to be cautious. Yet I have never felt more optimistic about the opportunities ahead. HRCS is spending more time looking outward, exemplified in the wide array of events highlighted in the report. Social-emotional learning is a hot topic in the education world, and HRCS is at the table for that conversation. In 2020 we will grow our adaptive sailing program, working with groups with a wide variety of special needs. Along with providing an important service, this work will build greater empathy and understanding. The new fleet, the moorings, and Dyckman Marina are making this possible.

Thank you for reviewing this report, supporting HRCS, and being part of this voyage. Our donors, members, and volunteers make all of this possible. We look forward to the next leg together.

Sincerely,



Robert Burke  
Executive Director





# 2019: A YEAR TO REMEMBER



Sail Academy students earn **New York State Safe Boating** certifications.

**5 New Moorings Installed** south of the Frying Pan ("SoPan") to accommodate growing fleet and programs.

**Soldiers Under Sail** program kicks off the season with on-land classes.

35 supporters, students, and staff travel to Rye for a weeklong clinic led by Advisory Board Member Kristen Berry aboard new J/80s and competed in **American Yacht Club Spring Series**.



## January

HRCS alumni return to the boathouse for **Alumni Homecoming** to reconnect with each other and share their college experiences with younger students.



## February

Sail Academy students in Chelsea and Inwood **Build Wooden Boats** over the winter semester.

## March



## April



## May

Sail Academy students **Return to the River** to bless and launch wooden boats. Members dedicate J/80 **Member-Ship** that they fundraised \$50K to purchase.

## June

Students, families, and Councilmember Ydannis Rodriguez celebrate the launch of their Opti at our **First Inwood Return to the River**.

Students, staff, and board members watch the **SailGP** boats race from aboard the accessible catamaran Impossible Dream.





**City Sail** introduces 160 children from around the city to STEM and sailing through weeklong sessions. Sail Academy interns support as **Junior Educators**, peer teaching while learning essential job skills.

July

Members sail to greet climate activist **Greta Thunberg** aboard HRCS fleet branded with UN Sustainable Development Goals on the sails. Students and members join **Climate March** a few days later.

August



September

**New York Architects Regatta Challenge** brings 30 teams for a day of racing, fundraising, and camaraderie. NYARC's support sponsors a new J/80, **Fallingwater**, a nod to Frank Lloyd Wright.



Members transit J/24 fleet to City Island and J/80 fleet to Gateway Marina in Flatbush, their new winter home.

November

**STEM to Stern Campaign** hits \$1.25M mark with leadership gifts from ConEdison and the City of New York.

December



October

Over 750 supporters raise a record-breaking \$290K through **Sailing for Scholars Gala & Regatta**. Jay Cross of Related Hudson Yards gives an inspiring speech at the New York Yacht Club's Model Room, 18 teams compete in two fleets. **Polar Water** brands J/24 fleet.



# SAIL ACADEMY

developing leadership and academic  
success in underserved NYC students  
through sailing education

## PROGRAM OUTCOMES

**College + Career Prep:** prepare students for success in college/career

**Social Emotional Learning + Leadership:** build leadership skills including self-confidence, communication, and teamwork

**STEM Identity:** foster a greater interest in STEM subjects and environmental stewardship

**Sailing Skills:** develop student confidence and competence operating sailboats

## PARTNER SCHOOLS

Atmosphere Academy

Manhattan Business Academy

The James Baldwin School for Expeditionary Learning

Quest to Learn

The NYC Museum School

The NYC Lab School

Harvest Collegiate

Hudson High School

Salome Urena Educational Campus

## 2019 by the Numbers

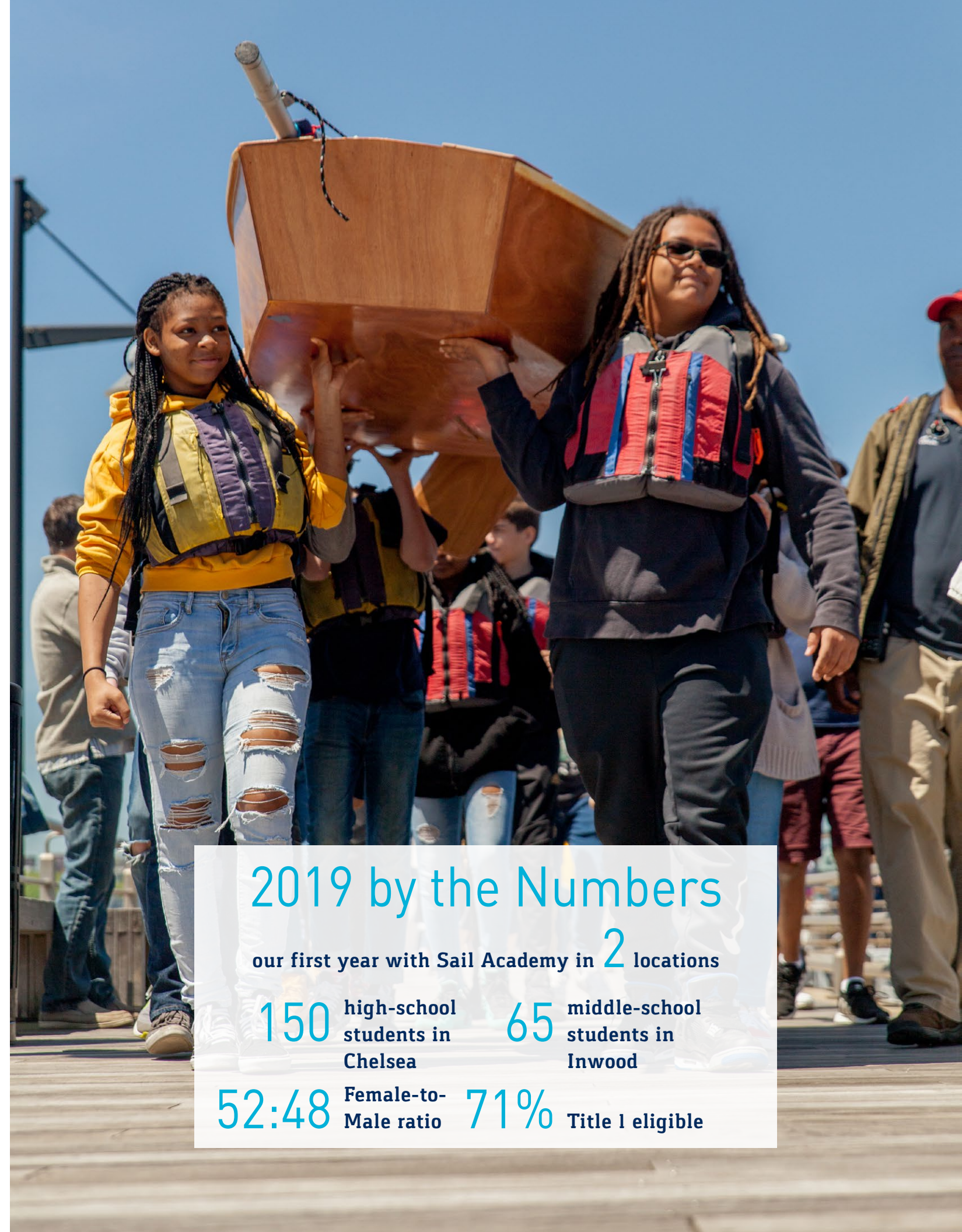
our first year with Sail Academy in **2** locations

**150** high-school students in Chelsea

**65** middle-school students in Inwood

**52:48** Female-to-Male ratio

**71%** Title I eligible





## STUDENT TRIPS

**Sailing Trips:** Liberty State Park, Fort Lee, Greenbrook Sanctuary, the Center for the Urban River at Beczak (CURB), Irvington, and Long Island Sound

**Land Trips:** Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, SIMS Recycling Center, and the Lamont-Doherty Center for Earth Science

**Regattas:** American Yacht Club, Shelter Island Yacht Club, Mantoloking Yacht Club, and Mamaroneck Frostbite Association

## WINTER PROJECTS

**Sailing by Numbers** students received their New York State Safe Boating certifications and built 10' wooden Optis.

**Ocean Literacy** students partnered with the Hudson River Park Trust in a study of fish DNA in the river and built a fish tank to learn about wildlife.

**First Mates** restored a historic wooden Duckboat and competed on it in Duckboat Worlds in Barnegat Bay.

## INTERNSHIPS

**Students** gained essential workforce skills by interning **over 850 shifts**. They learned customer service, boat and engine repair, and how to teach in our summer camp.





# Sail Academy Class of 2019

**14** graduating seniors

**100%** graduated from high school in 4 years

**86%** enrolled in 4-year colleges

**50%** plan to major in a STEM field

## POSTSECONDARY PLANS

Allegheny College  
City College  
College of Mount Saint Vincent  
Franklin & Marshall College  
Hunter College  
Stony Brook University (2)  
SUNY Albany  
SUNY Maritime College (2)  
Syracuse University  
University of South Carolina  
US Navy





# COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

providing affordable maritime education and recreation to the community at large

## PROGRAM AREAS

**Membership:** includes instruction, social sails, workshops, and optional weekly racing within an inclusive community  
**Sailing School:** award-winning school provides lessons and group events for the public

**City Sail:** summer camp for youth ages 9-16 to build sailing skills and learn STEM and teamwork in weeklong sessions

**Youth Racing:** the first program of its kind in NYC, bringing together a diverse cross-section of public and private schools to practice and compete

**Soldiers Under Sail:** a yearlong adaptive sailing program delivered in partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs

**Community Regattas:** partnerships and events with local groups and nonprofits





## MEMBERSHIP

293 members sailed 5,000+ days. Members volunteered 1,000+ hours with Sail Academy, serving as mentors on and off the water.

## SOLDIERS UNDER SAIL

Veterans participation nearly doubled to 334 participant days. Heroes on the Hudson was held for the first time in Inwood, serving 60+ disabled veterans.

## CITY SAIL

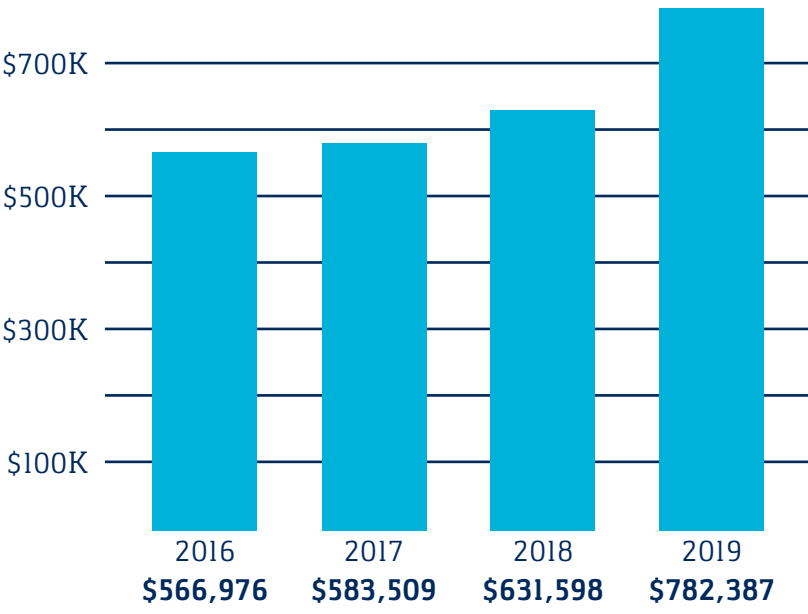
166 youth learned sailing and STEM through summer camp sessions. 18 Sail Academy students interned as Junior Educators, peer teaching alongside instructors.

## INWOOD COMMUNITY DAYS

165 neighborhood residents went out on free sails with volunteer members and Sail Academy students.

## Program Service Revenue

Community Programs are a key component of our sustainable funding model, covering significant infrastructure and administrative costs.



## Making Sailing Inclusive to All

- Piloted our first all-Women’s Basic Keelboat Class
- Partnered with “Shades of Black Making Waves,” to introduce more people of color to the sport
- Created a steering committee for future adaptive programming





# HRCS COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

## Dario Arias: Sail Academy Alumnus

When Dario Arias immigrated to the United States from the Dominican Republic at the age of 11, he did not speak English and even his Spanish skills were limited from his rural school. Throughout middle school, he attended a bilingual program and had to learn both languages at once, reflecting that "at some point, you feel like you don't belong anywhere." At night, he listened to the radio after his mother fell asleep, absorbing the English of the upbeat hosts.

Dario started high school at Quest to Learn, one of HRCS's partner high schools in Chelsea. When an HRCS staff member came to recruit students for Sail Academy, he was skeptical. "It sounded too good to be true," he said. But he signed up, and he kept coming back. "The first time I saw the dinghy taking people out to the boats, I saw a student driving it. And I thought, 'that could be me.'"

He learned to sail, built a wooden Opti, and launched it with his peers. But his favorite part was driving launch. He came in on his days off to practice, determined to excel at this foreign skill. In his second summer, Dario interned in HRCS's City Sail summer camp, assistant teaching younger students. He commuted from the Bronx, almost two hours each way. Working 8-4 for a month, he learned the importance of teamwork and self-care. "I could no longer rely on the larger group," he reflected, "there was no chance for me to be late"

Dario progressed through Junior and Senior year at HRCS, building a wooden Windmill, planning an overnight trip with his peers, and working part-time in the Community Sailing school. With support from HRCS Academic Director, he enrolled at Hunter College, where he is studying Computer Science.

When HRCS launched Sail Academy Inwood, working with middle school students in a new year-round afterschool program, Dario was one of the first staff members to work in the program. Many of the students were Dominican, and spoke limited English. He translated lessons, on and off the water and reflected on how much he had grown. "Because I went through what I went through," he said, "I was better able to help them achieve what they wanted."

In 2019, Dario undertook the challenging skipper certification, drilling his man overboard maneuvers and mooring pickups. He took the US Sailing Basic Keelboat Instructor Certification and passed. Over the summer, he taught adults to sail, reflecting that "learning how to teach is learning what different people need, and how to adjust your lessons to meet that."

Dario is taking classes for coding, and wants to start his own business one day. In the meantime he plans to keep working at HRCS, which he says changed his philosophy on working with other people, teaching him to collaborate and rely on others to hold up their end.



# HRCS COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

## Tom Mueller: Member and Volunteer

When Tom Mueller moved from Long Island to NYC in 2014, he joined HRCS's membership program to get out on the water. He went sailing with other members, attended workshops, and became interested in Sail Academy. "It was the perfect fit because I had been a stay-at-home dad and had done a lot of projects with my kids."

Tom began volunteering one day a week over the winter, helping first year students learn math and build basic wooden boats. He was not prepared for the energy of 25 students measuring and sawing plywood in their school hallway. "The first time I came to volunteer, it was quite a shock." But Tom was not deterred: "I took it on as a challenge." That first winter, Tom and HRCS staff led students through the 13-week process of building an 8-foot wooden optimist. It was a steep learning curve, but Tom connected with the students and they learned together.

They finished "Little Sebastian" and "the Ugly Barnacle" and launched them at Return to the River in May. Tom passed his skipper test and started teaching students sailing and leadership out on the water. In the fall, he returned to boatbuilding, this time volunteering three days a week. "Every year, we all got better," he says.

As HRCS grew, so did Tom's involvement. He guided students through five years of building optis, sailing, and growing up. "I get a lot of pleasure out of seeing the kids I've worked with and how they've grown over the past few years," says Tom. "To be able to pin that growth on the things we do at HRCS is particularly gratifying. That's why I come back."

One of those students is Dario Arias. Dario was a freshman in high school during Tom's first year, and Tom taught him to build his first wooden boat. Now they instruct alongside one another. When HRCS launched Sail Academy Inwood in 2018, both Dario and Tom were part of the pilot program. "The connection between kids and members has evolved a lot," Tom reflects.

Tom's involvement does not end with Sail Academy. His team, the "Mizzenformed Musketeers," has competed in HRCS's annual fundraising regatta since 2015, raising \$70,000 thus far to support Sail Academy. Tom is a very active part of the adult membership program, and has encouraged many of his fellow members to get involved volunteering. He believes Sail Academy helps foster a collaborative culture in the membership.

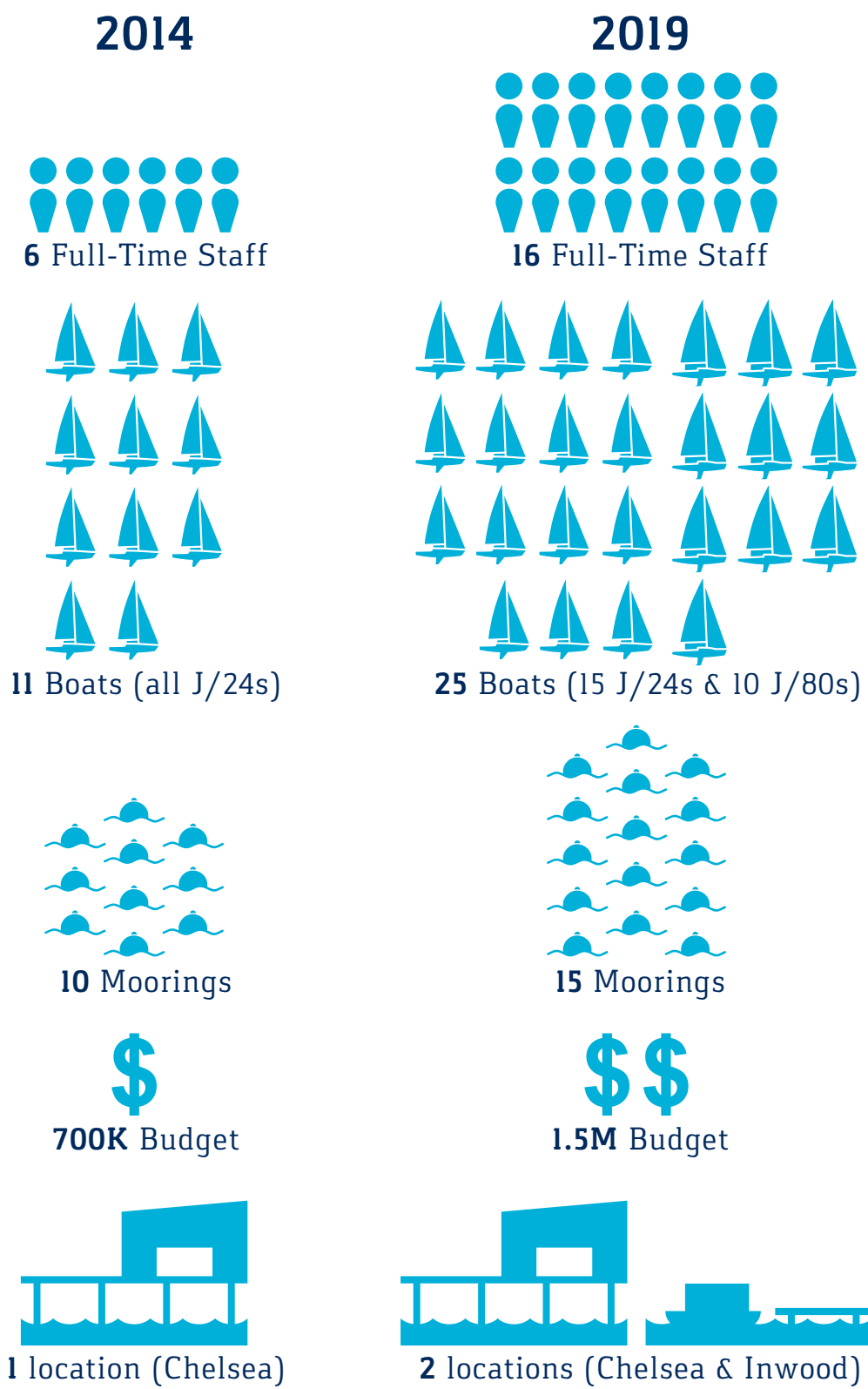
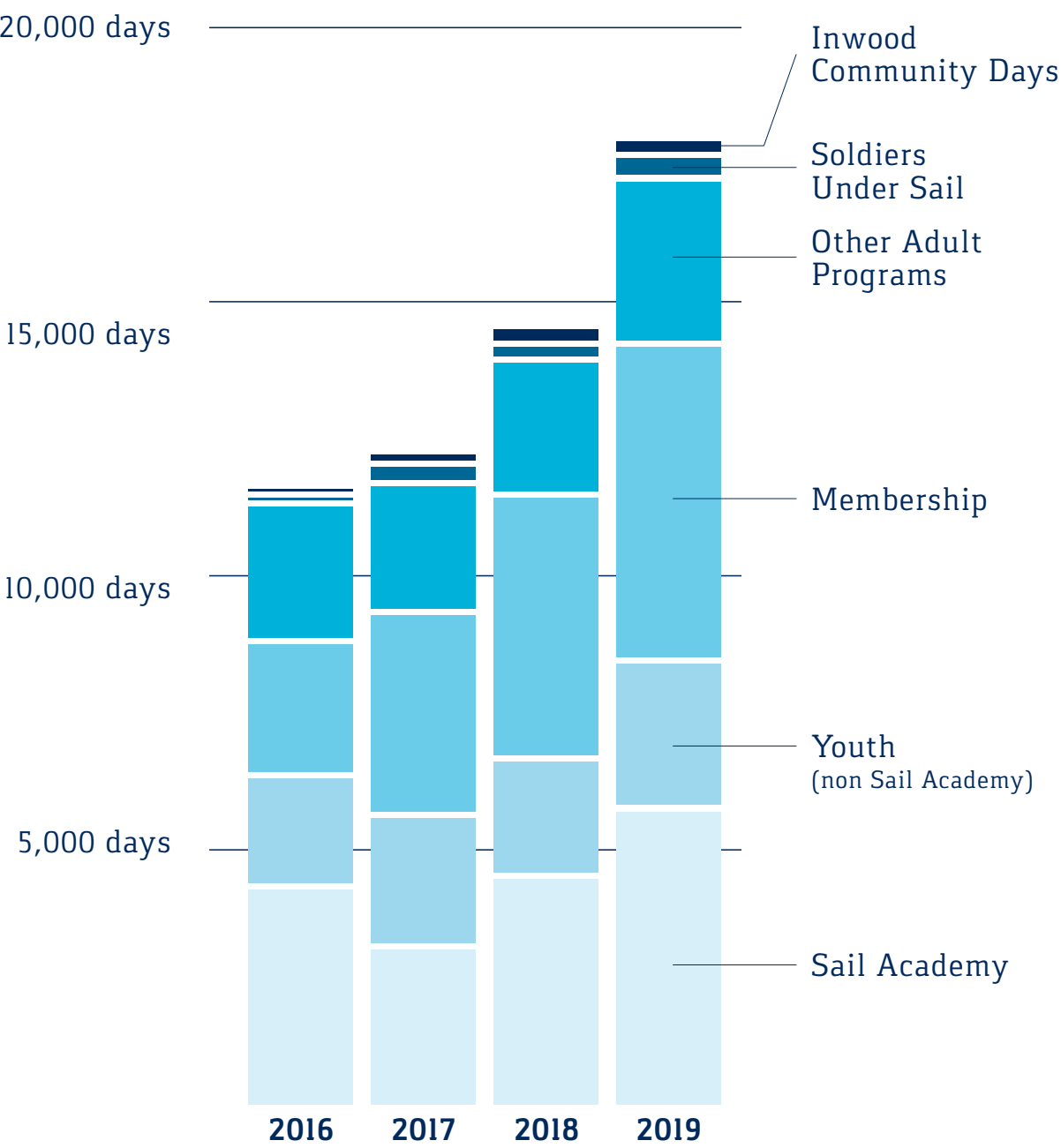
Tom now leads the boatbuilding portion of the first year program, working with over 75 students and a dozen volunteers, many of whom he helped train. He is excited to pilot an underwater ROV project in Inwood, and to continue "planting seeds" as the organization grows.





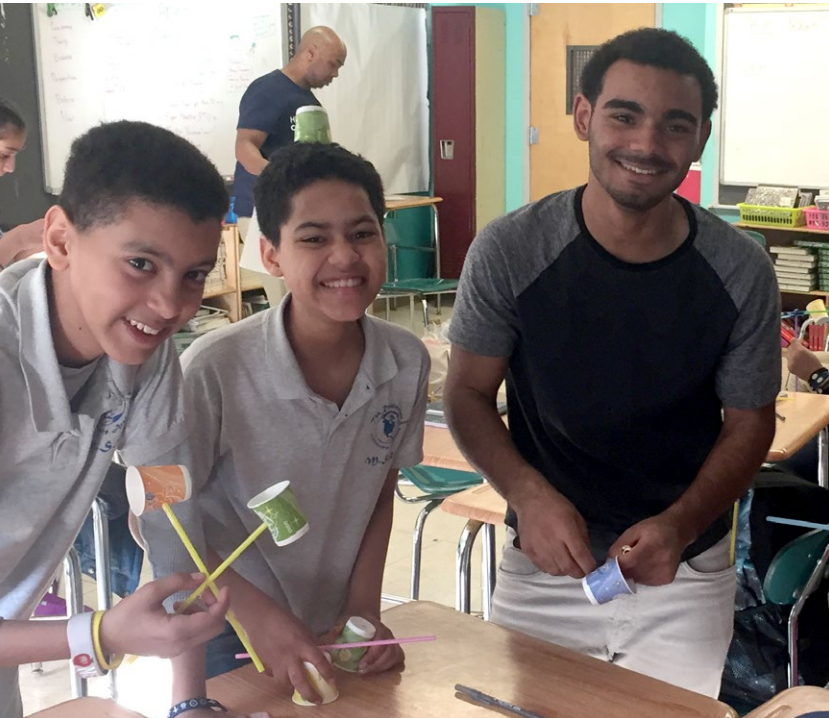
# 5 YEAR SNAPSHOT

## Participation by Program





# STEM TO STERN CAPITAL CAMPAIGN



**Inwood Sail Academy:**  
Successfully launched a new program for middle school students in new, high-needs neighborhood in 2018. Will reach a steady state of 80 students across three years by 2020.



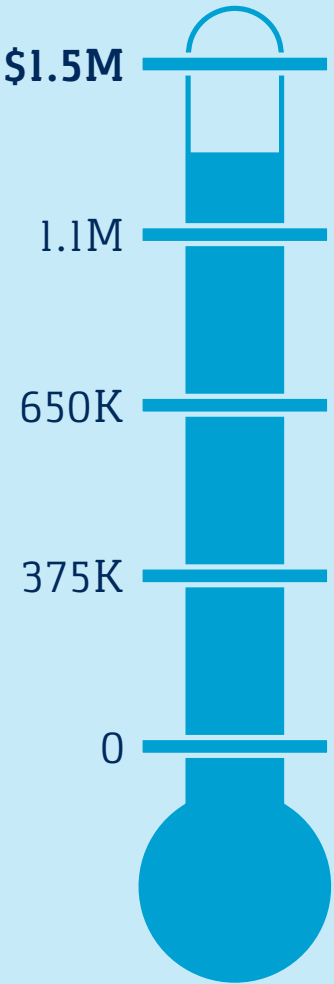
**Floating Classroom:**  
Leadership grants from ConEdison and New York City Council ensure HRCS will have a three-season on-water space in Inwood.



**J/80s:**  
10 new boats have transformed sailing instruction for students, veterans, and members, and are incorporated across all programs.



**Adaptive Sailing:**  
Quemuel Arroyo, HRCS Board Member and Accessibility Specialist for the NYC DOT, helped us adapt a new J/80 and sailed it at Sailing for Scholars. Former Olympian and Paralympic Coach Betsy Alison coached his team.



Only **\$250K** more to reach our goal!

See "Supporters" page for a list of STEM to Stern Donors.





# FINANCES

## REVENUE

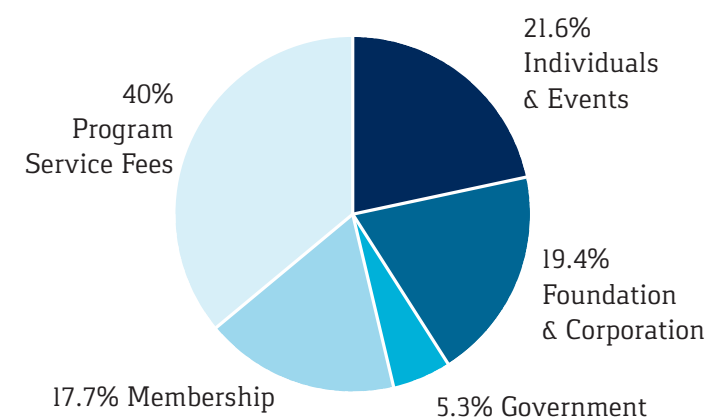
	FY 2019	FY 2018
■ Individuals & Events	\$ 320,019	\$ 248,871
■ Foundation & Corporation	\$ 287,750	\$ 377,386
■ Government	\$ 79,010	\$ 80,940
■ Membership	\$ 261,554	\$ 216,417
■ Program Service Fees	\$ 531,623	\$ 395,461
<b>Total Revenue &amp; Support</b>	<b>\$ 1,479,956</b>	<b>\$1,319,075</b>

## EXPENSES

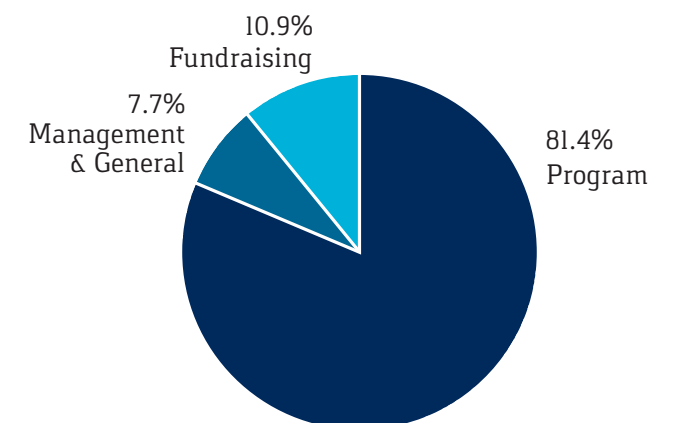
■ Program	\$ 1,118,696	\$1,055,046
■ Management & General	\$ 106,401	\$ 99,930
■ Fundraising	\$ 149,980	\$ 238,380
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 1,375,077</b>	<b>\$ 1,393,356</b>

*Note: Financials do not reflect STEM to Stern Campaign Revenue, Capital Purchases, or Depreciation, but do reflect Fundraising Expenses.*

## FY 2019 REVENUE



## FY 2019 EXPENSES





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Sandy Vietor  
Jessica De Vivo

# STAFF

Full-Time Staff

Alec Basilion  
Fleet and Operations Manager

Robert Burke  
Executive Director

Will Culver  
Inwood Manager

Maeve Gately  
Director of Development and Communications

Stephanie Gonzalez  
Bookkeeping Assistant

Russell Jacobs  
Program Coordinator

Emily Martinez  
Program Coordinator

Leo Martinez  
Program and Alumni Coordinator

Jonathan Mercado  
Veterans Program Coordinator

Julia Miller  
Development and Volunteer Coordinator

Conor Murphy  
Public Programs Manager

Sunaina Rao  
Academic Director

Donald Rotzien  
Director of Community Sailing

Mwenye Seville  
Youth Development Director

Andy Sold  
Membership Coordinator

Alexe Taylor  
Youth Sailing Director

Anthony Velez  
Boathouse and Operations Manager

**Instructional Staff**

Dario Arias  
Spencer Arluk  
Nick Badal  
Jay Baum  
Hannah Belsky  
Carrie Berenback  
Thomas Clark  
Chris Duda  
Paul Hermanson  
Christopher Lawrence  
Linus Levy  
Fursey McCormack  
Mary Kate Mezzetti  
Will Nodvik  
Danyte Resinger  
Andrew Sarfaty  
Barbara Stetson, Jr.

Report designed by:  
Sam Gebb, Design Consultant

# SUPPORTERS

HRCS thanks the generous donors and supporters who make our work possible.

Listed below is the Navigators’ Circle, donors who gave \$1,000 or more.

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\* indicates STEM to Stern







Hudson River Community Sailing develops leadership and academic success in underserved New York City youth through sailing education and provides maritime education and recreation to the community at large. HRCS is a 501(c)3 charitable organization.

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