

Los Angeles Maritime Institute TopSail Youth Program
Response to POLA NOP - City Dock No. 1 Marine Research Center Project (1/31/2011)

For the Los Angeles Maritime Institute (LAMI), the City Dock No.1 Marine Research Center (MRC) Project brings opportunities for partnerships at every phase, first in support of the research focus and then in building collaborative educational programs for the future.

Our comments support both facility and program development, adding shipboard experiences and expanding education *under sail*.

We offer the unique educational synergy of a sailing ship -- a 'tradition with a future' and a value-added key to the success of this dynamic endeavor for the Port of LA. Our ships are USCG Sailing School Vessels, *Irving Johnson* and *Exy Johnson*, honored to be the Official Tall Ships and Maritime Ambassadors of the City of Los Angeles; and *Swift of Ipswich*, now being restored and soon to be back in service.

Collaborations that utilize our ships will multiply positive outcomes for all concerned. LAMI's emphasis has been on meeting the needs of 'at-risk' youth, especially middle-school students – most saying they've never seen the ocean. Our programs change the lives of 'youth-of-all-ages'...student participants, volunteers and paid staff including college students, teachers, USCG licensed professionals, adventurers...all focused on *sailing the sea to educate for life*.

Here are some comments with questions relating to the NOP:

1.0 Overview and Background

The MRC plan offers mutual benefits and exponential potential with LAMI! We are grateful to be home-ported in the Port of LA, with strong relationships with the local community and area-wide, indeed international, recognition. Our program and our ships impact uncounted numbers of people through the schools and diverse groups who participate in TopSail; plus our volunteer 'family' of supporters; and the vast public who are fascinated by tall ships' adventure education and exploration. In fact, Tall Ships Challenge – Festival of Sail events have attracted more people to the waterfront than any other events!

LAMI is already part of the San Pedro Waterfront Plan, with the Downtown Harbor being designed around tall ships' needs and community visibility.

LAMI will add to and benefit from increasing community involvement and future educational opportunities with the Marine Research Center, especially through coordinating partnerships with COSEE-West, POLA HS, Cabrillo Marine Aquarium, ITEP – Banning HS, Wrigley Institute, SCMI, etc. POLA's leadership will be valuable in encouraging innovation and collaboration.

2.0 Project Description – Objectives, Location, Site, Elements

LAMI can both use and enhance the facilities planned in Phase 1 immediately - our ships offer researchers 'floating laboratories under sail,' and shipboard data-gathering, student internships, leadership and service opportunities directly related to marine research.

Later, when the project gets to Phase 2, our priority of education under sail will be a primary asset to the MRC goals.

Our questions for Phase 1 include:

Would we be able to share shore-side space already being planned for offices, meeting rooms, storage, boat maintenance and repair? Will there be space for indoor storage?

(With the Downtown Harbor plan, our current offices and storage will be demolished.)

What are the plans for the Outdoor Teaching/ Outreach classroom?

(Consider the opportunity for ships as dockside “classrooms.” Cabrillo Marine Aquarium is within walking distance of major water habitats: rocky shore, sandy beach, tide-pool and salt marsh...our ships can add experience on the ocean habitat.)

How about plans for a (research) library?

(LAMI has a collection of books with inadequate space to make them accessible for use.)

Will ‘Support Facilities’ include dockside Pump-Out facilities for vessel waste water?

(Existing pump-out facility is awkward – and costly - for our ships.)

What are the plans for docks and docking? Considering surge conditions in the outer harbor...

(Our ships are secure at floating docks further up the main channel, but could operate in and out of City Dock No.1, when in service of the MRC – depending on design plans for safe boarding of students.)

Could there be space for sail and rigging repair – and training in these skills?

(Since such space is mostly non-existent and inaccessible in So. Calif., this would be invaluable for our ships and attract other sailing school vessels in the Pacific.)

In Phase 2:

For the Waterfront Café, how about using students in Restaurant and Hospitality classes from Banning HS MATCH Academy and/or from El Camino and Harbor College?

At the same time as Phase 1 priorities for the MRC are moving forward, LAMI is continuing to strengthen our partnerships with educational programs like COSEE-West, SCMI, CMA, and POLA HS. We are committed to supporting marine education and research in innovative ways and broaden the vision for the future of City Dock No. 1 Marine Research Center.

I am speaking from my local dedication to the LA Maritime Institute TopSail Youth Program and also from decades-long experience with marine education on Tall Ships nationally and internationally.

I suggest that we would all benefit from a coordinated collaboration of marine education organizations, including those with Tall Ships, to explore ways to partner with the MRC. In addition to LAMI with *Irving Johnson*, *Exy Johnson* and *Swift of Ipswich*, other Southern Californian Tall Ship education groups not mentioned in the proposal or the original Visioning Study might be interested. They include: Ocean Institute – *Spirit of Dana Point* and *Pilgrim*; CIMI - *Tole Mour*; and Sea Education Association - *Robert C. Seamans*.

Consider:

- **Sailing school vessels* for MRC expeditions would be fuel-efficient, for local excursions and distant voyages. (We have overnight accommodations for up to 30 + 8 crew on our LAMI ships.)**
- **Making LAMI ships and crew available as ‘Floating Laboratories Under Sail’ to complement MRC shore side programs –**
 - College, Graduate-level, Continuing Education, High School and Advanced Placement
 - Underway seamanship training and sea-time for ship and boat operators
 - Educational transits, day sails and overnights to research locations or island facilities
 - Marine-life observations, data-gathering, census-taking in harbor and offshore sites
 - ‘Green’ boat operation and maintenance
 - Organizational/corporate leadership, team-building and management development
- **Exchanging marine education curricula, linking national and state standards and USCG regulations, infusing Ocean Literacy Principles into diverse content areas and developing 21st Century skills**
- **Modeling, testing and interpreting ‘green’ technology and practices**
 - Exploring funding for equipping our ships with ‘green’ engines and equipment
 - Educating youth and the public on the imperative of ‘green’ practices and relevant research and technology
 - Supporting Port TechLA innovations
- **Offering opportunities for MRC students sailing with TopSail to gain experience and credit as educators in an experiential learning environment**
 - Becoming mentors for TopSail Ocean Ambassadors (our pilot project)
 - Gathering, analyzing and interpreting data, i.e. on HAB (Harmful Algae Blooms)
 - Giving community service
 - Exploring marine and maritime careers at sea and ashore.

Sailing ships are a unique reality-based setting for adventure education, a natural fit for marine science, research and POLA GREEN priorities...and, a proven way to build social competence, character, courage, confidence—gained at sea and carried into life ashore:

- better sailors, skilled and safe for sailing through life,
- better shipmates, responsive and responsible, valuing diversity on our ocean planet
- better stewards, competent and committed to making the world a better place

**Looking forward to being ‘shipmates’ as we sail through this project,
Sincerely,**

**Nancy H. Richardson
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***See the Note below that addresses concerns about USCG restrictions on the current research vessels of the Marine Research Center**

(as mentioned in the Visioning Study – p. 11):

LAMI brigantines are U.S. Coast Guard Inspected and Certified, operating under CFR Title 46 Shipping. Subchapter R - Sailing School Vessels. Part 169.107 definitions:

“*Sailing Instruction* means teaching, *research*, and practical experience in operating vessels propelled primarily by sail, and may include *any subject related to that operation and the sea*, including seamanship, navigation, oceanography, other nautical and marine sciences, and maritime history and literature. In conjunction with any of these subjects, ‘sailing instruction’ also includes instruction in mathematics and language arts skills to a sailing school student with a learning disability.”

“*Instructor* means any person who is aboard a sailing school vessel for the purpose of providing sailing instruction and is not an officer, operator, or member of the crew required to be aboard the vessel, and who has not paid any consideration, either directly or indirectly for his or her carriage on the vessel.”

“*Sailing School Student* means any person who is aboard a sailing school vessel for the purpose of receiving sailing instruction.”