

# NEWS

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### LOCAL YOUTHS TO SAIL TALL SHIP FROM ENGLAND TO NORWAY

#### *Memorable Life-Changing Experience Awaits Los Angeles Maritime Institute TopSail Ambassadors*



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**SAN PEDRO, Calif.** – Thirteen local youths will embark on a journey across the North Sea as “Official Maritime Ambassadors” of the City of Los Angeles to participate in the 2005 Sail Training International Tall Ships Race from Newcastle Gateshead, England to Fredrikstad, Norway, July 22 to August 7.

Nearly one hundred recommendations for the opportunity to sail in the European tall ship race as ambassadors poured in from TopSail Youth Program alumni, school mentors, program directors, and TopSail captains and mates at the Los Angeles Maritime Institute (LAMI).

“Many well-deserving students were recommended for this opportunity. There were so many great stories. As I read each one of these inspiring experiences, I couldn’t help but think that all of them should go,” stated Hal Barstow, LAMI TopSail Youth Sail Training Program.

Final selections were based on recommendations received and written statements describing how participation in the TopSail Program enhanced the lives of the students and motivated them to succeed in school.

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## **2-2-2**

### **European Tall Ship Experience**

Four of the candidates are from the harbor area: Juvinal Cortes, 17, Banning International Trade Academy, senior; Allen Farmer, 16, San Pedro High School, senior, (TopSail alumnus, Dodson Middle School); Phillip Farmer, 16, San Pedro High School, (TopSail alumnus, Dodson Middle School) and Alex Quinonez, 18, Banning International Trade Academy, senior.

In addition to the four harbor area students, nine other former TopSail participants were chosen to complete the cadre of maritime ambassadors: Jill Avilez, 18, Hollywood; Jenny Bennett, 18, Lawndale; Oscar Cuadra 17, Hollywood; Austin Glenn, 15, Anaheim; Danny Juarez, 21, Los Angeles; Sal Martinez, 21, Los Angeles; Raul Peraza, 19, El Monte; Omar Sanchez, 17, Los Angeles and Mayra Vega, 20, Monterey Park.

The crew will sail aboard the Norwegian sailing vessel *Sorlandet*, a 210-foot square-rigger based in Kristiansand, Norway. They will take part in all aspects of shipboard life, including standing four-hour watches, taking the helm, and, if they choose, going aloft to help set or furl *Sorlandet's* 12,550 square feet of sail as they race across the North Sea.

Furthermore, the group will be entrenched in maritime history as they travel from London to Portsmouth where they will visit Portsmouth's Historic Dockyard before traveling on to Newcastle Gateshead to participate in the Tall Ships Race and Festival. This is Newcastle Gateshead's third and most eagerly awaited tall ships race. It will mark the bicentennial of Admiral Lord Nelson's victory at Trafalgar, a national celebration packed with events to showcase Britain's maritime resources and heritage. Finally, the crew will finish their sail training experience and European tour in Oslo, Norway.

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### **3-3-3**

#### **European Tall Ship Experience**

LAMI's participation in this year's International Tall Ships race became a reality due to a \$38,000 grant from the U.K. based Tall Ships Youth Trust. This is the first such grant awarded solely to benefit an American youth sail training organization.

Funds are still being raised to meet travel cost and expenses for the youth crew. To date, the LAMI ambassadors are only \$6,000 shy of their fundraising goal. With less than a month to go before the race, every effort is being explored to obtain the necessary funding. For more information about the LAMI TopSail Youth Sail Training Program or to make a donation to the LAMI TopSail Ambassadors, please call (310) 833-6055.

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