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1,200 kids get ‘MUDDY FEET’ in Museum’s watershed education programs

The Museum’s education programs for the 2009-2010 school year have served 1,200 students with 31,037 instructional hours. This is up dramatically from last year’s total of serving about 350 students with 1,800 hours of instruction. The Museum offers six unique programs for students from pre-school to 8th grade, all of which serve to connect them with this area’s rich maritime heritage as well as the environmental issues challenging the Chesapeake Bay.

A total of 617 students from seven city schools -- Eastport Elementary School, Tyler Heights Elementary School, Georgetown East Elementary School, Annapolis Elementary School, Bates Middle School and Annapolis Middle School -- successfully completed more than 20,000 hours of instruction. Director of Education Charlotte Rich doubled the number of Annapolis city-based public schools served by the programs last school year. Students who participated in these programs had test scores that improved by an average of 64%.



4th graders from Tyler Heights Elementary greet the state’s official state reptile – the Maryland diamond back terrapin

The programs are valued at \$283,878, based upon the average cost of instructional hours at Anne Arundel County schools. These programs are provided free of charge to Annapolis-based public schools, thanks to funding from NOAA’s Bay Watershed Education and Training program, the Carol M. Jacobsohn Foundation, the Bank of America Foundation, the City of Annapolis, proceeds from the annual Boat Yard Beach Bash fund-raiser, donations from Museum members and corporate partners like Watermark Cruises, which provided the use of their tour boats virtually at cost.

“Students get to go out on the water aboard a Watermark tour boat – a first-time experience for many of the kids,” Charlotte reports. “They meet a working waterman who brings his boat right up to the dock, hold an living oyster in their hands, touch a terrapin, draw a picture of their experiences with an artist and write a song with a Chesapeake Bay folklorist,” just to give a sampling of the many activities the students participate in.

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All of the Annapolis Maritime Museum's education programs include topics related to Anne Arundel County Public School curricula: language arts, social studies, science and math concepts through the use of vocabulary, journals and hands-on activities.

In addition to the free programs for city-based public schools, the Museum also provided fee-based programs for Eagle Cove School (formerly Gibson Island Country School), and others outside the immediate area, including Triadelphia School, Garrison Forest, Grace Brotherian Academy, Winter Street Elementary School, Glenelg Country School, Bethal Christian Academy, Winfield Elementary School, Heather Hill Elementary School and Bolling Air Force Elementary School.

Ms. Rich exceeded her goals with the help of assistant Alexis McPeck and intern Stephanie Graves, plus 45 volunteers who donated a total of 1,431 hours of public service.

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