

Dorchester Reporter

“The News and Values Around the Neighborhood”

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Beach programs, events getting boost from grant



A series of small grants—amounting to \$22,000 going to five Dorchester organizations — will fund free beach events as part of Save the Harbor’s Better Beaches Program. Events include performances by the Boston Circus Guild (above), disco on the beach, DJ sets, live music, paddle boarding and kayaking. *Save the Harbor/Save the Bay photo*

Free concerts and movie nights, yoga and fitness classes, circus performances, and wheelchairs to help those with disabilities access beaches are all getting a boost as part of a \$300,000 grant program Save the Harbor/Save the Bay and the Department of Conservation and Recreation announced last Saturday.

The Better Beach Program grants are heading to 67 organizations to support 150 free beach events and programs this year in nine communities from Nahant to Nantasket, Save the Harbor/Save the Bay said. This year’s grants represent a \$100,000 increase compared to 2020 when the non-profit group gave out about \$200,000 to 22 organizations.

“It is exciting to have so many new organizations on board this year,”

Maya Smith, Save the Harbor/Save the Bay’s community engagement manager, said in a statement. “I am certain that they will bring new visions, new voices, more food choices, more accessibility, and a more diverse audience to the beach.”

The funds stem from a DCR appropriation and also include \$50,000 in proceeds from the Virtual Harpoon Shamrock Splash, “which will be awarded to organizations and creatives who empower, amplify and invest in community members of color and improve beach access for people with disabilities,” the non-profit said.

Communities with organizations receiving grant money include Dorchester, South Boston, Lynn, Nahant, Revere, Winthrop, East Boston, and Quincy, among others.

And Save the Harbor is also allocating \$7,500 to purchase mobility mats and beach wheelchairs to increase accessibility for people with disabilities at metropolitan-area beaches.

In Dorchester, the organization HipStory will use \$5,000 for DJ sets, live music and MC’s. South Boston Neighborhood House, for example, is set to receive \$10,000 to hold “family fun nights.”

“Save the Harbor is committed to increased equity and improved access in all our programs and on our beaches,” Save the Harbor/Save the Bay’s Executive Director Chris Mancini said.

In 2020, grant recipients used the funds to run socially distanced summer programs and to provide safety equipment and support as organizations adjusted to keep beaches safe and open during the pandemic.

“It is going to be a terrific summer, with terrific free events and programs that celebrate our diversity and resilience,” said Bruce Berman, director of strategy and communications at Save the Harbor. “After a very difficult year like no other, we are looking forward to seeing you all face-to-face on the beach.”

Save the Harbor’s program partners and event sponsors include Harpoon Brewery, JetBlue, Mix 104.1, The Blue Sky Collaborative, The Boston Foundation, The Richard Saltonstall Charitable Foundation, Beacon Capital Partners, P&G Gillette, National Grid, the Daily Catch, and Comcast.