

# East Boston

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## Eastie Non-Profits Share in \$32,500 for Local Beach Grants

Last week Save the Harbor/Save the Bay and the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) awarded \$32,500 in Better Beaches program grants to five East Boston organizations and individuals to support free beach events and programs throughout the summer.

The East Boston YMCA, Harborkeepers, NOAH (Neighborhood of Affordable Housing), Piers Park Sailing Center and Triangle, Inc. will host events that include wellness classes, a maritime festival, kayaking and the "Beach:Ability" program for people with disabilities.

The grants awarded in Eastie are part of \$300,000 in Better Beaches grants to 67 organizations and creatives to support 150 free beach events and programs in nine communities, as in-person public programming resumes on the region's public beaches from Nahant to Nantasket.

"It is exciting to have so many new organizations on board this year," said Save the Harbor/Save the Bay's Community Engagement Manager Maya Smith. "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 Piers Park Sailing Center received \$10,000 for its 'Kayaks to Go' program.

"Save the Harbor/Save the Bay is one of Piers Park Sailing Center's most valued partners," said PPSC Executive Director Alex DeFronzo. "When it comes to making Boston's beaches welcoming and accessible to everyone they are a true champion. Through their advocacy and the great work that they do with the

Metropolitan Beaches Commission & the DCR we have been able to work together to activate beaches and the harbor for East Boston youth and families.

Our partnership with Save the Harbor created PPSC's Harbor Explorers program for 6-9 year old youth 15 years ago. The Better Beaches grant has given PPSC the opportunity to expand free community kayaking both here in East Boston and at Carson Beach in South Boston. We are very grateful for all that Save the Harbor does to make the beaches and Boston Harbor welcoming to everyone."

The East Boston YMCA received \$5,000 for free beach 'wellness' classes.

"The East Boston Y is excited to partner again with Save the Harbor, Save the Bay in order to provide free wellness opportunities at Constitution Beach this summer," said Y Executive Director Joe Gaeta. "Drop in classes will include Family Yoga, Family Zumba, Family Boot Camp, amongst others in the evenings overlooking the beautiful waterfront. The pandemic has taken its toll on so many, we hope that the ability to make wellness more accessible to our community will help reduce stress levels."

NOAH will use \$5,000 for boating safety and learn to kayak programs.

"NOAH is very glad that Save the Harbor/Save the Bay is invested in equity and community development for all people," said NOAH Executive Director Phil Giffie. "This grant helps us with our summer kayaking program, which in the past brought 1,600 people each summer to Constitution Beach and exposed them

to the benefits of East Boston's shoreline. We thank Save the Harbor/Save the Bay for raising funds to support this work."

Harborkeepers will receive \$5,000 to run their annual Maritime Beach Festival at Constitution Beach and Triangle, Inc will get \$7,500 to run a Beach:Ability Festival to promote better access to area beaches for people with disabilities.

"Save the Harbor is committed to increased equity and improved access in all our programs and on our beaches." said Save the Harbor/Save the Bay's Executive Director Chris Mancini. "Thanks to the support of House Speaker Ron Mariano, Senate President Karen Spilka, the Baker/Polito Administration, the Metropolitan Beaches Commission and all our program, community and funding partners including Harpoon Brewery and JetBlue, it is going to be a great summer on the beach."

Funds to support the grant program come from a legislative appropriation to DCR and include \$50,000 in proceeds from the Virtual Harpoon Shamrock Splash.

Metropolitan Beaches Commission Co-Chair Rep. Adrian Madaro of East Boston said, "Free beach events and programs are critical to Bostonians and the region's residents who rely on these spectacular urban natural resources for recreation, especially during the pandemic."