



Annual Report

2019

September 2018-August 2019



# About Artist Boat

## Our Mission

Artist Boat is a 501(c)(3) whose mission is to promote awareness and preservation of coastal margins and the marine environment through the disciplines of the sciences and the arts.



Connect people to Gulf Coast environments through mind-opening experiences.

Educate and inspire people to action to preserve and protect coastal and marine habitats.

Our 5 Goals

Expand engagement in existing programming to inform and inspire people of all ages.

Preserve and restore 1,400 contiguous acres from beach to bay on West Galveston Island.

Establish the first nationally significant environmental education center on the Gulf Coast



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# Our 2019 impact by the numbers



**\$750,000** INVESTED  
in local schools and teachers

**14,038** SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

**1,445** VOLUNTEERS  
donated 6,914 hours of their time working at our Coastal Heritage Preserve

**396** YOUTH WORKSHOPS  
& ADVENTURES  
connected 3,720 kids to the native environment over multiple days, and 1 formal external evaluation determined the programs' impact on students

**332** BUCKET BRIGADE TOURS  
informed 4,222 beach goers about the important qualities of Galveston Beaches

**116** PUBLIC KAYAK TRIPS  
brought 503 people into critical wetland areas

**109** SPECIES

added to the Coastal Heritage Preserve master species list

**73** TRASH BARRELS

painted and installed on Galveston beaches

**20** ACRES

of coastal prairie preserved and 18 acres resored

**8** ECO-ART RESIDENCIES

and 9 Eco-Art Camps educated 373 students about coastal and marine environments, and resulted in 2 public works of art

**5** WATERSMART LANDSCAPES

designed and built by students on 5 school campuses

**3** PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

delivered to 28 teachers in the Houston-Galveston area

**1** PERMANENT HEADQUARTERS

and 1 public access point on the Coastal Heritage Preserve, the Oppenheimer Bird Observatory



44% youth programs      8% volunteers  
20% outreach      28% public programs

Connect people to Gulf Coast environments through mind-opening experiences.

### Eco-Art Workshops + Adventures

This year we continued to offer our flagship Eco-Art Workshops and Adventures to students from second grade through high school.

Our hands-on, in-class lessons teach students about native prairie and wetland environments through science and art activities. Students then bring this knowledge outdoors, to explore the environments they learned about in the classroom on either foot or kayak.



### STEAM-Powered: Blue Carbon Art IQ

For the third year, we offered an expanded Eco-Art Workshop and Adventure program to 662 Galveston 7<sup>th</sup> grade students.

The STEAM-Powered: Blue Carbon Art IQ program offers two workshops and two adventures in science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics (STEAM) over the course of the school year. Students explore complex concepts like blue carbon, climate change, sea level rise, ocean acidification, and thermal expansion.

Students engage in project-based learning through the creation of an interpretive art piece, translating knowledge through conceptual art.

*Select pieces of student art work were showcased in our Blue Carbon Art Show (pg. 18).*



Following program participation, students:

- showed a 75% *increase in knowledge of the Galveston Bay ecosystem*
- are more likely to engage in stewardship of the Bay
- have improved attitudes that Galveston Bay is *beautiful and clean*



*"My students gained an educational and physical experience that they'll remember forever."*

L. Chambers, Collegiate Academy Teacher





### Public + Private Eco-Art Adventures

Groups can join us in fun, educational kayak adventures offered at five locations around the Greater-Houston area. Adult engagement connects more people to the Gulf Coast and creates and grows the regional stewardship ethic. This year we brought **503** members of the public on a kayak adventure.

Connect people to Gulf Coast environments through mind-opening experiences.

## Eco-Art Residencies

We continued to offer Eco-Art Residencies in schools this year. Residencies span 12-24 hours within one class. This extended time allows the creation of multiple art-science integrated projects that vary from large-scale public art to small take home projects.



In 2018-2019 our educators took up residencies at 8 campuses. Each campus partook in a different residency theme. Schools that created large scale public works are denoted with a \*

- Clear Creek Intermediate School, *Whale of a Time*
- Valley West Elementary, *Manatees of the Gulf of Mexico* (see above)\*
- Whidby Elementary, *Shark Mania*
- Dickinson High School, *We Back the Bay* (see left)\*
- Blocker Middle School, *Shark Mania*
- Fry Intermediate, *Fish Frenzy*
- CE King, *Marine Debris*



Educate and inspire people to action to preserve and protect coastal and marine habitats



### “We Back the Bay”

For the first year, we offered the “We Back the Bay” program to five schools, serving 728 students in the Greater-Houston Area.

This program enables students and teachers in the counties surrounding Galveston Bay to create learning legacies on their school campus that will improve the water quality of Galveston Bay.

“We Back the Bay” builds awareness of the causes and consequences of poor water quality in Galveston Bay and develops the critical thinking skills necessary to keep pollution out of the Bay.

Students design and build a WaterSmart landscape on their campus to achieve two goals: (1) conserve water and (2) reduce stormwater runoff from their school campus.

Northside High School, *rain garden with outdoor classroom*

Westside High School, *wetland pond*

Dickinson High School, *rain garden with 500-gallon rain barrel*

Odyssey Academy, *rain garden*

Harmony School of Technology, *rain garden*



### Westside High School

The students and faculty at Westside High School worked together to build a wetland pond on their school campus during the “We Back the Bay” program. Today, whistling ducks, ibis, dragonflies, toads, and a myriad of other wetland creatures call this new pond “home”. Students at this school get to witness the impact that restoring native habitat can have for local wildlife populations.



*"After this experience, I learned that trying to help the planet, even in a small way, is a lot more productive than not doing anything at all..."*

*Through this project within our community, young people have been encouraged & energized about helping the environment, and that is something they can share with their friends, families, and one day, their kids, spreading the message about maintaining and loving this planet."*

Alex Masewicz - Westside High School Student



*"Hands on experiences and opportunities for students to showcase creativity provide [them] lasting memorable moments and learning."*

L. Elzner, Oppe Elementary Teacher



### Habitat Restoration Program

656 Galveston 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders participated in our Habitat Restoration Program during the 2018-2019 school year.

The Habitat Restoration Program offers two workshops and one adventure over the course of the school year. Students are introduced to coastal prairie habitats, the animals who inhabit them, threats facing the coastal prairie, as well as techniques using oil pastels. Students then take care of seedlings during the winter until they can be planted at the Coastal Heritage Preserve.

Restoration adventures give students a chance to take ownership of the native coastal prairie. This year, students restored *more than 9-acres* of coastal prairie.

*Select pieces of student art work were showcased in our Blue Carbon Art Show (pg. 18).*

From beginning to end, the students involved in this program..

- Showed a 91.7% increase in *knowledge of the coastal prairie ecosystem*
- Claimed to spend *more of their time outside and less time playing video games and watching T.V.*
- Claimed to do more to learn about nature, such as visiting a park and gardening
- Agreed that they *enjoy* being in nature and understand there are *many* habitats in need of restoration in Galveston



Educate and inspire people to action to preserve and protect coastal and marine habitats

### Beautify the Bucket

Beautify the Bucket is a competition effort to encourage beach goers to throw their trash in the can, not the sand. Volunteers paint a trash barrel based on a marine theme:

- ocean organisms
- marine debris
- coastal and marine ecosystems
- Galveston recreational activities

Volunteers painted 73 barrels this year.

After the competition, the painted barrels are placed on the beach, where they raise awareness about the marine environment and encourage proper trash disposal.

*In 2018, more than 2 million pounds of debris were removed from Galveston beaches. This program reduces the amount of debris littered on the sand by capturing the attention of beach-goers.*

### Professional Development

Three professional development workshops were held for local teachers this year. These workshops give teachers new strategies and tools to teach conservation topics in the classroom. Each professional development course had a topic. This year's topics were:

- Blue carbon
- Climate change and extreme weather
- Galveston Bay water quality



Expand engagement in existing programming to inform people of all ages



### Blue Carbon Art Show

Selected works from our “STEAM-Powered: Blue Carbon Art IQ” (pg. 10) and “Habitat Restoration Program” (pg.16) were displayed at the Galveston Arts Center for six weeks.

Students were able to interpret their work to a wide audience of people during the April Art Walk, showcasing the impact of climate change on the environment and the beauty of the coastal prairie.



### Eco-Art Camps

This year, we improved our Eco-Art Camps. Educators wrote new curriculum to fit themes of fish, sharks, deep sea creatures, and whales. Our camp age ranges were also split into age groups of 5-8 and 9-12. With split age groups, educators were able to best tailor activities to campers of each age range.



### Bucket Brigade

The Bucket Brigade program dispels misconceptions about Galveston Beaches through free interpretive tours and animal encounters. This year we saw 4,222 people.

Tour topics include:

- water quality
- the importance of dunes
- marine debris
- Sargassum + the creatures which inhabit it

Bucket Brigade serves a range of K-Gray learners.

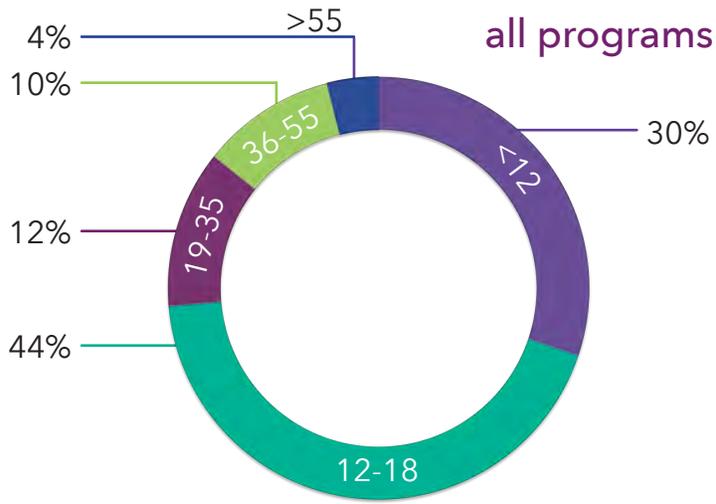




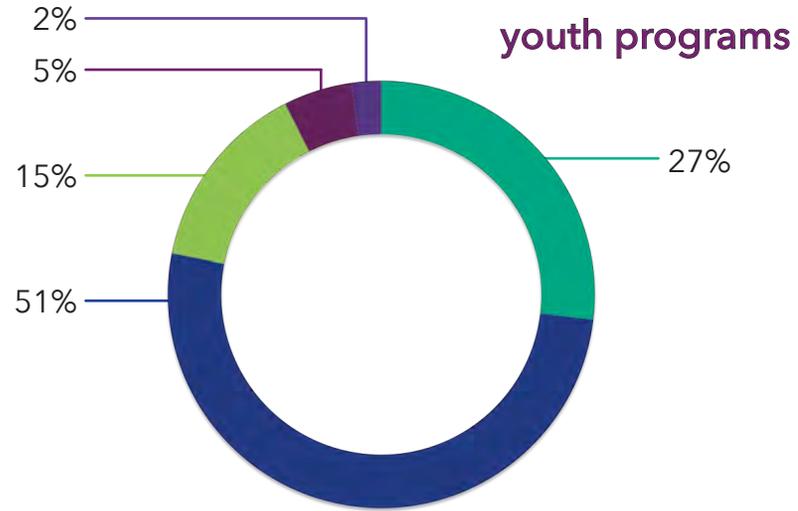
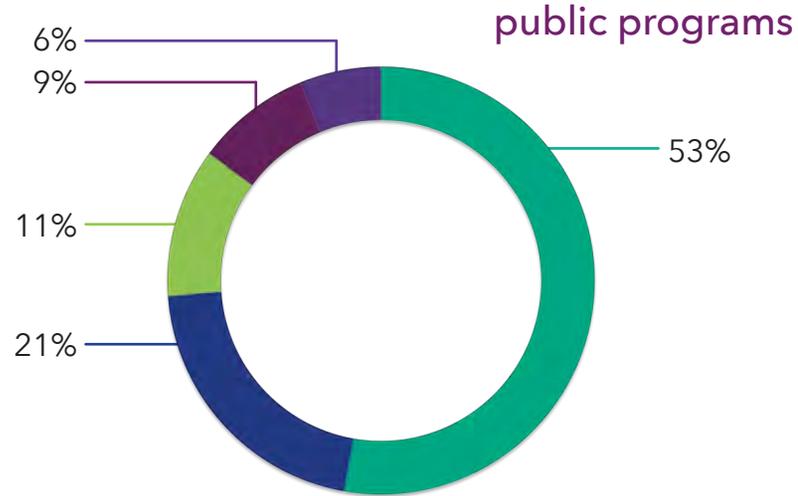
**Each year we aim to serve a diverse audience.**

These graphs show the range of people we connected with in the 2019 fiscal year. Of the people we served this year, 74% were under 18 and 60% were people of color.

# AGE



# RACE



- Caucasian
- Asian
- Hispanic
- Other
- African American

Preserve and restore 1,400 acres from beach to bay on West Galveston Island.

### Volunteers

Volunteers of all ages participated in habitat restoration, spending over 6,900 hours at the Preserve. Many groups volunteered at the Coastal Heritage Preserve this year, including:

- CITGO
- Port of Galveston
- REI COOP
- Scout groups
- Middle school students from Lincoln, Nebraska

### Gulf Corps

Ten members of the Gulf Corps spent twenty-seven days on the Preserve removing invasive species, installing a fence, and building a boardwalk.

The Gulf Corps was established with funding from the Deepwater Horizon spill through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. They provide labor for on-the-ground restoration projects which benefit coastal habitats and water quality.

### Scout Projects

Two Eagle Scout candidates and one Gold Award candidate completed their projects at the Coastal Heritage Preserve this year. The projects included:

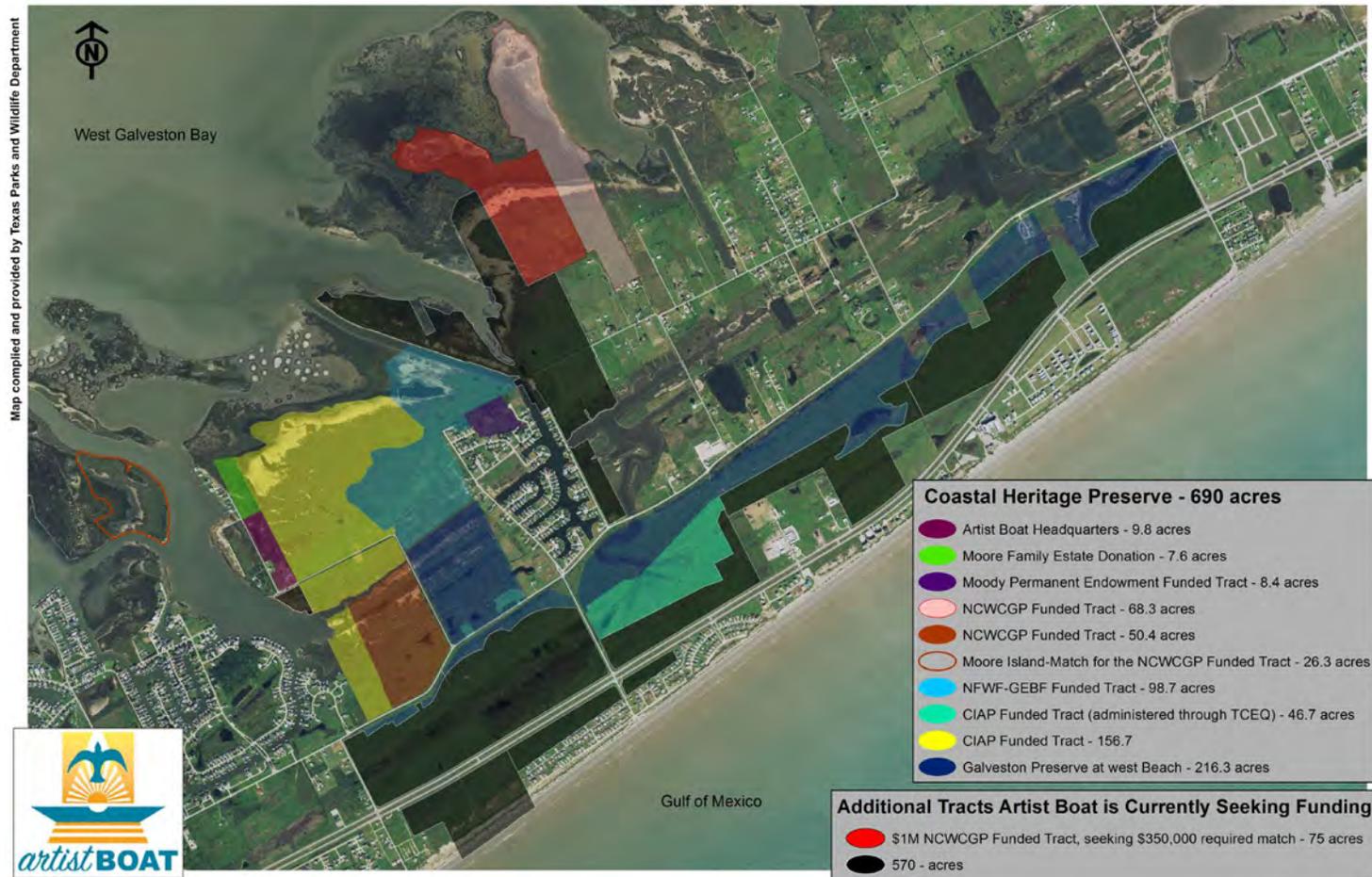
- Purchasing and installing 12 new gates for the Preserve
- Purchasing and installing signs for each gate and fence lines at the Preserve
- Constructing 10 mounting boxes for wildlife cameras

Six more Eagle Scout projects are under way!





During 2018-2019, we made great strides in saving coastal habitat.  
 The Coastal Heritage Preserve grew by 20 acres.  
 We now have **over 690-acres** of land to protect and restore.



Establish the first nationally significant environmental education center on the Gulf Coast





**The Edward and Helen Oppenheimer Bird Observatory** is the first of its kind on Galveston Island, a bird observatory open to the public along the Great Texas Birding Trail.

### A first for Artist Boat, too

Overlooking coastal prairie and a freshwater pond, the Edward and Helen Oppenheimer Bird Observatory marks the beautiful beginning of publically accessible land within our Coastal Heritage Preserve.

In addition to the observatory itself, the property also features:

- ADA accessible parking and boardwalk
- an informational kiosk
- two interpretive signs
- heron shaped bike racks
- a one-mile mowed hiking loop

### Made possible by

The Oppenheimer Foundation, REI COOP, Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation, and many private sponsors.

Designed and built by in-kind work from Gulf Coast DesignLab students from the University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture and the Gulf Corps.



## At long last, a permanant "dock" for Artist Boat

### A Little House on the Coastal Prairie

Finally, a place to call *ours*! On August 15, 2019, we closed on a 9-acre property and house at 13330 Settegast Road. For the first time in our lifetime, we will have our headquarters at the Coastal Heritage Preserve.

This is a major step towards establishing a nationally significant environmental education center on the Gulf Coast down the line.

Each year our programs reach more people at the Preserve. Our educators and conservation staff spend more than 80% of their time at the Preserve. From our current office, the Coastal Heritage Preserve is more than a 20 minute drive away.

The union of our Headquarters and the Coastal Heritage Preserve will provide our staff with better access to the Preserve so their energies can focus on maintaining a welcoming and safe space for all learners.



We are thrilled that the opportunity to buy came when it did..

***Thank you to everyone who  
contributed to make this dream  
come true!***



Establish the first nationally significant environmental education center on the Gulf Coast

*We may have secured the property, but our work is far from done. We need your help to make this new house our **home**.*

*Please donate to support our programs today.*



# Highlights of our accomplishments to date



**\$11,500,000** INVESTED  
in preserving endangered environments and bringing  
kids outdoors

**90,279** YOUTH REACHED  
through our state-of-the-art workshop and adventure  
programs

**38,611** PUBLIC KAYAK TRIP  
PARTICIPANTS

**22,524** BUCKET BRIGADE  
PARTICIPANTS

**690** ACRES

of coastal prairie saved from development

**273** TRASH BARRELS

painted and installed on Galveston beaches

**161** PUBLIC ART WORKS

including 70 benches on the Seawall Interpretive Trail

**3** EDUCATION ACCESS  
STRUCTURES

built on our Coastal Heritage Preserve: a kayak storage facility,  
outdoor classroom, and Oppenheimer Bird Observatory

**1** PERMANENT HEADQUARTERS





Mailing address  
P.O. Box 16019  
Galveston, TX 77552  
409-770-0722  
[www.artistboat.org](http://www.artistboat.org)

