



Annual Report

2021

September 2020 - August 2021





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 mindopening 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.



Board of Directors

J. Alton Alsup, President Keith Little, Vice President Nancy Greenfield, Vice President Michael E. McNeely, Treasurer Doug Little, Secretary Kenneth C. Booth, Ph.D. Ben A. Hock, Jr. **Betty Massey** Matthew R. Singer **Scott Weaver**

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Karla Klay, Executive Director Matthew Abernathy, Director of Operations Karissa Laffey, Education Program Coordinator Greg Hall, Habitat + Stewardship Program Coordinator Kelsey Malan, Executive Assistant Jane Marie Phillips, Bookkeeper Delaney McRitchie, Eco-Art Educator Grace Grimes, Eco-Art Educator Andrea Russell, Eco-Art Educator

Our 2021 impact by the numbers



\$176,000 INVESTED

in local schools and teachers

13,188 SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

41 YOUTH WORKSHOPS & ADVENTURES

connected 1,477 kids to the native environment over multiple days.

241 BUCKET BRIGADE TOURS

informed 2,368 beachgoers about the important qualities of Galveston beaches

103 PUBLIC KAYAKTRIPS

brought 441 people into critical wetland areas

New Endangered SPECIES

black rail added to the list and implemented special protocols to protect their niche habitat

65 TRASH BARRELS

painted for beautification of our beaches.

775 ACRES

of coastal prairie and wetlands preserved forever; 125 acres of coastal prairies and wetlands in progress for permanent conservation.

7 ECO-ART RESIDENCIES

educated 760 students about marine environments and the animals which inhibit them.

2 WATERSMART LANDSCAPES

designed by students on 2 school campuses.

7 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

delivered to 72 teachers in the Houston-Galveston area.

8 Eco-Art Camps

educated 90 students about coastal and marine environments.



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

Eco-Art Workshops + Adventures

This year Artist Boat continued to offer the flagship Eco-Art Workshops and Adventures to of all ages and grade levels.

The hands-on Eco-Art Workshops 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 by foot, vessel, or kayak on an Eco-Art Adventure.



These programs were supported by grants from Moody Permanent Endowment Fund, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration - Bay and Watershed Education Training, The Children's Center, and Environmental Protection Agency - Gulf of Mexico Program.



"My students understood the science & art relationship. I also felt my students understood wetlands and prairies well. Lastly, I feel my students have a better vision (positive) of animals & our area." -Gia Spriggs, PISD





The Children's Center provided Galveston ISD Eco-Art Workshops and Adventures

This partnership provided the Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEAM) Powered Program for 6 classes of Galveston Independent School District Middle School students 6th to 8th grade.

These programs are essential to encourage engagement in actions to improve the environmental quality of our island and decrease the impacts of humans on our island environment.

STEAM Powered programs provided 13 hours of enrichment at Coastal Heritage Preserve for six classes of 6th to 7th graders in GISD. The program provided multiple outdoor-learning opportunities over the course of a student's school year on the island, which:

- increased science, environmental, and art literacy
- increased resiliency to adapt and respond to change
- developed student's sense of place to motivate stewardship of Galveston STEAM Powered (Eco-Art Workshop, Eco-Art Adventure, Blue Carbon Adventure, Blue Carbon Workshop) programs are designed to foster knowledge and skills of middle school students to discuss and visually communicate the importance of "blue carbon" habitats (i.e. salt marsh) to the broader community. This unique program achieved the following:
- promoted real knowledge about the student's local and important wetland ecosystem
- connected students to real concepts in science demonstrated by marsh ecosystems.

199 total students participated in the program.

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

Environmental Protection Agency - Gulf of Mexico Program Grant for "We Back the Bay and Gulf"

"We Back the Bay and Gulf" is program dedicated to demonstrating methods to reduce non-point source pollution, improve water quality, filter water, and mitigate flood hazards with students and on their campuses. Pasadena Independent School District (PISD) schools partnered with Artist Boat to participate in this program in 2021. This year, we partnered with Parkview and South Houston Intermediate. These schools were able to achieve many goals during this year-long partnership. They successfully:

- explored our watershed through an interactive model
- acquired skills in watercolor techniques
- kayaked through Artist Boat's Coastal Heritage Preserve (CHP)
- created a campaign with their school
- constructed a rain garden
- constructed a pocket prairie

A total of 9campuses will receive these services within three years, from 2018-2022.









"My students gained an appreciation for real world concerns related to trash in the ecosystem and carbon footprints." - M. Lowery, HISD

Crenshaw Environmental Science Magnet School

Bolivar Birding Adventures

Artist Boat is this campuses educational partner in curriculum development, teacher mentoring and modeling, and providing experiential learning. Every student this year went with their class on an adventure to learn about ornithology and explore the globally significant habitats for birds on the Bolivar peninsula.

120+ Students went on a six hour birding adventure that visited Smith Oaks Sanctuary, North Jetty, and Bolivar Roads on Bolivar Peninsula. Students were supplied with binoculars and bird guides, and were taught the basics of bird watching and field identification.











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



"I had the most AMAZING experience these four days! I have gained so much knowledge, and I cannot wait to share what I have learned with my family, friends, teachers, administration, and students!"



National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration - Bay and Watershed Education Training grant funds

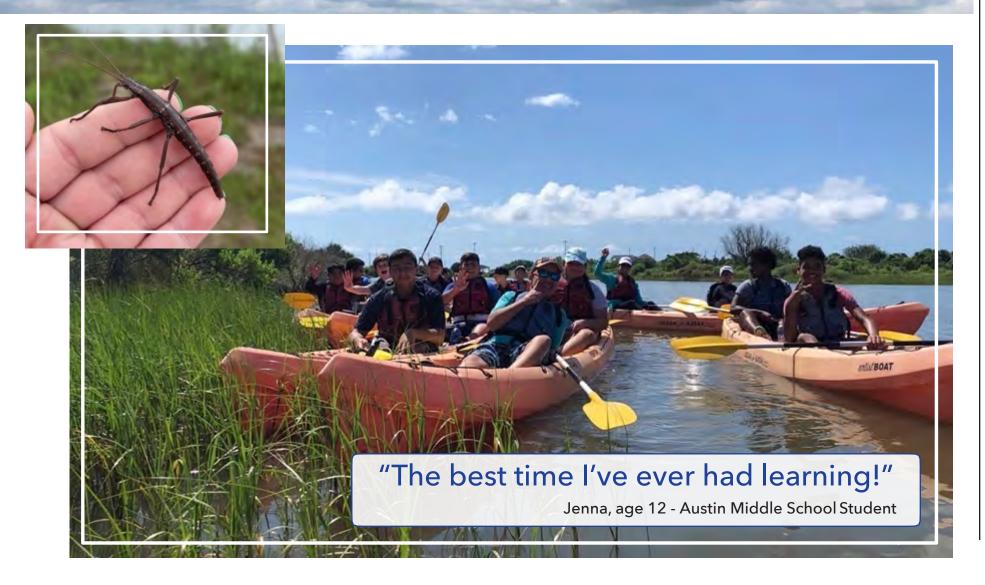
"Turn the T.I.D.E."

Turn the T.I.D.E. leads to a more sustainable future by increasing awareness and altering attitudes and behaviors associated with climate change and extreme weather. Turn the T.I.D.E. is advocating for TOMORROW, INFORMing the community about current social and ecological issues, DISCUSSing and DEBATing our next steps, and learning from our shared EXPERIENCES (T.I.D.E). This three year grant (2019 - 2022) from provides:

- science workshops covering themes of climate change and extreme weather
- focus on the critical environments of coastal wetlands, coastal prairies, and sand dunes that help fight against climate change and extreme weather
- art workshops focused on watercolor and observation skills of species native to the Galveston area
- Students restore dune habitats
- eco-art kayak adventures at Artist Boat's Coastal Heritage Preserve. The PISD schools which participated in the 2020-2021 school year were Bondy and Southmore Intermediate serving over 40 students.

"This put together the class lesson to a real world experience!" – J. Cuellar, Lamar ISD

"My students gained an educational and physical experience that they'll remember forever." - L.Chambers, Collegiate Academy Teacher



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

Sea Star Base S.T.E.M. to Stern

This program is run as a partnership between Artist Boat and Sea Star Base Galveston (SSBG). In 2021 a curriculum was developed by Artist Boat to provide this program and train other educators to teach students from the M/V Baysmart Express, a 110' education vessel for interactive adventure. Artist Boat educators and Sea Star Base captains cruise with the students from Offatts Bayou through Galveston and Houston ship channels. This cruise offers a unique look at the local waterways; allowing students to take in the environment - from wetlands that are a haven for local wildlife and many bird species, to the maritime industries and marine traffic. It's a side of Galveston that a person can only see from the water. About 85 students were able to explore the bay!

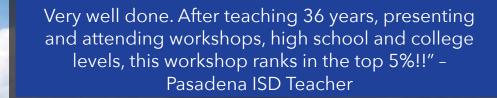








"Yesterday's trip through the ship channel was perfect. My students and I learned so much while on board the vessel Baysmart Express. I think all of the information given yesterday benefits every student who goes out on the Baysmart Express, even when specific academic preferences vary. Thanks so much!!" -Karen Alsept- Instructor -Continuing Education | Galveston College







Private and Public Kayak 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. Participants learned and harnessed basic kayaking skills while also taking in the coastal environment surrounding them. This year, 236 members of the public were brought on a kayak adventure and learned about our critically important ecosystem and the animals that inhabit it.









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 artscience integrated projects that vary from large-scale public art to small take home projects. 355 students participated!







From 2020-2021, Artist Boat hosted three different Eco-Art Residencies. These included Shark Mania, Fish Frenzy, and Whale of a Time. We were able to deliver these residencies at Martine El., Liestman El., Academy of Accelerated Learning, and Whidby El. We had many fun activities including plaster shark heads, acrylic whale paintings, clay fish sculptures, and a shark dissection. The student's favorite activity was the shark dissection in which they discovered the shark was pregnant with four babies.



"Students would approach the murals with enthusiasm daily. They loved to show off parts that they painted to their friends and name the different plant and animal species they learned. Crenshaw students took their time and painted with care when it was their turn to help. They knew that these murals would be on display for years to come." - Karissa Laffey, Artist Boat's Education Coordinator.





Crenshaw Environmental Science Magnent Ecosystem Murals

In the spring of 2021, Artist Boat led an artist residency to create five large scale murals on the walls of Crenshaw Elementary and Middle School. These murals depicted the five ecosystems of the Bolivar Habitat Preserve: freshwater wetland, saltwater wetland, beaches and dunes, coastal prairies, and oak mottes. All students on campus from Pre-K through 8th grade were invited to participate in the mural project. All 120+ students painted these murals





"This program is wonderful and educators really get students involved in learning and taking ownership of our local ecosystems."

- Holy Family Catholic School, 7th grade teacher











Educate and inspire coastal and marine habitats.





EPA GOMP "We Back the Bay and Gulf"

For the third year, Artist Boat has expanded the creation of habitats on school campuses and our island's beaches. The "We Back the Bay and Gulf" program has been provided to nine schools with seven more planned, serving a total of over, 1,400 students in the Greater Houston Area who have designed nine WaterSmart features to conserve water and reduce stormwater runoff from their school campus. 56 students participated this year building two watersmart features on their campuses

This two year grant (2019-2022) from EPA GOMP provides:

- construction of a rain garden
- construction of a pocket prairie
- creation of a campaign supporting the conservation of our local environment

These WaterSmart landscapes benefit their local community by not only conserving water and reducing runoff, but spreading awareness of its importance.



Parkview Intermediate built a rain garden. South Houston Intermediate built a *pocket prairie*.

'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... - Westside High School Student



"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



NOAA BWET - "Turn the T.I.D.E."

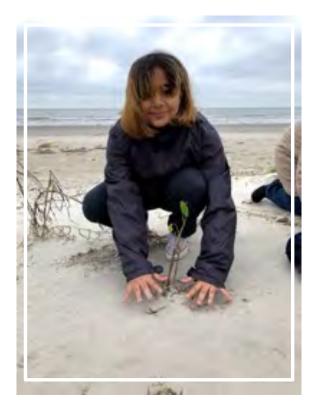
This three year grant (2019 – 2022) from NOAA B-WET provides:

- Habitat Restoration Adventures to restore dune ecosystems, and
- production of podcasts addressing resiliency by students.

About 0.76 acres of sand dunes were restored this year by the students, and they created a podcast discussing the importance of our local environment.

Turn the T.I.D.E. provided dune restoration for Galveston Island. This year, 36 students restored 0.76 acres of dunes in partnership with NOAA B-WET and Galveston Park Board of Trustees.







"This helped me understand more of the nitty gritty details, common misconceptions and relate it my local environment. It also gave me more resources and ideas to use in my high school classroom." - Participant Review

Professional Development

Professional development workshops were held for local and nationwide teachers this year. These workshops gave 72 teachers new strategies and tools to teach conservation topics in the classroom. This year's Professional Development courses and their topics were:

- EPA We Back the Bay & Gulf (blue carbon, water quality, storm water). 18 teachers attended a 4-day virtual and in person workshop to prepare for the EPA GOMP program.
- NOAA BWET Turn the T.I.D.E. (climate change, extreme weather, resiliency). 22 teachers attended the 32-hour virtual and in person workshop
- Planet Stewards, Community Resilience to Climate Change. 21 teachers attended the 24-hour virtual and in person workshop
- Pasadena ISD Mini Professional Development (climate change, extreme weather, resiliency). 5 teachers attended the hour long virtual professional development hosted by Pasadena ISD.
- Private Professional Development for Nacogdoches ISD. 6 teachers attended the 5 hour long Eco-Art Kayak Adventure professional development at Artist Boat's Coastal Heritage Preserve







Beautify the Bucket

Beautify the Bucket is a competition effort to encourage beachgoers 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

Participants adopted 65 barrels this year. This year, the art competition for these barrels took place during the World Ocean Day Festival on Stewart Beach.

After the competition, the painted barrels were placed on the beach, where they raised awareness about the marine environment and encouraged proper trash disposal.











ECO Camps

Campers learned to kayak, how to plan a safe kayak trip, take nature walks, observe, and journal. Multiple fishing methods were taught (seining, crabbing, and cast netting) and so much more! Depending on what marine animal and habitat we learned, the campers then hand built in clay, watercolor painted, learned sketching, acrylic painting, and crafted with natural objects found in nature. Every camper walked away with a clay sculpture, canvas painting, fish print art, and a nature journal at the end of the week. They studied fascinating native creatures through wildlife talks, skull studies, bug hunts, microscopes, and oyster and sea star dissections!













Eco-Art Camps

Artist Boat held three full weeks of Eco-Art Camps this summer. Each week was focused on a different marine topic. Our programs included "Off the Deep End" where we explored the creatures of the deep, "Shark Mania" instilled excitement about our local sharks, and "Whale of a Time" focused on learning all about whales and dolphins. Each program taught skills in sculptural building, clay modeling, painting, and print making. Each camper walked away with all of the pieces they created. Campers also had the unique opportunity to explore the CHP and catch all sorts of native creatures first hand.

90 Campers came to the Preserve for a week!



Outreach

Artist Boat is regularly featured in local magazines and news outlets. Some of the ones from this year that you can find us in were School Arts Magazine, North American Association of Environmental Educators Case Studies in Best Practices, KFPT Radio, Clicks2You, Galveston NOW/I-45 NOW, Galveston Daily News, 94.5 the Buzz, and iHeart Media.

Artist Boat gave a wide variety of presentations at different events including at the Coastal Heritage Preserve for Leadership Galveston and the Girl Scouts of San Jacinto, Seabrook Science Magnet Program, Houston Sierra Club, Sea Star Base Galveston, a two-day Juneteenth Ambassador weekend for St. Phillips, and our annual festival for World Ocean Day!

We were lucky enough to have a few groups hold events with fundraisers for Artist Boat this year. Rita's and the Unitarian Universalists both held fundraisers in our honor, and West End Running Club held a raffle for one of our kayak adventures.

Some of the most enjoyable events this year were our ribbon cuttings! We hosted a ribbon cutting at Crenshaw Environmental Magnet, and two trail naming ceremonies at the Coastal Heritage Preserve (Cangelosi Cut & Stymie's Magic Pond).









Bucket Brigade

The Bucket Brigade program dispels misconceptions about Galveston Beaches through free interpretive tours and animal encounters. This year, we served 2,327 people. For COVID safety, all groups were limited to 15 participants and remained 6 feet apart despite being outdoors.

Tour topics include:

- water quality
- marine animal behavior and life history
- the importance of dunes
- marine debris
- Sargassum + the creatures that inhabit it

Bucket Brigade serves a range of K-Gray learners.





World Ocean Day

Artist Boat had the privilege of hosting a World Ocean Day Festival on June 12, 2021 this year. We spread awareness of the importance of our ocean and had many interactive and educational activities. 455 participants, 10 exhibitors, 3 performers. Some of which include:

- Young Audiences of Houston performances: "Puppet Pizzaz" and "A Marine Micro Ballet"
- Turning old t-shirts into bags
- Free sustainable giveaways
- Games to practice saving wildlife
- Reusing materials to create floating sculptures
- Free interactive beach tours
- Search and find NURDLE patrol



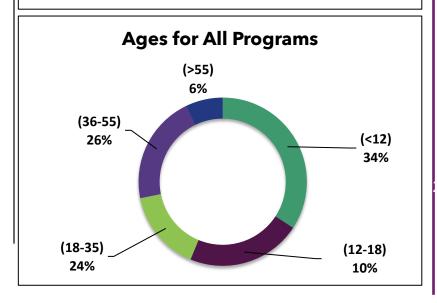


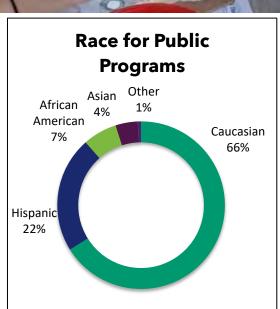
Each year, we aim to serve a diverse audience.

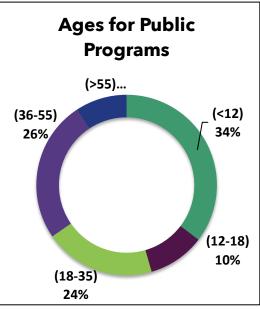
These graphs show the range of 4,459 people we connected with in the 2021 fiscal year. Of the people we served this year, 44% were under 18 and 57% were people of color.

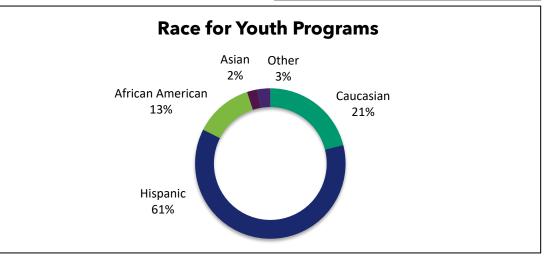


Race for All Programs Other, 5% Asian, 6% African American, 9% Hispanic, 37%





















Volunteers

Though participation numbers were limited this year, volunteers of all ages participated in habitat restoration, spending over 1,422.5 hours at on the CHP. Groups and individuals who worked on the CHP this year included:

- Sea Citizens
- Phillips 66
- TAMUG Big Event
- Eagle Scouts
- 55 Individual volunteers
- Local birding experts



Gulf Corps

Five members of the Gulf Corps spent 17 days on the CHP providing labor to build an 800 ft + section of fence which corrected the property lines within the Spanish Grant subdivision, at the entrance to the Peake property. This project also included the removal of a legacy fence from the property, requiring the Corps to remove thousands of pounds of debris. The Gulf Corps also spent time repairing the fence along 11-Mile Road, and treating invasive plant species on the preserve.



Eagle Scouts

Eagle Scout Luke Bailey completed his project of a large covered bench to accommodate visitors near the Peake property gates where groups gather before Walking Tours and Kayak Adventures. Eagle Scouts provided a bug hotel and many "no trespassing" signs, too. These were welcome and needed additions to this area of the preserve.





One in a Million Campaign

In March 2021, Artist Boat launched a two-year peer-to-peer fundraiser to try and get 1,000,000 people to donate \$10 to protect and finish the purchase of 1,400 acres of precious wetlands and coastal prairies. We have many grants that will unlock at certain quantities of donations to match the donations and help us with this huge purchase. This year we were able to close on 75 acres of land and raised a total of \$215,588.28 from 1,027 donors.













Land Acquisition

Artist Boat conserved 75 acres of land from the developer at Anchor Bay. This conserved a parcel that included 50% wetlands and 50% coastal prairies. This parcel closed on July 15, 2021. The land purchase price was \$1,260,000 with \$100,000 in due diligence costs (Appraisal, Appraisal Review, Survey, Legal, Environmental Phase 1, Shead Conservation Solutions, Closing Fees and Title Policies, and Artist Boat Staff Time). A federal grant from USFWS contributed \$1,000,000 in partnership with TPWD. Matching funds were provided by Galveston Foundation Inc. (\$10,000), Campbell Family (\$15,000), West Galveston Property Owners Association (\$5,000), TPWD (\$10,000), Dominik and Barbara Sassar (\$5,000), Galveston Bay Foundation Coastal Assistance Program (\$15,000), Jerry Mohn (\$5,000), Brown Foundation (\$75,000), and Gulf Coast Bird Observatory (\$30,000).

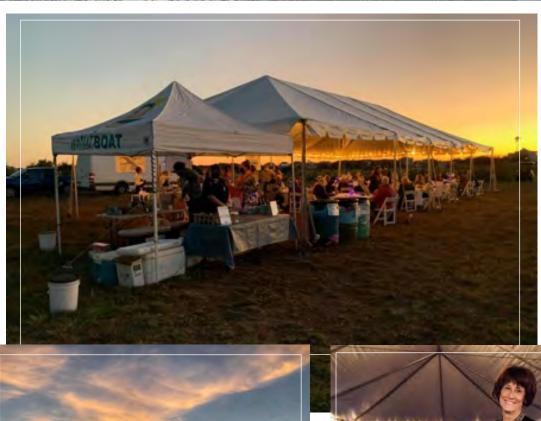
The balance was raised from Artist Boat's Be One in a Million Campaign to save lands by asking one million people to donate \$10 to move our preserve from 700 acres to 1,400 in two years.





"When we save nature, we save ourselves." -Karla Klay, Executive Director



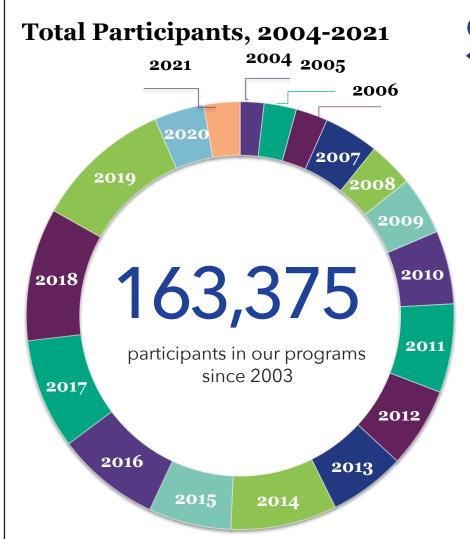




Float the Boat

In light of the COVID-19 outbreak, we are pleased to say that we transformed Float the Boat from a one-night indoor gathering to a socially-distanced dinner series outdoors on our very own Coastal Heritage Preserve. This dinner series flourished and proved to be the most successful Float the Boat fundraiser to date! The dinner series hosted a total of 286 guests over 6 evenings. The events were held between October 30 -November 14, 2020, in conjunction with our auction and kayak raffle. Our annual auction is one of the largest in Galveston, and this year we made it online so everybody could join us from home too. We raised a total of \$125,824 from sponsors, \$44,807 from the online auction, and \$3,902 from kayak raffle tickets. This brings us to a grand total of \$174,533. We are so happy to been able to modify this event to still be safe during the pandemic.

Highlights of our accomplishments to date



\$14,700,400 INVESTED

in preserving endangered environments and bringing kids outdoors

87,811 YOUTH REACHED

through our state-of-the-art workshop and adventure programs

16,890 PUBLIC PARTICIPANTS

25,355 BUCKET BRIGADE PARTICIPANTS

Highlights of our accomplishments to date

775 ACRES

of coastal prairie saved from development

336 TRASH BARRELS

painted and installed on Galveston beaches

1627 PUBLIC ARTWORKS

including 70 benches on the Seawall Interpretive Trail

STRUCTURES

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

PERMANENT HEADQUARTERS



From the director staying the course with you!

Thank you!

Dear Friends, Donors, Partners, Volunteers, Funders, Crew Members, and Fans,

First and foremost, Artist Boat's success is a direct reflection of the committed investments YOU make to assure our mission flourishes and thrives! YOU all have made that possible for over 18 years! We all know disasters occur in many forms. This year and last was a surprising one with a global pandemic causing loss of life and decimating many for-profit and non-profit organizations.

We are visioning the future, and we need you more than ever to help us. Each of you, each acre we save, and each kid we teach is "One in a Million."

Thanks for staying with us and continuing your support! Thanks to all our funders, supporters, friends, fans, volunteers, partners, and crew members!

Sincerely, Karla Klay, Executive Director































We continued to grow by between 80% to 33% every three years for over 16 years. Covid may have stymied us but, not forever. The past year we returned to our service levels during our first three years of operations. But, already this year it is looking like we will return to pre-covid levels of service with educational programs. This year we also were able to celebrate lives on the Preserve and dedicate ponds and trails in memory and in honor of people. That was a unique and inspiring first.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	TOTAL SERVED TO DATE
Eco-art Workshops	1,103	828	678	2,463	924	2,044	3,055	3,382	1,669	1,618	3,225	3,599	1,752	2,395	2,340	3,720	2,516	261	37,572
Eco-art Adventures	1,303	902	1,055	1,782	1,942	1,598	2,068	3,034	2,195	2,275	4,069	3,841	2,174	1,896	2,591	2,750	1,721	456	37,652
Residencies	101	608	1,265	992	1,471	1,228	1,238	867	427	1,175	682	630	270	283	95	373	122	760	12,587
Professional Development	73	111	236	275	245	119	103	52	115	85	84	- 67	62	14	61	28	23	90	1,777
Public/Private Adventures	358	511	548	591	816	527	1,264	2,382	1,775	1,840	1,457	1,372	932	639	572	503	277	526	16,890
Bucket Brigade	-		-	10	- 2-	- 3	-	-		8	-	- 4	4,820	6,639	6,843	4,222	491	2,340	25,355
Habitat Restoration Adventure	-	420	168	63	-	1,360	1,024	609	2,298	934		204		717	-	507	198	36	8,538
Outreach/Engagement	14	611	- 8	576	159	299	300	628	1,431	1,500	3,514	558	2,382	627	2,979	3,422	412	33	19,531
Volunteers/Workdays		-	- 10	100	- 4								417	411	925	1,359	404	61	3,577
				> 80% inc			> 50% Inc				> 25% Inc				> 33% Inc		<67%		
Average		Avg = 3,626	5	Avg = 6,491			Avg = 9,836				12,441						13,151	507	1 1
TOTAL SERVED	2,938	3,991	3,950	6,742	5,557	7,175	9,052	10,954	9,911	9,427	13,131	10,204	12,809	13,621	16,406	16,884	6,164	4,563	163,479

In spite of a global pandemic and falling back to 2008 (post-Ike) levels of service, Artist Boat remains committed to:

- conserving 1,400 acres of wilds for wildlife and people on West Galveston Island,
- educating people of all ages in the coastal and marine environment through unique coastal experiences,
- restoring coastal prairies and dune ecosystems,
- · protecting our beautiful Gulf Coast, and
- affirming that the coast is unique, beautiful, and alive to all who will hear and take action!











