

Nonprofit Organization Grants:

Coast Guard Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety
Recreational Boating Safety

Federal Grant Title:	National Non-Profit Organization Grant Program
Federal Agency:	United States Coast Guard
Funding Opportunity Number:	DHS-USCG-2021-001
Type of Funding:	Cooperative Agreement
CFDA Numbers:	97.012
CFDA Descriptions:	Boating Safety Financial Assistance

Grantee: National Safe Boating Council (NSBC)
Grant Number: 3321FAN201118
Grant Title: Waves of Hope
Period of Performance: 1 year grant

Award Amount: \$50,000.00

Summary:

The National Safe Boating Council (NSBC) proposes an influencer campaign for Waves of Hope, a coalition of families and friends working together to prevent boating and water tragedies. This coalition provides a platform for survivors, families, and partners to collectively take action, share their stories, and educate others on the importance of responsible boating in hopes of preventing future tragedies. By working together to share their stories, the Waves of Hope coalition can have a profound impact on preventing boating and water tragedies. Efforts will equip coalition members, influencers, and other representatives to serve as a nationwide network of boating safety advocates by supporting their outreach efforts in local communities.

Proposed activities and deliverables will focus on supporting local outreach efforts of the Waves of Hope influencer network and creating resources for the coalition to use in their local communities. Resources will be available in a Waves of Hope outreach toolkit, including family stories, fact sheets, and other educational items. Waves of Hope coalition members will be encouraged to apply for a chance to become a family influencer to receive additional resources for local outreach efforts. As the ‘why’ in boating safety, this personal approach will equip people in a position of influence to share Waves of Hope stories and critical boating safety messages in their communities. Influencers will be required to share status updates and feedback of their local efforts with the NSBC to assist them with reaching local boaters.

<https://www.safeboatingcouncil.org/>



National Safe Boating Council

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November 21, 2022

U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters
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For the FY 2022, the U.S. Coast Guard granted the National Safe Boating Council \$50,000 for Waves of Hope 3321FAN2011.18. This letter, together with the enclosed Executive Summary, Program Activities, and Program Evaluation, is our final report.

Sincerely,

/Peg Phillips/
Executive Director
National Safe Boating Council

Enclosures: Executive Summary, Program Activities, Program Evaluation



National Nonprofit Organization Recreational Boating Safety Grant Program

Grant: Waves of Hope, Agreement No. 3321FAN2011.18

Grant Period: 15 months (07/01/2021 – 09/30/2022)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The U.S. Coast Guard awarded the National Safe Boating Council a grant for Waves of Hope, Agreement No. 3321FAN2011.18. Waves of Hope is a coalition of families and friends working together to prevent boating and water tragedies. It provides a platform for survivors, families, and partners to collectively take action, share their stories, and educate others on the importance of responsible boating to prevent future tragedies. That one moment that changed their families forever could have been prevented. A life jacket. A propeller guard. An attentive boat operator. An engine cut-off switch. An informed adult.

The NSBC led an influencer campaign for the program by supporting local outreach efforts of the Waves of Hope influencer network and creating resources for the coalition to use in their local communities. Branded resources were available on the updated website – www.WavesofHopeBoating.org, including family stories, fact sheets, and other educational items.

Waves of Hope coalition members were encouraged to apply for a chance to become a family influencer to receive additional resources for local outreach efforts. As the ‘why’ in boating safety, this personal approach put coalition members in a position of influence to share Waves of Hope stories and critical boating safety messages in their communities. Eight recipients were selected through an application process and monitoring. From community events to local radio advertising, these families effectively shared about Waves of Hope and their tragedy with their local community. As one family member has shared, “This effort gave purpose to our pain, and a local community is most receptive to change after a local tragedy.”

A limited social media campaign and digital outreach campaign shared about important safety messages with the boating public on behalf of Waves of Hope. These messages were accompanied by a Waves of Hope family story. In addition, the NSBC managed a private Facebook group for coalition members.

The NSBC led monthly networking calls for Waves of Hope families and others who have been impacted by boating or open water tragedies. This is an important part of Waves of Hope as it gives families purpose in their pain and support as they work to prevent their tragedy from happening to someone else. Through this effort, six new families joined Waves of Hope, and five worked with the NSBC to develop and share their loved one’s story.

Waves of Hope gave a voice to families to remember loved ones lost in a boating or water tragedy, while sharing their story with the boating public in hopes to prevent future tragedies.



PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

The following is a summary of program activities. All activities were completed on time with no delays. Resources and additional information are available at www.WavesofHopeBoating.org.

1) **Influencer network:** The NSBC hosted monthly Waves of Hope coalition networking calls for family representatives, state agencies, and other supporters to learn how they can support this effort and support each other. This built the foundation of the Waves of Hope influencer network – equipping 125 families around the nation with access to educational resources from Waves of Hope. From this group, through an application process, eight individuals were selected to receive funding to support their local efforts. Following is a summary of the local impact:

- **Hunter Bland:** Included the Waves of Hope logo on his professional angler truck, used his social media networks to reach more than 10,000 people with boating safety messages, and shared about his personal story and Waves of Hope at summer tournaments.
- **Theresa Dabiere-Craig:** Worked with summer youth recreation camps to offer a water safety program, sharing about her son Sean’s story and Waves of Hope. She specifically focused on the importance of always wearing a life jacket while boating. She also gave several presentations at local events, supported National Safe Boating Week, and shared information on social media.
- **Cassi Free:** Shared about her son Andy’s story in her local community and at the 2022 International Boating and Water Safety Summit.
- **Dana Gage:** Developed a series of radio ads focused on life jacket wear that were shared prior to and during the Fourth of July and Labor Day 2022 on 96.7 The Ticket, KTCK-AM (a Cumulus Radio station). The radio station provided three times the number of air-play beyond the advertising investment.
- **Jerilyn Spokis:** Stocked life jacket loaner stations at Lake Singletary in Massachusetts.
- **Karen Steely:** Shared about her son Aaron’s story in her local community and at the 2022 International Boating and Water Safety Summit.
- **Krissy Taylor:** Shared about her son Afton’s story in her local community and at the 2022 International Boating and Water Safety Summit. She also enlarged Afton’s story card to a poster size and displayed at local launch points around central Ohio.
- **Jan Willhite-Iserman:** Worked with her local community to share about boating safety with young children, including autistic children. This included life jacket fit educational



events. She also stocked a local life jacket loaner station and worked with the local sheriff department marine division to share information about Waves of Hope.

- 2) **Educational resources:** Additional educational resources were developed to provide influencers and coalition members with resources to educate others on the importance of responsible boating in hopes to prevent future tragedies. These included packaged family stories, fact sheet, promotion items for events (memory coins, wristbands, stickers, printed story cards), social media template and images, additional family story cards, outreach tips, print ads/posters. These were available in an online toolkit at www.WavesofHopeBoating.org/take-action. Printed items were made available for free through the NSBC Online Store in the Waves of Hope Outreach Box.
- 3) **Digital toolkit and marketing:** An updated website - www.WavesofHopeBoating.org – brought new capabilities to sharing Waves of Hope information. A new resources page serves as the digital toolkit providing a step-by-step action plan for coalition members to utilize in sharing their stories in local communities. In addition, a limited social media campaign and digital outreach campaign shared important safety messages with the boating public by connecting the messages to a Waves of Hope family story. These were shared across the NSBC’s Facebook and Twitter accounts, reaching approximately 260,000 people. Template social media content and images for others to use can be found at <https://www.safeboatingcouncil.org/wavesofhope/resources/>. In addition, the NSBC managed a private Facebook group for coalition members to communicate outside of monthly networking calls, sharing outreach tips with each other and providing mutual support.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

The following are program metrics as of October 5, 2022:

- 1) **Influencer network:** There are 125 members of the private Waves of Hope Facebook page, serving as the foundation for the influencer network. The eight individuals who received Waves of Hope funding reached their local communities, as well as a nationwide reach through social media efforts. Together they attended 30 events, distributed 2000 launch point reminder signs, educated hundreds of youth, and more. These events will make an everlasting impact in their local communities. In addition, 75 people received Waves of Hope Outreach Boxes.
- 2) **Digital analytics:** Over the last year, there were more than 3,500 visitors to www.WavesofHopeBoating.org. On social media, there were approximately 1,000 engagements with Waves of Hope content.
- 3) **Reactions:** As one Waves of Hope family member shared, “This effort gave purpose to our pain, and a local community is most receptive to change after a local tragedy.” Waves of Hope families shared their stories at the 2022 International Boating and Water Safety



Summit (IBWSS). Attendees shared feedback that they had not considered the risks of open-air carbon monoxide poisoning and powerlines until hearing from the families. Since the conference, the NSBC has connected our instructors and members with manufacturers who supply a wearable CO detector. Over 50 have been ordered by attendees since the Summit. In addition, the NSBC provided carbon monoxide outdoor signs and flyers to be provided at all 400 lakes managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Partners have stepped up to support the families and educate the public about boating Safety. For example, the response from Carter Viss sharing his story at IBWSS has led to several Florida dive shops stocking three dimensional buoys and promoting their use. For public outreach, iHeart Media and other radio stations in Texas markets offered free airtime to continue to air the radio PSAs that were distributed via the influencer grassroots grant. And, on social media many shared their condolences with Waves of Hope families and shared the social media content posted by the NSBC.