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Organizing Sponsors:



# BIGTEAMREGATTA SANFRANCISCO2010

A corporate sailing challenge to benefit youth sailing.

**Contact:** Lacey Todd  
415.421.2225  
Fax: 415.421.2208  
[Lacey.Todd@tisailing.org](mailto:Lacey.Todd@tisailing.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Treasure Island Sailing Center BIG Team Regatta Corporate Sailing Challenge Raises \$35,000**

*Funds Go Toward Scholarships in Support of Sailing Programs for At-Risk and Disabled Youth*

**Treasure Island, CA, October 13, 2010** – The kids of Treasure Island Sailing Center (TISC) received a check for \$35,000 at the 6th Annual BIG Team Regatta fundraiser held on Friday, October 1, at OCSC SAILING in Berkeley. Six four-person teams made up of executives from Mechanics Bank, PG&E, Hanson Bridgett, Almar Marinas, and ACCO Engineered Systems, Inc., competed in the race on San Francisco Bay for bragging rights and to show their support for youth and adaptive sailing.

The BIG Team Regatta, an annual corporate sailing challenge founded by the team-building experts of Group Experiential Learning (GEL), has been a critical source of funding for TISC's youth and adaptive sailing programs for the past six years. Each corporate team donates \$5,000 to fund full and partial scholarships for developmentally disabled youth and children from under-served communities. Each corporate donation gets approximately 33 children out on the water, and TISC provides unlimited scholarships to those in financial need. Approximately 75 percent of the 1,000 students served each year are on scholarship.

“The regatta was a huge success for the Treasure Island Sailing Center foundation,” said Lacey Todd, operations manager for TISC. “The money we raised from our sponsors will get more kids on the water; kids who might not otherwise get the opportunity to sail the Bay. The kids also had a lot of fun helping prepare for the regatta, and enjoyed speaking at the awards ceremony to show their appreciation.”

After spending the morning learning how to sail, participants strategized over lunch, and then returned to the Bay for a series of exciting races. Meanwhile, volunteers from the San Francisco Junior League worked on shore to prepare for the post-race awards ceremony and regatta party.

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Everyone who helped or raced felt like a winner. One of the most celebrated awards handed out, the “Broken Tiller,” went to Mechanics Bank for performing the most spectacular and outrageous maneuver of the day. Taking first place in the actual racing was PG&E Team 2, followed by their sister ship, PG&E Team 1. Third place honors were earned by Almar Marinas, a team that has participated every year since the inception of the event in 2005. Video clips and images of the race and final results can be found here: <http://www.gelcorp.com/clients/bigteamregattasf2010/>.

A surprise visit from special guest speaker Peter Stoneberg, a founder of the America’s Cup Organizing Committee, and Rear Commodore at St. Francisco Yacht Club, thrilled guests at the awards ceremony. Stoneberg spoke about his own love of sailing, the drive to get the America’s Cup held in San Francisco, and the nuances of racing high tech catamarans, as well as the competition our city faces from other international cities desirous of the economic stimulus of yachting’s preeminent competition.

Organizing Sponsors, GEL and OCSC SAILING, have been hosting the BIG Team Regatta in Berkeley for the past six years. “We who sail do so because it makes us feel like kids again,” said Anthony Sandberg, president of OCSC SAILING. “The children we get out on the water at Treasure Island are creating memories and developing confidence that will give them joy for a lifetime of exploration and adventure. I’m proud to be able to share my love of sailing with the next generation. Sailing has been such a great gift to my life I can’t imagine not finding ways to share it.”

Jay Palace, president of GEL, added: “Gathering a big team to help empower children through sailing is a joyful experience. Regatta planning takes 12 months, but today we get to celebrate with a huge cadre of volunteers and community-minded business people. The highlight for me, as always, was presenting the check to a group of 7-12-year-olds who then read prepared thank you’s or spoke extemporaneously about how much they like learning to sail.”

Christopher, a 12-year-old student from Hillsborough, said: “I’ve been sailing for four years, so I guess you could say I’ve been sailing for about a third of my life. Its been a lot of fun for me, and I think through generous sponsors like all of you, kids who do not have the opportunity to sail can now enjoy this fun and exciting sport.”

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Several Bay Area donors and sponsors helped make our event possible, including: Synergy Corporate Housing; Bishop Ranch; Recommind; Sibby's Cupcakery; Republic of Cake; Lagunitas Brewing Company; Fine Foods at Home; Kinder's BBQ, Terry Dewane of Belo Wine Company; Canteen Bay Area; Noah's Bagels; Costco; Shutterfly; InnerWorkings, Inc. (trophies); professional videographer Vincent Casalaina; and Sergei Zavarin of ULTIMATE YACHTSHOTS.

Many volunteers spent countless hours making the event possible, including volunteers from the Junior League of San Francisco and the families of TISC students.

Next year's BIG Team Regatta takes place on September 30, 2011. Interested organizations can visit the [event page](#) or contact Jay Palace at 888-GEL-TEAM (888-435-8326) to sign up.

To learn more about or support the Treasure Island Sailing Center, contact Operations Manager Lacey Todd at [lacey.todd@tisailing.org](mailto:lacey.todd@tisailing.org) or 415-421-2225. You can also follow TISC on Twitter at @TIsailingcenter and become a fan on Facebook!

For updates and news from BIG Team Regatta San Francisco 2010, visit the official website here: <http://www.gelcorp.com/clients/bigteamregattasf2010/>.

## **About Treasure Island Sailing Center**

The Treasure Island Sailing Center (TISC) is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to improve the Bay Area community and the sport of sailing by providing access, facilities, and sailing instruction to people of all socioeconomic backgrounds, skill levels, and physical abilities. To learn more about our youth, adult, and adaptive sailing programs, call (415) 421-2225 or visit <http://www.tisailing.org>.

## **About Group Experiential Learning**

Group Experiential Learning (GEL) helps businesses forge high performance leaders and teams through active, outdoor experiential programs and consulting services. GEL is based in San Francisco, California, and creates custom team building experiences, executive retreats, and leadership development programs across the U.S. and in select international locations. In addition to supporting TISC, GEL is a bronze sponsor of the US Sailing Team AlphaGraphics, and is its official supplier of team building and leadership development consulting. <http://www.gelcorp.com>.

## **About OCSC SAILING**

OCSC SAILING is the premier sailing club in North America. For over 30 years, we have taught sailing on the San Francisco Bay. Because of our years of experience in sail training and corporate entertainment GEL has chosen OCSC SAILING as its San Francisco Bay partner. Together GEL and OCSC Sailing are able to provide your company with the exact sailing event desired. From simple sails for client entertainment and socializing to large celebrations and structured training in leadership and teambuilding, including landmark events in the

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Caribbean and Europe, GEL and OCSC SAILING can do it all. Contact OCSC SAILING at 1 800 223 2984 or visit <http://www.ocsc.com>.

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