

SEA AFFINITY

Youth2Adult – Y2A – is a series of articles celebrating sailing’s role in youth development.

According to Steve Maddox, who started a program in his Baltimore, Maryland area to serve under-privileged urban youth, “Sailing is a platform for higher life functioning.”

He had home-schooled his own children, and then began assisting other parents who were home-schooling, when Maddox stumbled upon US Sailing’s Reach program. It “utilizes sailing as an educational platform, challenging youth to embrace education, establishing a love of learning while exploring productive Science, Technology, Engineering and Math” according to www.reach.ussailing.org.

Maddox amended Reach modules to make them work with non-sailors and the “learning different”, as he prefers to call children who are learning disabled. Although Baltimore children are located within two miles of the sea, most never go there and have no affinity for the sea. Because of transportation costs, initially Maddox took the program to the kids instead of the kids to the water. He used videos, talked concepts and offered the program at no charge. What he found out was remarkable.

The dynamics of his first “no charge” after-school program administered through Boys & Girls Clubs (a national association serving inner-city kids) were these: parents dropped kids off (the children had no choice in attendance), kids were given “stuff” (food, etcetera), kids stayed indoors fiddling around on computers. The result: kids were restless and disrespectful.

Later, Maddox tried a different format within a Christian after-school program. Here the kids walked to the facility (by choice), they were not given “stuff”, they played outside, they worked in small groups (six kids/one adult), there were behavioral rules such as “raise your hand before talking”, the kids were expected to write things down, computer time was limited, there was a minimal cost to attend. All these factors yielded the results Maddox and others hoped for. The kids were respectful. Time was productive.

Each lesson taught had to bring relevance. A sample of some of the lessons: hoisting sails, steering, picking up marine debris (they scooped up trash while sailing and later talked about where it came from and how kids can help reduce trash and prevent littering).

Building an affinity for the sea in turn builds appreciation. Where there is appreciation, there is understanding. Where there is understanding, there is caring. Caring and a high regard for the sea are two of junior sailing’s many benefits.

Y2A Featured Youth

*Luc Chevrier, 16 years old
Member: St. Lucia Yacht Club
Favorite Boat: Laser Radial*



Although born in France, Luc’s formative years have been in St. Lucia, a place he considers “one of the most exquisite islands in the Caribbean.” He is in Grade 11/ Fifth Form at Bonne Terre Preparatory High School. With favorite subjects of physics, geography, biology, physical education and math he says, “Apart from sailing, I love fishing and soccer.”

At nine years old his dad introduced him to sailing, “He loves fishing and sailing and often took me out with him.

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The island of Saint Lucia was made for seafaring – or perhaps it’s the other way around. The prevailing warm and soothing northeast trade winds provide ideal sailing conditions. Yet, it’s Saint Lucia’s breathtaking scenery that attracts the finest yachts from around the world. Drop anchor near the majestic peaks of Petit and Gros Piton. Rodney Bay invites a night on the town. Or choose Marigot Bay for a chic excursion. Must-see dive spots abound, and there are plenty of hidden bays where you’ll create your own Caribbean mystique. Of course, no getaway would be complete without exploring the luxurious side of Saint Lucia through its restaurants, shopping, and resorts. Immerse yourself in a luxe yachting adventure in simply beautiful Saint Lucia.

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"He was part of a J/24 sailing team and wanted me to follow in his footsteps by enrolling me into St. Lucia Yacht Club's Learn to Sail program. With my love for the sea and encouragement from my parents, I began to focus very seriously on sailing."

Meeting high-level sailors from around the world has become Luc's favorite aspect of sailing. "I now have many friends in sailing from around the world that I met at the regattas I participated in." For Luc, the adrenaline rush at the starting line as well as sailing in extreme conditions at high speed "creates a feeling that words cannot describe."

Coping with stressful situations, keeping calm, communicating with teammates and staying focused on the task at hand are some of the skills Luc has developed from junior sailing. "I am able to apply these life skills in my school work when studying, socializing and completing large amounts of homework," he says. His scariest sailing moment was being surrounded by lightning and thunder in a squall in the Dominican Republic during the 2012 Optimist Worlds.

Luc's racing has taken off. He started in Optimists at nine years old. By ten, he competed in Canada's CORK then on to Opti Worlds in the Dominican Republic in 2012. "In 2014, I raced the Byte CII at the 2014 Youth Olympics in Nanjing, China. Currently, I am improving my skills and positioning at regattas in St. Lucia, Martinique, France, Canada, USA and Italy."

Luc would like to see "more youth enrollment in our sailing program and a larger diversity of boats added to our fleet." He would like to one day represent St. Lucia in the Olympics and make a career out of sailing.

Luc's message: "I encourage Caribbean youth to try the sport of sailing. We live on islands surrounded by water so why not make use of that resource? Sailing is a fun and educational sport. You get to meet other youths from around the world, make lifetime friends and learn many things about the sea that surrounds us. Also, there are many career opportunities in sailing and the marine sector. I would love to see many young Caribbean people take to the seas!"

Y2A Featured Adult

Lennox Wallace, 53 years old

Employment: Senior Captain, Leeward Charters,

St. Kitts

At 20 years old, Lennox Wallace was just finishing technical college in St. Kitts. He joined a boatyard that was yielding catamarans such as the 45-foot *Skyjack* and the 47-foot *Caona*. He began building catamarans with the late Philip Walwyn. "They told me I had to learn to sail them. I started out learning on Sunfish," Lennox explains. "Sailing helps me to deal with people,

working with the elements and generally being a good person."

With a large foredeck, a beam of 22 feet and a hull speed of 25 knots, *Caona* — named after a Carib Indian princess — became much more than a catamaran to Lennox. He tells of having "a very good relationship with *Caona*, who, like his wife, took him back to Nevis many years ago." This is part of the warm hospitality Lennox shows charter guests and makes him stand out in his field. In the 1980s, after a three-week first aid and emergency/rescue operations course in the UK, he assisted with mentally and physically challenged youth, and, when he returned home, was presented to the British Queen.

Currently, Lennox lives in St. Kitts with his wife, daughter and son. He makes his livelihood sailing *Caona* for Leeward Charters, volunteers as Red Cross Youth Director and enjoys singing and playing in a rhythm-and-blues band.

Lennox's wish: "I'd like to see more teaching of children on how to sail."



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