

NYSG makes programs available to youths in minority households unable to access to extracurricular marine education classes.



Marine Education in Minority Communities: Secrets of Great South Bay Marine Camp

Technology advancement, sports, extra-curricular activities, and school programs work together to dictate the patterns of today's children's lifestyles. Furthermore, the noticeable increase in access to electronic media (television, internet, gaming, and social media) creates an atmosphere where youths are easily isolated from outdoor activities. Youths in underserved communities are more restricted when they live in single-parent households with limited disposable income, especially if they assist with after-school care of younger siblings. As a result, many children are unable to access opportunities for quality marine education and outdoor learning experiences.

NYSG Responds

In 2016, New York Sea Grant (NYSG) partnered with the Town of Babylon and a group of educators to conduct a special summer marine "mini camp" at the Bob Sweeney Sport Fishing Education Center for youths residing in Western Suffolk County minority communities. NYSG supported the program through a small grant and the Babylon Town subsidized the transportation service.

NYSG worked directly with professionals who conduct social programs in Western Suffolk County minority communities. A custom marine science curriculum using immersion learning techniques was administered to teach marine biology to more than 200 youths participating in these two-day sessions. Several captured their first fish as part of this exciting opportunity.

NYSG was offered an additional education and outreach opportunity to encourage students to consider marine sciences careers during a keynote address to the youth leadership graduation ceremony attended by 70 parents and students in Huntington, NY.

Provision of resources to resolve financial barriers enables educators to engage minority youths in marine sciences classes and suggest alternate career choices.



Youth enjoy NYSG-developed mini-camp marine activities. Photos: Jan Porinchak, Antoinette Clemetson



Partners:

- Bob Sweeney Sport Fishing Education Center
- Hofstra University
- Nature Works
- Sport Fishing Alliance
- Town of Babylon

The Sea Grant Focus Area for this project is Environmental Literacy & Workforce Development

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