

AMERICAN ★ SAILOR

American Sailor -
News and Information for
US Sailing members



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Getting Millennials Hooked on Sailing

The millennial generation (those born roughly between 1981 and 1997) has surpassed the baby boomers (born 1946 to 1964) as the largest living generation, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau. So, it's not surprising that businesses and organizations alike are looking more towards "Millennial Marketing," a term that has become quite the buzz in marketing departments around the country.

At US Sailing's National Sailing Programs Symposium (NSPS) in February in Austin, TX, Lynn Handy, Executive Director of Downtown Sailing Center in Baltimore, and Travis Lund, Executive Director of Treasure Island Sailing Center in San Francisco, presented "Five Strategies for Millennial Engagement in Sailing." With 72 percent of millennials preferring to spend their money on experiences rather than on materials things, sailing is a perfect fit. However, as Lynn noted, it's getting them exposed to the sport that is the challenge.



"As a millennial, I knew that my generation of non-sailors was less likely to get into the sport through the traditional avenues," Lynn recently told US Sailing. "I had friends who admitted that it's too much of a commitment and too much money to even consider it. If I wanted to increase my revenue and reach more customers, I would have to adjust my approach."



The first strategy is accessibility. By offering discounts to new sailors, they can get a taste of spending time on the water. Lynn noted that she discounted one of the learn-to-sail programs in 2013 and that it sold out in less than two weeks. And, the program has been selling out ever since!

Additionally, to keep sailors engaged, new members of the Downtown Sailing Center receive a free three-hour learn-to-sail course. If sailors are not a member, they are encouraged to join by applying their learn-to-sail fees towards a new membership.

Group exposure is the second strategy that Lynn found to be successful. Using unique marketing avenues helps to get the word out about learn-to-sail opportunities. These include encouraging co-worker team-building activities, promoting networking opportunities and encouraging volunteer efforts.

Being open to new approaches to fit the unique needs of the millennial generation is also

an important strategy. Lynn says that one of the reasons that the program at Downtown Sailing Center is so popular is because it's designed to meet the unique needs of millennials. She said that not only do millennials love friend/group activities but that they also like personalization and diversification. For example, instead of following the traditional racing rules of sailing, the coaches pick a buoy on the water and race around it, letting the sailors pull in sheets, steer and sail around Baltimore Harbor. Lynn says that the program at Downtown Sailing Center focuses on good times and good sunsets, providing an awesome sailing experience for everyone.

Next, creating partnerships to attract new sailors can be a successful tactic. After an invitation to join a bocce team in Baltimore, Lynn realized that if 50 millennials could be convinced to play bocce she could definitely get more people interested in sailing. She decided to reach out to Baltimore Social, the company that organizes the bocce league, and asked if they'd be

willing to partner on sailing experiences. They officially launched the partnership four years ago and it has been going strong ever since.

Lynn suggests reaching out to "experience economy" groups, such as running clubs, local parks and recreation departments, local gyms, non-profits and outside event venues.

The final strategy, which is becoming increasingly essential, is social media outreach. As noted in the presentation, nearly 69 percent of millennials experience Fear of Missing Out (FOMO). This encourages them to show up, share and engage, which is the driving force behind the "experience economy."

"There is nothing like an Instagram picture of sailing on a harbor, which convinces other friends that they must try it," Lynn said.

The learn-to-sail program at Downtown Sailing Center attracts 70 new people to join the sport each session. Lynn noted that the return rate is almost 10 percent, with at least six of them coming back to become a member or to take another class.

"When considering launching a new program at your facility, it's important to consider the demographic," Lynn said. "Your program might not be able to host a seven-night sailing league, but you could offer a learn-to-sail sunset group event, a scavenger hunt via sailboats, team building events and so much more. As we all know, sailing is an epic sport. We just need to convince those non-sailors to give it a try."

By Kara DiCamillo

2017 US Sailing Team Announced



US Sailing has named 18 Olympic-class athletes to the 2017 US Sailing Team. The national team is selected annually and is comprised of the top sailors competing in the events selected for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. The roster is assembled from a combination of sailors who qualified based on results at World Cup Series Miami 2017, and additional accomplished athletes who receive discretionary selection from the Chief of U.S. Olympic Sailing, two-time Olympic Champion **Malcolm Page (Newport, R.I.)**. Through the US Sailing Team and its sponsors, athletes on the Olympic path receive financial, logistical, coaching, technical, fitness, marketing and communications support.

"Being named to your national team in any sport is a distinct honor, but it is also important to realize that these athletes have embraced a long-term commitment to excellence," said Page. "In addition to displaying some fine racing results over the past year, each of these sailors has committed

to a comprehensive training and competition plan for 2017. We want our roster to feature athletes who are internationally competitive, progressing in their training plans, and committed to reaching the top of the podium."

The 2017 team features seven athletes who competed in Rio 2016, and it is expected that others, including Olympic bronze medalist **Caleb Paine (San Diego, Calif.)** will return to action over the coming months. The US Sailing Team started the year with good results at World Cup Series Miami, North America's premier Olympic classes regatta. Men's 470 veterans **Stu McNay (Providence, R.I.)** and **David Hughes (Miami, Fla.)**, the top-performing American boat in any class over the past four years, claimed their third career Miami gold medals. McNay and Hughes finished 4th overall at Rio 2016, and their near-miss of the Olympic podium has propelled them towards earning another chance in Tokyo.

Joining McNay and Hughes on the national team for the first time will be 2016 I420 Youth World Champions **Wiley Rogers (Houston, Texas)** and **Jack Parkin (Riverside, Conn.)**, who have made the jump to the Olympic 470 class. Former 49er sailor **Ian MacDiarmid (Delray Beach, Fla.)**, the first modern-era sailor to win U.S. national championships in two different Olympic classes before the age of 18, qualified for the team in early 2017 and transitioned to the Men's 470 soon after. He will sail with London 2012 Men's 470 Olympic bronze medalist **Lucas Calabrese (Miami, Fla.)** who has transferred nationalities from Argentina to the United States. Together,

the three U.S. Men's 470 teams have the potential to form a highly competitive unit.

Another experienced athlete returning to the fold in 2017 is two-time Olympian, 2006 Rolex World Sailor of the Year and record five-time Laser Radial World Championship medalist **Paige Railey (Clearwater, Fla.)**. The road towards Tokyo 2020 will be the fourth full-time Olympic campaign of the Floridian's accomplished career. Joining Railey in the Laser Radial will be long-time national team teammate and record four-time ICSA College Sailing National Singlehanded Champion **Erika Reineke (Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.)**.

Holding down the men's singlehanded classes will be Rio 2016 Olympian, **Charlie Buckingham (Newport Beach, Calif.)** in the Laser, with 2013 Laser National Champion **Luke Muller (Ft. Pierce, Fla.)** in the heavyweight Finn class. Muller marked his arrival in the top level of international Finn sailing with a 4th overall finish at World Cup Series Miami 2017.

Two-time Moth class World Champion and 2009 US Sailing Rolex Yachtsman of the Year **Bora Gulari (Detroit, Mich.)** will sail with former 49erFX athlete, 2015 Pan American Games bronze medalist and 2016 Olympian **Helena Scutt (Kirkland, Wash.)**. **Louisa Chafee (Warwick, R.I.)**, a three-time collegiate All-American, will compete with 2014 Youth Worlds silver medalist **Riley Gibbs (Long Beach, Calif.)**.



"When people see our new logo, they should associate it with excellence, hard work, innovation, and results. It represents a new era, and the unlimited potential of our national team."

- Malcolm Page, Chief of U.S. Olympic Sailing

In the 49er **Judge Ryan (San Diego, Calif.)** and **Hans Henken (Coronado, Calif.)** finished second in the Rio Olympic selection series early last year despite a heavily truncated post-college Olympic campaign, and will look to build on that strong foundation. **David Liebenberg (Livermore,**

Calif.) helmed the top U.S. 49er in World Cup Series Miami 2017, and competed in the internationally broadcast medal race. Brothers and Harvard University Sailing Team standouts **Andrew Mollerus (Rye, N.Y.)** and **Matthew Mollerus (Rye, N.Y.)** round out the U.S. squad in the high-performance skiff class.

"To help American athletes achieve their goals, the U.S. Olympic sailing program is looking to build a system based on three primary goals," said Page. "We need to ensure that we maintain a positive and cohesive team culture, focus on athlete skill-building, and create long-term performance sustainability. I know that we

have both the talent and resources in the United States to create a top program, and I look forward to working with these 18 sailors and all others on the Olympic path to build the best team in the world."

Learn more about the US Sailing Team at www.ussailing.org/olympics/.

2017 USA Junior Olympic Sailing Festivals



USA Junior Olympic Sailing Festivals (#gojo17), a nationwide series of sailing regattas for youth ages 8 to 18, will be taking place at sailing clubs and yacht clubs around the country in 2017.

JO Festivals share a common goal: to encourage young sailors to enjoy sailing, develop their skills, and become life-long sailors.



These sailing festivals mix Olympic-style competition with elements of fun and learning at all levels, from beginning racers to those with Olympic aspirations.

Find a USA Junior Olympic Sailing Festival in your area: jo.ussailing.org

Be a First Sail Location

Is your home community sailing center, sailing club or yacht club an official First Sail location? Find out how your club can be part of this exciting new initiative.

anyone through a growing list of First Sail Locations, comprised of community sailing centers, sailing schools and yacht clubs around the country.

First Sail is organized by US Sailing with the goal of promoting the benefits of sailing, encouraging individuals to get out on the water and growing the sport of sailing across the United States.

The First Sail Experience is a short, affordable introductory sailing lesson offered to



**Paul Lang,
Instructional
Coordinator
at Mission Bay
Aquatic Center:**

"First Sail fills a gap in our sailing programming. While we all know the joy and excitement that can come from learning to sail, a number of potential students hesitate to commit to a full-length sailing course, especially if they have yet to step foot on

a boat. Not only is First Sail the perfect offering to allow students to try sailing without a significant commitment of time or money, but it's a perfect way to introduce our program to students who are reluctant to sign up to a full course without knowing if they'll like sailing or not.

We are confident that the vast majority of people who have a safe, informative and fun initial exposure to sailing will continue on to additional sailing instruction, and First Sail is an ideal vehicle for that first exposure to sailing."

Learn more about First Sail at firstsail.org.

Sailing Leadership Forum 2018 - Save the Date!

This signature US Sailing event offers a unique experience for all types of sailors. Join us for Sailing Leadership Forum 2018 at the TradeWinds Island Grand Resort in St. Pete Beach, Fla. on February 1-3, 2018. Learn more about SLF 2018 at sailingleadership.org.

