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Save the Harbor and DCR to Sponsor 80 Free Beach Events and Programs

Journal Staff

Save the Harbor/Save the Bay and the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) awarded more than \$215,000 in Better Beaches Program Grants to support over 80 free beach events and activities on the Boston Harbor region's public beaches in a ceremony on Boston's Fish Pier on Saturday, June 11th, 2016.

This year's Better Beaches Program Grants will fund concerts and sand sculpting competitions, beach festivals, movie nights, free paddleboard, kayak and swimming lessons, storytelling by the sea and art on the shore on public beaches from Nahant to Nantasket.

This year's recipients include 43 organizations in 9 waterfront neighborhood neighborhoods and beachfront communities from Nahant to Nantasket, including Lynn, Nahant, Revere, Winthrop, East Boston, South Boston, Dorchester, Quincy and Hull.

Funds for the Better Beaches Program include the proceeds of the Harpoon Helps Shamrock Splash and a legislative appropriation made to DCR to support summer programming on the region's public beaches, as recommended by the Metropolitan Beaches Commission.

In 2015, Save the Harbor and DCR awarded grants to 35 organizations in nine waterfront neighborhoods and beachfront communities from Nahant to Nantasket. Last year Better Beaches Program grants leveraged nearly \$650,000 in cash and in-kind support from local businesses and local government, including over 8,500 volunteer hours that supported the 70 free beach events and programs. More than 500,000 people attended Better Beaches Program events in 2015.

"It's a great investment and a terrific partnership," said Save the Harbor's spokesman Bruce Berman. "The Commonwealth appropriated \$190,000 this year and we are giving away more than \$215,000 to support another spectacular summer of free events and activities on these great urban beaches."

"All of these great events have one thing in common," said Save the Harbor/Save the Bay's President Patty Foley. "They bring people together to strengthen their communities and enjoy our region's most stunning natural resources, the 19 miles of DCR's public swimming beaches that connect us to each other and to Boston Harbor, Mass Bay and Broad Sound."

"The Department of Conservation and Recreation looks forward to working with Save the Harbor to deliver another summer full of fun, free events and programs at our beautiful public beaches for people of all walks of life to enjoy," said DCR Commissioner Leo Roy. "The Baker-

Polito Administration remains committed to fostering such partnerships to protect, promote, and enhance our state's resources for generations to come."

"At public hearings from Nahant to Nantasket we heard how important free events and programs are to the region's residents, who really love our beaches," said Representative RoseLee Vincent, Co-Chair Metropolitan Beaches Commission, Revere and Saugus. "Thanks to Save the Harbor/Save the Bay and DCR for working together to strengthen our beachfront communities and waterfront neighborhoods."

"Our waterfront and our beaches are remarkable assets with the power to connect our communities. We have heard again and again how modest investments in free events and programs have put these beaches to work and have provided expanded opportunities for residents, businesses and tourists," said Senator Thomas M. McGee, Co-Chair Metropolitan Beaches Commission, Lynn and Nahant.

"As an urban mom I know just how important these urban beaches and parks are to the region's kids and families," said DCR's Director of Mass Parks Operations and Metropolitan Beaches Commissioner Samantha Overton, who received an award from Save the Harbor and the Metropolitan Beaches Commission at the ceremony. "I'm proud of DCR's partnership with Save the Harbor and the Metropolitan Beaches Commission. My family and I really love these beaches."

Better Beaches Program Grants ranged from \$500 – \$20,000, with a typical grant of \$3,500. This year's programs include concert series, sand-sculpting competitions, campfires, art festivals, neighborhood beach parties, and family reading and movie nights on the beach, art on the shore and storytelling by the sea.

Save the Harbor would like to thank our foundation funding partners The Boston Foundation, the Richard Saltonstall Charitable Foundation, the Harold Whitworth Pierce Charitable Trust, our corporate sponsors Harpoon, JetBlue, Comcast and National Grid and the hundreds of participants and donors to the Harpoon Shamrock Splash for their support.

We would also like to thank Metropolitan Beaches Commission Co-Chairs Senator Tom McGee and Representative RoseLee Vincent and the legislative and community members of the Commission, the Baker-Polito Administration and our partners at the Department of Conservation and Recreation for making this great program possible.

To learn more about the Better Beaches Program visit Save the Harbor/Save the Bay's blog, Sea, Sand & Sky at www.blog.savetheharbor.org, or follow savetheharbor on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.