

(Two brothers who have benefited from SMBSF grants describe their experiences during youth sailing programs)

Sailing at the Del Rey Yacht Club continues to be a great experience for me that I look forward to every weekend. I came to Del Rey with just a few sailing skills. Over time, I progressed in my skill level and have learned many different techniques and racing skills. Making new friends at Del Rey was also very easy to do. Everyone is nice and willing to help you improve in your sailing skills.

Learning new sailing techniques, such as roll tacks, role jibes and using a spinnaker wasn't easy at first. Practicing these maneuvers took me a very long time just to get the hang of it, but with persistence, I was able to improve. I really love being on the Pali racing team and participating in the different regattas. The regattas were pretty intense; everyone was very aggressive, which also helped me to become a better sailor. During the regattas, I had to be more assertive or else I would not be able to get anywhere.

Some regattas took very long for the races to start, but during this time, it is always a lot of fun just hanging out with my friends. When summer started, I immediately signed up for summer sailing. I could not wait to get back out on the water. Summer sailing was another fantastic experience. I was able improve in my sailing skills, especially when it came to sailing fjs. I even got a chance to brush up on my skills with sailing sabots during the afternoon.

When summer sailing was over I could not wait to start high school sailing. Overall sailing is a fantastic sport and I would recommend sailing to all of my friends. I have grown as a sailor and as a person. I am very grateful for this experience.

Nashon C.

Sailing at the Del Rey Yacht Club has been a great experience for me because I have learned many new sailing skills. Over the years I have progressed with my sailing abilities from Sabots to Optis and now I am now sailing FJs. During the summer program, I learned a lot of new sailing techniques. This summer we mainly worked on racing skills because I was placed in the advance opti racing fleet. In the beginning, I wasn't keeping up with the group because I just came out of green fleet Optis but now my skills have really improved.

During the afternoon sessions, I started to warm up to the group and when we raced, I got second place. My coach, Ben Spector, was by far my favorite coach. He taught me how to roll tack and how to start on the line correctly and the list goes on and on. I have learned a lot from Ben.

When I sailed this summer, I also developed some tricks of my own, like starting the race on the pin end. This tactic allowed me to be leeward of everyone else in the race. But this trick all depends on the direction of the wind. During the summer, the wind was usually steady and not changing but that was in the morning. In the afternoon there were quite a few wind shifts, so I was able to use all of the skills I have learned during my training at the yacht club.

I think that sailing has really affected my life in a positive way and I know that I will be sailing for a very long time. It is a very interesting sport that forces you to be discipline and focused. I think sailing raised my self-esteem and my self-confidence. Sailing allows me to challenge myself and my sailing abilities every time I am out on the water. I really believe that sailing has forever changed my life.

Aaron C.