



GREAT LAKES
BOAT BUILDING SCHOOL
A Marine Trades Institution



in partnership with
MERCURY
UNIVERSITY

STEM2STERN NEWSLETTER



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From the Executive Director

Dear Friends of Great Lakes Boat Building School,

Over the past fifteen years GLBBS has been blessed with the tireless efforts from many supporters and organizations helping to propel the School forward to the respected and noteworthy School it is today. I am pleased to share with you through these efforts and collaborations, GLBBS and Les Cheneaux Community Schools were the beneficiaries of a grant awarded through the Michigan Marshall Plan for Talent. This grant provided the financial resources to take the Marine Service Technology program dream and make it a reality. Listed below are the Michigan Boating Industry Talent Consortium (MBITC) who assisted with the Michigan Marshall Plan for Talent application:

MICHIGAN BOATING INDUSTRY TALENT CONSORTIUM

Les Cheneaux Area Schools	Irish Boat Shop	Les Cheneaux Chamber of Commerce	Silver Spray Sports	Irish Boat Shop
Mackinac Economic Alliance	Walstrom Marine	Michigan Works	Eldean Shipyard	Boyne Boat Yard
Michigan Boating Industries Association	Toledo Beach Marina	Coburn and Associates	Diesel Fuel Doctor	North Shore Marinas
American Boat and Yacht Counsel	Rhode Island Marine Trades Association	Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District	Jefferson Beach Yacht Sales Pier 1000	E.J. Mertaugh Boatworks

Thank-you to all consortium members for your support through this process. A special thank-you to Randy Schaedig, Les Cheneaux Community Schools Superintendent, Ken Drenth, former GLBBS Board Chairman and Ryan Hinnen, former GLBBS Executive Director of Development for their devotion of time and effort applying for the Marshall Plan for Talent Grant.

In addition, this fall, GLBBS will be offering a Career Technical Education (CTE) program to Eastern Upper Peninsula juniors and seniors through Les Cheneaux Community Schools. The Small Engine CTE program will focus on marine engines, providing students an introduction to the marine industry and the marine technician program.

Marine Industry support is crucial to the success of our students, programs and School. Through engagement of industry relationships, students are the beneficiaries of careers and opportunities to work in the dynamic, constantly evolving marine industry. GLBBS Board of Directors is committed to respecting student financial resources as well as delivering outstanding placement services. As such, we are expanding our relationship development to engage marine industry leaders in offering sponsorship and scholarship programs to assist students with tuition and job placement. An opportunity to hear more about how to get involved with students and programming at GLBBS will take place via virtual informational sessions on April 16 at 4 pm and April 23 at 9 am. Space is limited to the first 50 employers who register at <https://glbbs.edu/employer-webinar/>.

Celebrate with us our outstanding students, our committed supporters and our new industry partnerships. Here's to our distinguished past and the promise of an exciting future!

Sincerely,



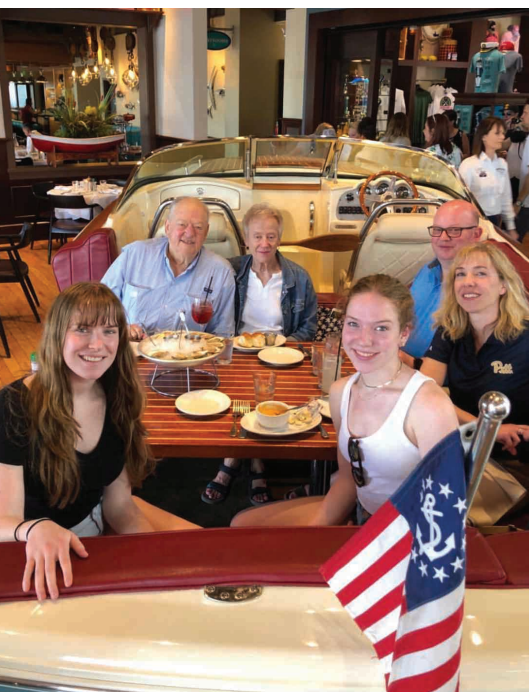
Nikki Storey, Executive Director



In Memoriam...

GREGORY L. MALCHO

By Bud McIntire '11



Bud McIntire

Our great friend, colleague, long-time GLBBS Board member and dedicated family man has left us to carry on without him. It's hard not to think of him coming around the corner with a big smile, a sheaf of accounting

papers in his hand, a wry remark and a tireless dedication to the Great Lakes Boat Building School, of which he was the Treasurer from 2009 until his passing.

Greg had a deep attachment to the Les Cheneaux Islands having vacationed here as a young boy and returning for the rest of his life with family and friends. He loved the area...the scenery, the people, the peace-and-quiet of an unhurried corner of the world and, of course, the classic wooden boats. It was a place of respite from his long and intense 35-year career as a successful financial executive with the Ford Motor Company.

Following Greg's retirement from Ford, he found ways to give back to the Les Cheneaux community, most notably combining his appreciation for wooden boats and his strong financial background to serve as a Board member and Treasurer of GLBBS. He saw the school through many milestones while providing financial governance over the years and was the longest serving Board member to date. His tireless focus on the school's financial health, and assisting the Board in maintaining that discipline, has played a key part in the school's success on a Regional and National level. He would also be the first to say that he was part of a great team of people in helping the school progress from the days of its dedicated original Founders

to the many Board members who served over the years.

The last time I talked with Greg a few weeks ago, he was full of enthusiasm about the new partnerships with Mercury Marine and with the State of Michigan to expand the mission of the school. To the very last, he kept his motivation about GLBBS and to its success as an educational institution training the next generation of wooden boat craftsmen and as a landmark of the Les Cheneaux Islands. He also talked about getting back to Hessel just as soon as he could. He was always looking forward to it.

Condolences to his wife of 53 years, Beth, who could often be found at GLBBS contributing her time and talents at special events, to his children...Brent, Matthew and Amy...to his brother, Chuck, a local resident, and to his grandchildren...Christy, Elise, Ella, Brian and Jack. You all meant the world to Greg. Remember him in the smell of fresh cut cedar at the boat school, at the annual gathering of classic wooden boats in Hessel and just in the place so dear to Greg's heart...the Les Cheneaux Islands.

'Fair winds and following seas' old friend...

There will be a celebration of life hosted at Great Lakes Boat Building School July 5 at 12 pm. Please join us in sharing and celebrating Greg.

In lieu of flowers the family has requested memorials to the Great Lakes Boat Building School.

Bud McIntire is a 2011 graduate of Great Lakes Boat Building School. Bud worked at GLBBS post graduation as the Director of Student Services and was not only a colleague of Greg's but a great friend.



GLBBS OFFERS MERCURY MARINE EXCLUSIVE PROGRAMMING FOR STUDENTS

By Alex Iseri, *Director of Mackinac Economic Alliance*



In order to remain vital, organizations must constantly be looking for opportunities to grow and develop. These opportunities must not only be within the organizations'

capabilities, but also have to reflect the needs of the populations that they hope to serve. The needs of these populations are constantly in flux, changing to reflect the demands of the economy and their communities. For organizations to remain relevant, they must find ways to anticipate the emergent demands of the economy and communities. And they must find ways to act to meet that demand. An organization's inertia and attachment to its history can hamstring its capacity to respond to change. Organizational inertia and an attachment to an organization's history can hamstring an organization's capacity to respond to change. Conversely, an organization's well-timed change can catalyze rapid growth and positive transformation. Organizations that have been shaped by decades of tradition and long-standing standards and practices can be enhanced in unique ways by the introduction of new ideas. This can foster dynamism in the organization and the community in which it operates.

After months of preparation and years of hard work, Great Lakes Boat Building School (GLBBS) has introduced a new, exciting partnership for the School. On January 24th, GLBBS and Mercury Marine announced a new exclusive partnership that would start students down the career path to become certified Mercury Marine technicians.

Launching this exclusive partnership places GLBBS, and its students, in an extremely advantageous position. Not

only is Mercury Marine one of the world's premier marine engine manufacturers, but Michigan represents a huge market for both marine engine manufacturers and marine engineer technicians. Michigan is the third largest marine market in the country with nearly a million registered watercraft. It is estimated that 1 in 2 Michiganders will take to the water every year. Students who matriculate from this program will be in high demand in Michigan and across the country.



This certification will become available to GLBBS students in the fall of 2020, and it is anticipated that this will have an immediate and profound impact on the school and the community. Adding the Mercury Marine Maintenance certification to the school's offerings will have a dramatic impact on enrollment at GLBBS as students flock to enroll in a program that will prepare them for rewarding, well-compensated careers as Mercury Marine technicians. This will not only feed the growing marine industry in Michigan and across the country, but it will also drive growth in the Les Cheneaux region and Mackinac County. More students at GLBBS means that there will be more demand for goods



and services year around in Cedarville and Hessel, providing more support and more business for area businesses. This will help businesses to expand, creating jobs and increasing household incomes, thereby creating more incentives for young families to join the community. This growth will be augmented by GLBBS graduates who choose to remain in the Les Cheneaux region, either through employment with an existing company or by starting their own business, which in turn will create more jobs.

Creating these opportunities at the existing facility also allows the School to offer a set of complimentary offerings, which will in turn help to build robust relationships between the craftsmen and craftswomen learning the construction and repair of wooden boats, and the men and women who will be responsible for repairing marine propulsion systems. There is no way to anticipate what will come from these relationships but is safe to say that consumers can only benefit from a more closely networked community of marine professionals.

It is for these reasons that the School is proud to announce this new collaboration.

This step will not only carry Great Lakes Boat Building School forward into the future, but it will also be a great boon to a community that has so loyally supported the School as it grew and developed.

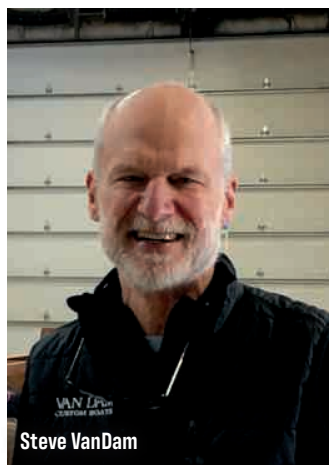
This would not have been possible without a fantastic board, an incredible team of staff and instructors, and all of you who have shared with us a vision of a school that trains the next generation of great marine professionals.

Alex Iseri is the Director of Mackinac Economic Alliance. Thank-you Alex for so generously donating your time to write for Stem2Stern.

GLBBS PROGRAM ADVISORY BOARD

Ensures Relevancy

By: **Steve VanDam**, *Program Advisory Board Chair*



Today, the Great Lakes Boat Building School embarks on offering a new Marine Service Technology Program in partnership with Mercury Marine. Adding a second program to the School's established Comprehensive Career Boat Building Program enhances its mission to prepare students for rewarding careers in the marine industry. This step has the unanimous support of our Program Advisory Board (PAB). Our role is two-fold. First, the PAB reviews the School's curriculum and practices to

ensure relevance to industry needs and career employment for our students. Second, the PAB is proactive in guiding the School to achieve its vision as the leader in marine workforce development in the Great Lakes region.

As the owner of Van Dam Custom Boats and a marine storage and service business, it was clear to me that the School needed to expand its offerings to include a Marine Service Technology Program. Even though our custom boat building business focuses on wooden boats, they are exotic boats that also require the installation of engines and sophisticated mechanical and electrical components. Members of the PAB from across the Great Lakes region came to the same conclusion and represent restoration shops, marinas, boatbuilding businesses, museums, secondary school vocational programs and recreational boating educational opportunities. The Marine Service Technology program will cover a broad range of skills needed in a boat yard. Students will learn everything from keeping the bilge pumps working to servicing engines, from trouble shooting a dead battery to diagnosing blown fuses and from tying a boat correctly at the dock to blocking it safely in storage. In boat building shops, these are the skills needed in addition to trained craftspeople.

Looking to the future, the PAB is already discussing what offerings should be added down the road. They include high tech composites, marine finish systems, diesel training, and advanced electrical and electronics training. There is a lot going on at the Great Lakes Boat Building School and the PAB is razor focused on helping it continue to offer its students the best training available in the marine industry.

Steve VanDam has served on the GLBBS Program Advisory Board since its inception in 2013. He is also the Founder of VanDam Custom Boats located in Boyne City, Michigan.



FREEING WILLARD

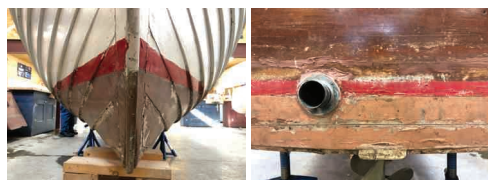
By Matt Edmondson, Lead Instructor



WILLARD - It often happens that the best projects you get to work on in the boat shop simply fall in your lap. What makes these projects so special is not just the story of the boat

and the people that owned it, but being able to become part of that story yourself. This is the case with WILLARD - a 1959 Century Viking that came to us by chance, gave us a story, and left us enough blank pages to let the crew at GLBBS write a chapter or two...

"I found a cool old boat; you have to come see it They said it's ours if we want it!" That was the first I heard of WILLARD, spoken with excitement by Chris Ritchie, GLBBS 2017 alum and Captain of Whiskey Plank Tours. We took a boat ride out to the boathouse in which the boat, a lapstrake utility, was kept and found it in the back under a cover much in need of attention but totally intact. Off came the cover and we were pleased to be greeted with the word CENTURY on the aft quarter.



When we take a boat on donation for the restoration class, there are a few key things that we need to see in that boat to make sure that we are able to hit our goals for the students. The trick to restoration, and it's main difference from building new boats, isn't so much that the skills involved are different as much as it is the *sequence* we apply those skills changes from boat to boat.. As a learning tool, it looked like WILLARD would be a great one - sort of 'broken in all the right places'. It would need refinishing, engine work on the Graymarine 109, undoubtedly some bottom repair, and many other common repair and maintenance jobs commonly seen by today's wooden boat

shop. WILLARD would allow the students to survey and evaluate and determine the best ways to make repairs and in what sequence, all on a manageable sized boat. "Chris!... yeah man, let's get it!"

Excerpt from Clara Hardy, donor, from correspondence with Whiskey Plank:

On the Willard history: my father bought the boat in, I would say, 1985 or so. It was out on a trailer in front of what used to be Garvie's (now the culinary school) with a price marked (\$3000?) around the time of the boat show. The original name was the "Chicks-a-boo." Dad (and Mom) were keen to get a wooden boat because that had very much been part of life on the island -- my mom had grown up with her father's (Willard Seiberling) "Sally Anne" as the camp boat in which family would pack picnics to other islands, or chug down the channel at sunset, etc. While I was growing up my grandfather used to spend nights in what was then "Wilson's Motel" (now the Lakeview), so every evening we would see him off in the Sally Anne and he would make jokes about how well she'd start up ("first try!"). I very vividly remember the sound of that inboard engine.

The Sally Anne had been sold after Willard's death in 1981. At that time we had a wooden outboard (a Lyman!) which we tried valiantly to refurbish that summer, but I think we ended up having to either sell or junk that and we replaced it with the Starcraft we are still driving. Anyway by the mid-late 80s we had spent a LOT of time, energy and money on fixing up the camp on the island as much as we could, and I think Mom and Dad were both nostalgic about trying to make it as much like it had been in the glory days as possible. Plus having a larger boat in addition to the smaller one was very handy for when we had large numbers arriving/leaving the island.

As we told you, the boat was quite leaky from the outset. The guy we bought it from had told us that this was only because it had been out of the water, and as the wood swelled it would stop leaking, but it really never did. There was a sump pump that would keep it from sinking, but of course it would also run down the battery... so while we did drive it pretty regularly for a couple of summers (including on some lovely sunset cruises!) it really never ended up being the reliable camp boat I think Dad had envisioned when he bought it. At some point in the 90s, after he retired and he and mom were spending full summers on the island, he undertook to do some re-finishing etc, and spent many hours down in the boathouse working on it. But I do not think we ever got it back in the water after that. Dad got cancer in 2003 and died in 2004; I'm not sure when the last time we actually had it in the water.

Reports of the leaking were not exaggerated. On a rainy October Friday, we boated over to the island with the intention of moving WILLARD off its cradle and into the boathouse slip, where we would hang it from the slings for a couple of days to



see if the bottom would soak up. Not unexpectedly, it didn't, at least not much. Century lapstrakes were planked with solid african mahogany planking, rather the plywood that nearly all other builders used at that time. Theoretically, they should swell more than plywood and tighten up, but Century lapstrakes have a bit of a reputation for chronic leaks.

After a couple of days in the slip, we went back to see if we could make the trip back to Hessel without losing the boat to Lake Huron. Armed with a generator, three pumps, and an undersized life vest, Chris hopped into WILLARD and I into the towboat for its first trek across the bay in 25ish years.

Fast forward to February of this year: WILLARD was brought inside and the initial work started - the surveying, cleaning, and researching. The students in the class of 2020 have been methodically disassembling the boat, documenting with photos and measurements the location of hardware, interior installations, and any other information that may be useful on the other end of the restoration process. Things we have discovered so far: There appears to have been damage to the running gear, likely from a rock strike. A new keel section was bolted on and the rudder and propeller replaced. Also, machine screws were added in the plank laps below the waterline. (Multiple sources tell us this was a common repair attempt to fix the chronic leaks.)



Additionally, an unoriginal skeg was bolted onto the keel, presumably as insurance against future groundings, but this repair inadvertently held the keel too straight, forcing a slight shift in the bottom shape of the hull.



Captain Chris Ritchie '17 from Whiskey Plank Tours

As you have years of destructive testing right there before you, lessons abound on a boat like this. You can plainly see what repairs and changes worked and what didn't. All is information that helps us determine the cure for Willard and assists us in making wise choices during the reconstruction.

So where does it go from here? Day by day we learn more about WILLARD and the boats like it, and the people in the past (and present) that interacted with them. The class of 2020 is doing its best to make sure that the work done to the boat is done so accurately and caringly. We hope to once again hear WILLARD's Graymarine making that classic inboard burble down the channels of Les Cheneaux.

Matt Edmondson is the Lead Instructor at GLBBS and a 2014 graduate of the Comprehensive Career Boat Building Program.

Indian River Skiff Update

By Matt Edmondson, Lead Instructor



Out in the mill shop, the Indian River Skiff Replica continues to take its final form. We have been learning some interesting lessons about the boat, both from the original's history and also from the standpoint of boatbuilding procedures.

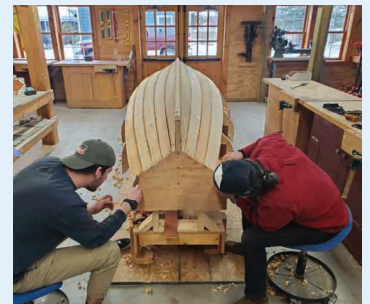
Boats of this type used to be integral to the waterfront scene of America, both freshwater and salt. Small pulling boats were used for work more than play. They were the taxi, the rental car, the pickup truck of the population of any waterfront community. As such, they weren't designed or intended to be finely crafted

works of art coated in the best spar varnish. Sturdy, easily built, low cost of materials were the main design brief, with most built with the eye of the builder as the only blueprint.

Variations of the designs were based on location, use, local materials, and the builders preferred style. The result today is an interesting collection of boats that each bear the signature of their builder and a snapshot in time about life in those parts of the world.

Ours is no different - the original IRS is a no frills, no paint, easily and quickly built rowboat for the inland waters of northern Michigan. It is built with Lightweight $\frac{3}{8}$ cedar planking over a frame of oak with simple iron thwart bracing. All easily obtainable in the 1920s or 30s, when we believe this boat to have been built.

While the series of steps to build a boat are generally framed pretty well, the individual production of parts and their assembly can vary boat to boat. At the start, this boat was exceptionally easy to plank. Many of these boats can be difficult in the aft sections near the transom, involving a lot of twist and set to the planks that make planking a challenge, but on the IRS the shape is less complex, presumably just for the purpose of making planking easy - something that would be a huge help in a one man boatshop.



One of the challenges the students have faced with this project though is how to maintain the proper hull shape until all the structure is installed. On lapstrake boats, it's quite common to put the hull's out skin, the planking, on the building form first and then install the frames later after being flipped right side up. The challenge on the IRS is that the hull planking is so lightweight, there is little to hold the boat in it's intended shape while being framed. We had to be extra gentle in the steam bending process, because it was very easy to set the frames a bit too tight and make the hull bulge out in the midships section. Typically, a builder would start mid-ships in the hull and frame outwards toward both ends but in this case we decided to bounce around, adding structure in different parts of the boat while clamps, weights, and temporary forms held the hull from splaying out too far.

Our Indian River Skiff has fast become a lesson in how to build deliberately, but with gentleness of tools and materials. We are looking forward to the next challenges it will surely bring!

CURRENT STUDENTS ENROLL IN NEW PROGRAM

By Cora VanSloten

Congratulations to Matt Stolle of New York, New York, William Berryhill of Guilford, Indiana, and George VanSumeren of Okemos, Michigan for being the first three students to enroll into our 2020 Marine Service Technology program. All three are current students of our 12-month Comprehensive Career Boat Building program and will graduate with a Great Lakes Boat Building School (GLBBS) Diploma of Completion in August.

"I'm glad to welcome all three of these students into the new program. They are just the kind of people the industry is looking for - inquisitive, hard working, and each of them genuinely love boats and boating. All three of our students moving into the MST program have similar strengths, and I'm happy to work with that group for another year!" - Matt Edmondson

Matt Stolle ■ New York, New York



William Berryhill ■ Guilford, Indiana



George VanSumeren ■ Okemos, Michigan



Alumni Spotlight

**Bretton Wilcox '19 Comprehensive Career Boat Building Graduate Boat Builder
M.E. Yacht Restoration Holland, Michigan**

Q: How did the time you spent at GLBBS prepare you for your new job?

A: My time at GLBBS allowed me to grow my skills and prepare me for a career in boat building and woodworking. I began as an entry level builder with very little wood working skill and the time spent at the school allowed me to get familiar with tools and equipment, learning trade skills, experimenting with different building concepts, and most importantly working in a day to day lifestyle mirroring how the industry operates with time records and documenting materials used.



Q: What is the most important or valuable thing you learned at GLBBS?

A: The most valuable thing I learned in the program is confidence and my team played a huge part in that. Your class mates and faculty are like family, in my case I had an older classmate who was a master of his trade and took me under his wing assuring me that my work was so much better than what I perceived it to be. Throughout the year I learned self-confidence and patience to be able to not just settle for a job after school but the career that I wanted.



Q: What do you love the most about your current job?

A: I chose Mike Evenhouse Yacht Restoration after GLBBS to start my career because they wanted a "Jack of all trades" kind of worker and I was their guy. Here I get to build, restore yachts, paint, metalwork, you name it. I love that it doesn't feel like work. This is something I have wanted to do for years now and I am thriving in the industry.

Q: What do you think was the biggest benefit of attending GLBBS?

A: GLBBS pumps a lot of knowledge and training into 12 months, and though it is intense and demanding at times, you get a significant amount of experience for the time spent in the program, from lofting, to mold making, propulsion courses, general knowledge of how boats operate, installing equipment, wiring, finishing, and so much more. As an entry level student, I went from knowing very little to knowing a vast amount about the nature of boats, woods, and marinas all in a one-year span.



Q: Anything else you'd like to share about your time at GLBBS or your new position/company?

A: There are so many paths you can take in this industry from finish work, to mechanics, fiber glassing, restoration, detail work, chartering, you name it. It's like a tree and GLBBS is the roots that allow you to grow. It's only the beginning.

Upcoming Events and Activities

The **POWER** *of fifteen*

HAVE YOU HEARD? GLBBS IS CELEBRATING 15 YEARS!

15 YEARS OF SKILLED GRADUATES ⚓ 15 YEARS OF BEAUTIFUL BOATS
15 YEARS OF LIFE-LONG FRIENDSHIPS

To honor and celebrate our 15th anniversary, GLBBS is offering you a chance to win a 15HP Mercury Fourstroke outboard engine. Sign up for a monthly recurring gift of \$15 or more in 2020 and you will be entered in a drawing** for the chance to win a short shaft, electronic ignition, tiller steer, 99LBS dry weight - Mercury Fourstroke engine. MSRP \$3,300

To sign up for recurring gifts visit glbbs.edu/powerof15 or call (906) 484-1081.

15% of all recurring gifts established in 2020 will be designated for student scholarships.

THANK YOU FOR FIFTEEN AMAZING YEARS!

**Drawing will take place December 31, 2020 at 11:59 pm.

Beerfest & Boatyard Bash

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4
5-9 PM**

CELEBRATING 15 YEARS SINCE THE SCHOOL'S FOUNDING

JOIN US FOR THE GRAND-REOPENING OF GLBBS AND SEE THE
NEWLY RENOVATED MARINE SERVICE TECHNOLOGY SHOP

Great Beer ▪ Awesome Food ▪ Silent and Live Auction ▪ Live Music ▪ & Much More!

Have a really great piece of history or art you would like to donate to a great cause? **GLBBS is looking for nautical themed donation items for silent and live auction.** Interested in getting involved? Contact Lori at lori.james@glbbs.org or by calling the School at **(906) 484-1081**.



**GREAT LAKES
BOAT BUILDING SCHOOL**
A Marine Trades Institution

*First Day
of Class!*

SEPTEMBER 8

Class starts for both our Comprehensive Career Boat Building and Marine Service Technology Program.

PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS VISIT GLBBS TO *Learn About Programs*

By Cora VanSloten



Cora VanSloten

Have you ever been to Les Cheneaux Islands in the dead of winter? Well, if you have, then you know that though it is quieter than the summer, it is certainly a lively community. Between the island-hopping snowmobilers, the cross-country skiers, the fishermen and women and the curious day-trippers, there is plenty to do in this snow-covered terrain.

On the second Saturday in February, in conjunction with a local winter carnival called Snowsfest, GLBBS opened its doors to fifteen prospective students and their guests. Students came from across the midwest and drove from as far as Kansas City, MO to learn about the programs being offered at GLBBS.



The day started off at Les Cheneaux Community Schools for a pancake breakfast hosted by the Les Cheneaux Snowmobile Club. Following breakfast, everyone headed to GLBBS for introductions and a tour of the school. Prospective students and guests met in a classroom where staff presented information on programming and financial assistance. This gave prospective students and parents the opportunity to learn how GLBBS is a launching pad for rewarding careers in the marine industry.

A recent Comprehensive Career Boat Building ('19) graduate, Brett Wilcox, was kind enough to join us for the day. Brett now works at M.E. Yacht Restoration in Holland, Michigan. Brett provided prospective students real-life examples of a student success story and was a great resource for potential students. After a tour of the facility and an explanation of the

renovations in order to accommodate our new Marine Service Technology and Small Engine Career Technical Education (CTE) programs, we dove right into some hands-on activities.



The group was split into three and each rotated through stations doing different boat-building activities. The first of the three was carvel plank caulking. This taught the students how to finish off plank seams. The second of the three was copper riveting and this showed the students how to fasten planking. The last of the activities was a steam-bending activity. This allowed students to discover the alternate ways to generate shapes with wood.



After students went through the boat building activities, pizza was provided for lunch and prospective students were given time to explore the Les Cheneaux area and Snowsfest. Around town, they would find a number of colorful creatures. As a part of Snowsfest, local businesses participated in a mythical creature ice sculpture contest hosted by the Les Cheneaux Islands Chamber of Commerce. With a grand prize of \$1,800.00 and our students having necessary new kitchen appliances in mind, they entered into the contest. With a little help from Lead Instructor Matt Edmondson, Student Services

Coordinator Matt Dost, and Shop Assistant Paul Pendry, they captured the interest of the community and were the talk of the town. This sculpture, named "Yeti vs Jaws" ended up taking second place to a sculpture made by Cedarville Marine.

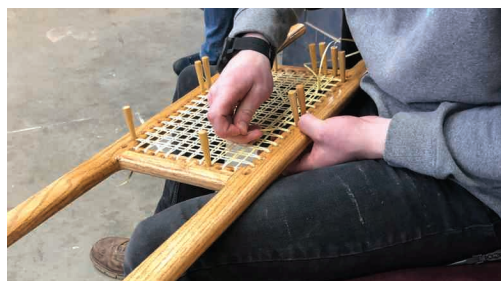
To wrap the day up, prospects congregated in the shop for some discussion about the life of a marine technician led by Mike Downey of Bergmann Marine. Mike is a wealth of knowledge when it comes to the tools of the trade, as he has worked in the industry for over 20 years and also teaches ABYC Certification classes at GLBBS. During this time, students were shown career pathways that are available to them by becoming a Mercury Certified Marine Technician as well as the vast amount of troubleshooting that takes place.



Thank you to all of our volunteers who helped make the day a great success, and a special thank you to Mike Downey from Bergmann Marine for sharing his experience as a Marine Technician and his tools from the trade. The next open house for prospective students will be June 6, 2020 in conjunction with the Aldo Leopold Festival. If you or someone you know is interested in a career as a marine carpenter, marine technician, or somewhere in between, please join us! Learn more here: www.glbbs.edu/ or call GLBBS at 906-484-1081.

As Admissions Advisor, Cora provides a wide range of assistance when it comes to jump starting your career in the marine industry and exploring a future of working on the water. "If you love working with your hands, the great outdoors, and being on the water, contact Cora!"

What the students have been up to...



APPLY NOW
and save
\$100

From now until May 1, 2020
Great Lakes Boat Building School
is waiving your application fee so you
can meet the deadline for priority
consideration.



**GREAT LAKES
BOAT BUILDING SCHOOL**
A Marine Trades Institution

APPLY ONLINE | GLBBS.EDU

NIKKI THE CAN DO KID

By Dave Murray

*“She’ll work long hours and study real hard
With zest and zeal, she’ll pursue it.
I know she’ll not come home and I say I failed
This Can Do Kid can do it.”*



Nikki Storey

When she was 18-years old, Nikki Storey was captured in verse by her grandfather, Otto, as the Can Do Kid. Now some two decades later as Executive Director of the Great Lakes Boat Building School, she is charged to ‘do it.’

She had been the business manager for just two months in 2015 when she was assigned a significant task.

“Mr. Reid (Joe Reid, Board chairman) asked me to develop a three-year financial sustainability plan to outline how the school could hit its goals,” she said. “I put it together quickly, about a couple of days, and when I handed it back to him and he read it over, he said, ‘someday you’ll be running this place.’”

Someday has arrived.

“Nikki fits my definition of an exceptional leader,” said Steve VanDam, Founder of VanDam Custom Boats and the GLBBS Program Advisory Chair. “She has taken the time to study leadership and good management practices and it shows.”

At 39, Nikki takes the helm of this 15-year old vessel called Great Lakes Boat Building School - A Marine Trades Institution. A new odyssey is about to begin as the school has united with Mercury Marine in an exclusive partnership that combines the Comprehensive Career Boat Building Program with Mercury’s Marine Service Technology program into the unique professional marine education and training center in the Great Lakes region.

“Nikki and I have built a strong relationship in a short amount of time,” said Nick Van Nocker, Mercury Marine Training Technology Manager. “Her passion about GLBBS and her career shines each time you work with her. She is determined to be successful, and I am excited to have a partnership with her. I look forward to what our two

organizations can accomplish together for the marine industry.” An industry that saw \$42 billion in sales in 2019.

Like the voyage of Odysseus, the seas ahead are filled with many challenges and risks. The Board has set 40 goals for the School’s coming year, and targeted seven milestones for their 5-year strategic plan.

Among the 40-year goals:

- ⚓ Meet enrollment of 12 for the Comprehensive Career Boat Building and 12 for the Marine Service Technology (with the 5-Year Milestone of 50 full-time students total)
- ⚓ Implement the Marine Service Technology program in September 2020
- ⚓ Develop 50 Educational Relationships (both secondary and post-secondary)
- ⚓ Develop 10 Marine Industry Relationships
- ⚓ Implement Financial Aid (Nikki’s leading role in attaining accreditation opened the door for students to receive federal assistance), and more.

Among the 5-year milestones are:

- ⚓ Will have sufficient staff and faculty to meet the needs of the students
- ⚓ Will have sufficient student housing to support enrollment
- ⚓ Will decrease reliance on donations to 20% of operational costs
- ⚓ Introduce and provide three new programs to the students in the next three years, such as fiberglass repair, composites and more
- ⚓ Have the appropriate facilities to support curriculum, students, faculty and operations
- ⚓ Generate revenue to meet or exceed all operational expenses



This is not a honey-do list. And a good captain knows how to get the most from her crew. With her background in human resources at Lake Superior State University and War



Memorial Hospital, Nikki knows the importance of and how to build effective relationships; a skill she continues to hone with the diversity of people—Board members, faculty, students, and community—working alongside her.

In working with Van Nocker, Nikki said they developed a solid foundation for their partnership beyond just a working relationship. She was not content with Mercury Marine’s leadership coming to GLBBS to see what GLBBS offered. She insisted that she and lead instructor Matt Edmondson travel to Fond Du Lac, Wisconsin, Mercury’s home base, to meet with the Mercury leadership and observe their training facilities.

“We share the same goals and vision by providing quality, well-rounded technicians for marine employers,” she said. “We’ve developed a lasting partnership to serve the marine industry around the Great Lakes.”

And her relationship with her staff is equally important. She implemented Employee Success Sessions, which meet every two months aimed to nurture open communications.

“These sessions help me keep a thumb on the pulse of how my team is feeling and if there are any issues I need to address for them,” Nikki described. “It opens a dialogue between us where they can tell me what is going well for them and what they need to be successful in their job in providing outstanding service for students.”

She also began an Employee Appreciation program where staff tells who they would like her to recognize among them, be it students, staff or School friends, and she sends notes of thanks or gift certificates from local businesses to them for their work to support the school and help achieve the

mission.

"I don't like being called the boss," she said with that smile that can light a room. "I work to collaborate with my team. I want them to see I work hard and yet I want them to know I am here to support them in their roles. Everyone plays a part in the success of our students and programs. I'll also let you know what's on my mind, and if you say you will do something, I trust and expect you will."

Of course, if you don't do what you said you'd do, you will hear something else that's on her mind. Some of that will be the resounding waves of her laughter, something she admits she likes to do.

"Great leadership is focused on the success of the team



rather than the self," said VanDam. "One of Nikki's many outstanding traits is her passionate success on the entire GLBBS team."

That team includes the students.

"There's a misconception that our focus is on the boat building," Nikki said. "Our focus is on the student. That's why we are here. That's what we are about. I was drawn to the marine industry for the opportunity to make an impact by supporting students who seek a marine industry career. It is exhilarating to participate in a field where the industry is constantly evolving, and you have a great opportunity to make a direct impact on someone's life through a career."

She's also reaching out to secondary school administrators through a Career Technical Education program for high school students in small engine maintenance and repair that begins this fall. Students can gauge their interest in Marine Technology through this free program, and any student from throughout the state who attends the Small Engine CTE Program is automatically offered a \$2,500 scholarship to reduce their tuition costs when they enroll in a post-secondary program at GLBBS.

As Chairman Reid pointed out, that ability to relate to students, to listen to them, is a key facet for prospective

students too, especially as GLBBS and Mercury University ratchet up their recruitment to meet their goals.

"She's very approachable and she will actually listen to each student," he said. "She will work with them (she's already shown that) to find a solution to their concerns that is satisfying to the student and maintains the integrity of the school."

He added, "The primary function of a school is to provide the student with the quality education to go into the marketplace and build a successful career. That's the morality of a school. That's why we knew Nikki was the right person, because it is a passion for her. Our goals are ambitious, but she is incredibly tenacious, and she has the heart and mind to do it. I think she could have helped Noah build his ark."

For the past five years, students from GLBBS have enjoyed a 100% job placement rate upon graduation from the school.

The other team member is the Board of Directors, and her relationship with them is as strong as a trucker's hitch knot. She credits Reid with mentoring her over the years, and she has had to lean on Board members in some of the stormier days.

"There were many days when I called Greg (Greg Malcho, the former treasurer of the Board who passed away recently, a loss Nikki still feels) and told him I was concerned about the financial status of the school, and we may have to close the doors," she recalled. "Greg would always say, in a calm reassuring way, that he's gone to the Board before and said the same things and someone has always stepped up to help, and that we would get through this storm. He was right. The Les Cheneaux Island supporters and community have always stood behind the school and its success is attributed to that support." She knew then that she had a good relationship with the Board.

Long hours, ambitious goals, an expanding multi-faceted program with significant spotlight attention can be a source for burnout, particularly for a single mother with two teenage boys at home, and a daughter and grandson in Grand Rapids. But for Nikki, it isn't just a job.

"I'm having fun and working here energizes and motivates me," she said with that assuring smile.

For her long hours, her passion and commitment to making

GLBBS not just a success but "the educational training center for the marine industry in Great Lakes," Nikki will be honored in Boating Industry's "40 Under 40" annual profile of the "best young leaders from all segments of the marine industry."

Taking the helm of this new Great Lakes venture may appear as daunting as the trials of Odysseus. Navigating the rocky shoals and turbulent waters of financial stability, recruitment and housing of students, hiring and retaining a quality crew, informing and assuring the Board of Directors, maintaining and upgrading the vessel and equipment, steering the right courses on a new map, being on top of ever changing currents, and garnering the support of communities and ports along the journey requires a strong, firmly set inner gyroscope, or as the poet William Blake called it—a firm persuasion, especially as unknown storms and waves swell up on the wine-dark sea.

But boats and education are not made for harbors. Only by sailing that open sea together will they all realize the



"amazing career opportunities that exist in the marine industry," an industry as old (and new) as any mariner or dreamer wishing to sail the seas.

More than 20 years ago one weathered mariner sized up this ship's captain and wrote his words upon her sails:

*I know she'll not come home and
say I failed, This Can Do Kid can do it.*

In the words of Dave Murray, "just a local resident who is still learning to row a little boat". Thank you – Dave for volunteering your time and supporting the Stem2Stern publication.

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As we turn the page on 2019 and reflect on the last 15 years of accomplishments at GLBBS, we can't help but be thankful to all of our friends, family, and supporters. Whether you've given of your time, supported the school through a monetary gift, or simply spread the good news about the "Boat School" -THANK YOU!

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To be the leader in marine workforce
development in the Great Lakes region.

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GRAVELLY ISLAND *Skiff Raffle*

**GLBBS WILL BE RAFFLING THE GRAVELLY ISLAND SKIFF AT BEERFEST
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GLBBS is thrilled to announce a raffle of the "GRAVELLY ISLAND SKIFF". The Gravelly Island Skiff is drawn from a set of plans from the book Building Classic Small Craft by John Gardner. John was a small craft historian for Mystic Seaport Museum in Connecticut, as well as a small craft builder himself. The plans were drawn from an 18' Maine lobster boat of unknown origin. It is built carvel, but with Cypress planking rather than cedar. The stem is a tropical hardwood called Iroko, which is a Teak substitute. The boat is fitted out for outboard power, and has a practical workboat layout, not unlike a Boston Whaler of the 60s- 70s. The forward bulkhead (with the hatch) is Sitka Spruce and the decks are Douglas fir.



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The lucky ticket will be drawn at the 11th Annual Beer Fest & BoatYard Bash on September 4, 2020. Need not be present to win.

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