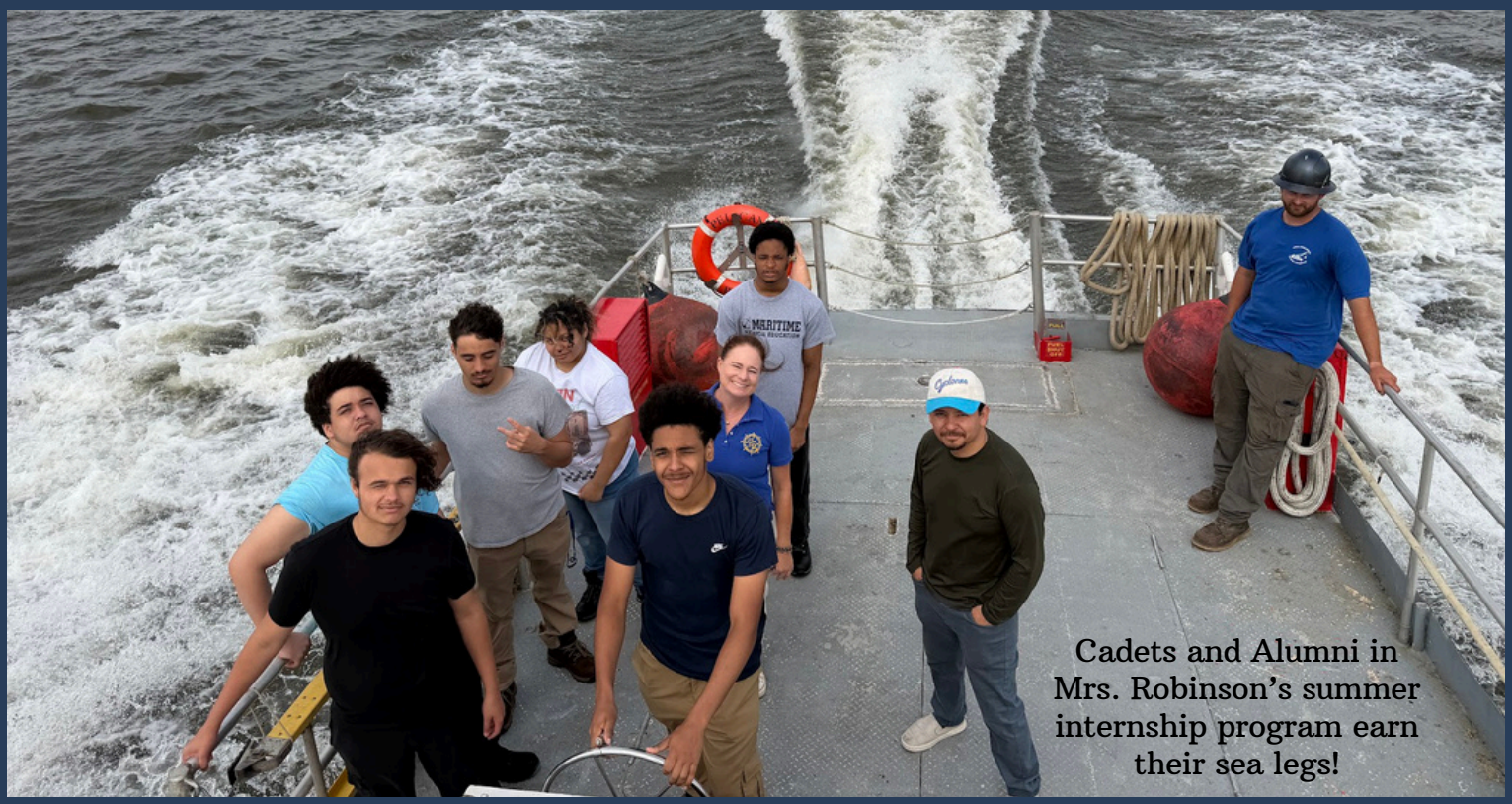
THE MARITIME ANCHOR

The Quarterly Newsletter of
The Maritime Academy Charter School

FALL 2026

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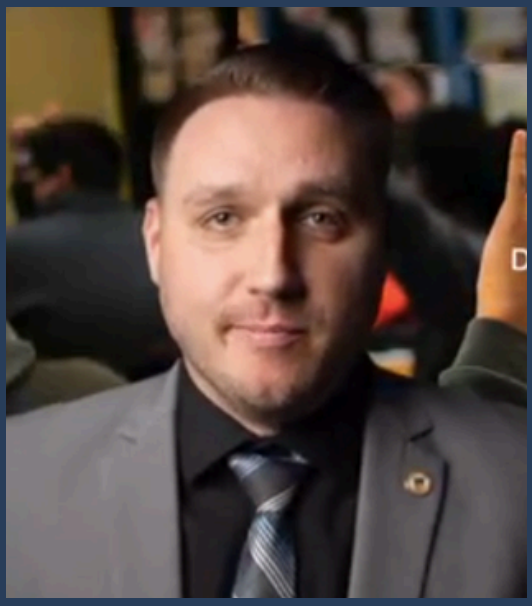
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Cadets and Alumni in Mrs. Robinson's summer internship program earn their sea legs!

Maritime Academy Charter ES ▪ 2275 Bridge St. Philadelphia, PA 19137 ▪ Phone: 215.535.4555 I Maritime Academy Charter HS ▪ 2700 E Huntingdon St. Philadelphia, PA 19125 ▪ Phone: 215.427.3090 I Maritime Academy is a 501 (c)(3) charitable organization. All donations are tax exempt.

Welcome from Mr. Wilson, CEO



Greetings!

My name is Matt Wilson, and it is my honor and privilege to introduce myself as Maritime Academy Charter School's new Chief Executive Officer.

I began my career at Maritime as a teacher. After 8 amazing years in the classroom and the successful completion of my Master's Degree in Educational Administration with a Principal's License, I served as our High School's Vice Principal for 5 years. From there, I went on to be Principal of our high school for 3 years. Entering my 17th year at Maritime as our new CEO, I remain committed to serving our community and enhancing our academic programming to support our mission and vision.

We continue to use maritime content as a vehicle to promote our academic growth schoolwide. Among many other initiatives, we strive to pursue and implement the most effective early literacy techniques and programs to ensure that our Cadets can easily transition from "learning to read" to "reading to learn." Our middle and high school teams collaborate to make the transition to our high school is seamless for Cadets and families.

I couldn't be happier with our teachers, staff, and administrative teams, and have full confidence that they will provide the top-notched educational experience that your Cadet deserves. I genuinely look forward to working with you.

To Our Cadets

You will be ready. The world is waiting for you and you will be ready. At Maritime Academy Charter School, we have three primary goals:

- To instill in each of you an appreciation of our nation's Maritime Heritage via hands-on access to the global transportation industry,
- To master your respective standards based curricula for graduation, post-secondary education, career and opportunities within the maritime industry.
- To provide a safe nurturing school environment to develop a strong sense of community, individual self-confidence, and a recognition of the strength of differences across people and all cultures.

You will build confidence and see the strength and productivity that occurs when people of all backgrounds and cultures work together. I've enjoyed watching you grow as individuals and I look forward to celebrating accomplishments that have yet to come.

Continue to set and maintain high standards for yourself and those around you. Be confident and lead by example. You're going to face many challenges, and you should use those challenges to fuel your determination to learn, adapt, and overcome.

Welcome and Introduction from Mrs. Bischoff

Principal, Maritime Academy Elementary and Middle Schools



Welcome back to school! I hope you all had a fantastic summer break filled with fun and relaxation. As we gear up for another year of learning, growth, and success, I am thrilled to welcome each and every one of you back to our amazing school community!

This year is special because we not only have wonderful new and returning teachers, school building improvements, and exciting plans for events and field trips, but this marks my first year as Maritime Academy Elementary/Middle School Principal. I am going into my 12th year here at Maritime and believe in the mission and vision we have set forth, as a school community. I have spent previous years as a 5th grade math and science teacher, special events coordinator, and assistant principal. I've had the privilege of seeing first hand the magic that is created here and the potential that is going to drive us forward into a top performing – even more sought after – school.

For the 2026-2027 school year, we are setting the bar high because we believe in each and every one of our cadets. Maritime has high expectations for ourselves, our cadets, and our school community as a whole; parents, guardians, support staff, bus drivers, to name a few. Together, we can achieve great things by supporting each other and ourselves to be the best that we can be. Because we believe so deeply in this standard, we have named this year's motto as, Charting the "C's" of Success! The "C's" being: Communication, Collaboration, Community, and Celebration.

Communicating your ideas and needs for Maritime helps our reflection process and ensures we are addressing all needs and considering all perspectives. Collaborating with teachers, Home & School, or administration to volunteer at events that bring Maritime funding and attention. Attending school functions and activities as a Community to show support for Maritime. Lastly, Celebrating each other and diversity that we pride ourselves on at Maritime Academy. I urge you to consider your part in each of these important focuses. Whether you are a parent, guardian, cadet or family member, you are a part of our community and your participation counts!

As we embark on this new journey, let's aim for nothing less than excellence in everything we do. From our appearance, how we speak to one another, our behavior to academic stamina, to carrying the Maritime motto outside of our gates - we can make a difference towards making this world a better place!

I am excited to see all the amazing things we will accomplish this year. Let's make it a year to remember, filled with growth, achievement, memories, and endless possibilities. Here's to a fantastic school year ahead! How can you help your school community set sail towards our adventures on the "C's" of Success?

Welcome and Introduction from Dr. Baptiste

Principal, Maritime Academy High School



It is with great excitement and gratitude that I introduce myself as the Principal of Maritime Academy Charter High School. Throughout my career as an educator and school leader, I have been passionate about creating learning environments where students are challenged academically, supported personally, and inspired to pursue their dreams. I firmly believe that every student possesses unique talents and unlimited potential, and I am committed to ensuring that all students have access to rigorous learning opportunities that prepare them for success in college, careers, and life.

What makes Maritime Academy Charter High School truly special is its commitment to innovation, career and college readiness, and real-world learning experiences. The maritime industry offers students unique pathways to leadership, technical expertise, and global opportunities, and I am excited to build upon the school's strong foundation. Together, we will foster a culture of excellence that promotes academic achievement, character development, leadership, and service. By embracing high expectations, cultivating meaningful relationships, and leveraging data-informed practices, we will ensure that every student is equipped with the knowledge, skills, and confidence necessary to thrive in an ever-changing world.

As we embark on this journey together, I want to emphasize the importance of partnership. Student success is achieved when educators, families, students, and community stakeholders work collaboratively toward a shared vision. My leadership philosophy is grounded in integrity, transparency, accountability, and servant leadership. I look forward to listening, learning, and working alongside each of you as we continue to strengthen our school community. Together, we will create a safe, inclusive, and engaging environment where every student feels valued, empowered, and prepared to navigate their future with purpose and pride.

Dr. Baptiste's Background

Dr. Lorrain Mott-Baptiste is a distinguished educational leader with more than 25 years of experience driving school improvement, instructional excellence, and organizational transformation across K-12 education systems in the United States and internationally. She holds a Doctor of Education in Educational Innovation and Leadership from Wilmington University and has completed advanced leadership studies through Harvard University. Throughout her career, Dr. Mott-Baptiste has served as a Middle and High School Social Studies teacher, assistant principal, district leader, and executive education leader, building a reputation for improving student achievement, strengthening school culture, and developing high-performing teams.





Dr. Mott-Baptiste's leadership experience spans urban public schools, charter schools, and international education systems. Most notably, she served as Chief of Monitoring, Evaluation, and School Improvement for the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK), where she helped lead the development of charter school improvement frameworks, accountability systems, and performance monitoring structures impacting more than 95 schools. Her expertise includes curriculum and instruction, data-driven decision-making, strategic planning, leadership development, educational innovation, and school turnaround initiatives. She has successfully led efforts to improve academic outcomes, increase teacher effectiveness, and establish sustainable systems that promote excellence and equity.

New Instructors and New Roles

Ms. Brooks
Marine Studies Teacher



I am excited about introducing the love of Marine Science and Biology to everyone!
My favorite thing is talking about all the unique life forms in the ocean. I have been teaching since 2011. My background is in Animal Behavior. I worked at the Center for Aquatic Sciences and ran the CAUSE youth development Program. I also work for Minorities in Shark Sciences to provide shark science and experiences to those that are not traditionally seen as scientists. I also work at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University and have been there for 14 years.
I live at home with my parents and 3 little sisters - the youngest is 15 yearrs old. I have 2 dogs, a cat, a turtle, and a gecko. I enjoy crocheting, playing video games, sleeping, and reading.

Mr. Drain
Workplace and Wellness Foundations (New Course), Health Education



I have been teaching for 5 years, and enjoy helping our cadets build and refine the necessary skills to participate and succeed in the fast paced, ever-changing workplace.
I have a B.S. in Exercise Science from Montana State University. I lived in London for a year studying Exercise Physiology and Sports Injuries, which was really exciting and informative.
I have two children. I love the outdoors and all things sports, especially golf. I grew up in Montana, and love to travel and explore new places!

New Instructors and New Roles

Mr. Wallis
High School Robotics

I have been teaching for 3 years, prior to that I was a Data Scientist and Summer Counsellor.
What excites me most about my new position is working with students with a hands-on curriculum and building problem solving skills.
I am married to Aimee Brisbin. I enjoy running, volleyball, soccer, and video games (Minecraft, CS2, Liftoff). I was born in London and grew up in NYC. I love soccer and am a dedicated Arsenal fan.



Mr. Ruschman
9th Grade Maritime STEM



I'm a second career teacher, and have been in the classroom about 20 years with most of that time spent in a career and tech school teaching environmental science and STEM.
I teach at Maritime now, so what's not to be excited about? My favorite part of teaching is helping students accomplish something they never thought they could - win a STEM competition, land an internship, or just enjoy school.
I moved this past July to Philadelphia from the Poconos with my partner Christina and our cats. We have been enjoying everything Philadelphia has to offer - paddleboarding, hiking, bicycling, museums, parks and most of all, food.

New Instructors and New Roles

Ms. Watts

High School Dean of Students and Climate



I'm excited to step into my new role as the Dean of Students and Climate at the high school. This role is especially meaningful to me because Maritime has been a part of my life for a long time. I graduated from Maritime in 2014, and years later, I had the opportunity to come back as a teacher. Now, I get to continue that journey in a leadership role where I can support our cadets, staff, and school community in a new way.

In this role, I'll be focused on helping make the high school a positive, safe, and supportive place for our cadets and staff while also making sure we have clear expectations and consistency. A big part of that is building relationships, creating clear and consistent expectations, supporting staff with student behavior and classroom climate, and helping cadets learn and grow from their choices.

I'm looking forward to working alongside our staff, cadets, and families to continue strengthening our high school community. It's definitely a new chapter for me, and I'm excited to keep learning, growing, and giving back to the school that gave so much to me.

Mr. Gosse

Marine Construction and 9th Grade Pre-AP English



I will be teaching 9th Grade Pre-AP English and Marine Construction (new course). I started teaching 10 years ago after careers in editing and environmental resource mangaement/restoration. I taught boatbuilding as a volunteer.

Marine Construction will provide an overview of trades and applied skills through the maritime lens. We will build a boat in the second semester! I'm always excited to build boats with others, and now to introduce trades skills and pathways to our cadets.

I am a proponent of getting people out on the water and showing them maritime life or careers are accessible. I am refitting my 62-year sailboat for more years cruising with my wife of 25 years, and 2 college-age boys (we also mountainbike). We have 2 cats and a dog.

New Instructors and New Roles

Ms. Borrelli

Teaching Assistant and Assistant Coach



I graduated from Maritime and now I'm working here!
I am excited to be working with kids and helping them learn.
I am Italian American. I like to color and cook. I am the oldest child of 4. I am an F1 fan and a big baseball fan -- GO PHILLIES!!!

Mr. Carroll

6th – 8th Special Education Math



I have a Master's Degree in Education, and more than 20 years teaching mostly in the School District of Philadelphia. I am certified in Music, Sp.Ed, and MY Math.
I write music for my YouTube channel. I was born in California. I have performed with the Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia, which has performed with the Philadelphia Orchestra.
I am excited to be working with new students and helping them become critical thinkers.

New Instructors and New Roles



Ms. Kulik
High School Art

I have been teaching for 6 years, and I love connecting with students and building life skills through art making (and decorating).
An accomplishment I achieved two years ago, I graduated with two Bachelor's degrees through the Honors College with distinction in both. Also, I love art!
I have been painting for about 10 years now. I take care of Pumpkin (cat) and Calvin (bunny) when I am not crafting or teaching.

Ms. Jimenez
AP Literature and Composition, 12th Grade Reading and Language Arts

I'm entering my third year of teaching.
When I was in high school, I took both AP Language and Literature.
As a student, I loved my AP English classes because we were exposed to diverse literature and challenged to write better and stronger every day. At university, I graduated as the top student in the English Department.
I am looking forward to fostering a love for reading and writing in the students within our AP class.
One thing you should know about me is my love for concerts and hiking. You will most likely see pictures from any of these adventures.



New Instructors and New Roles

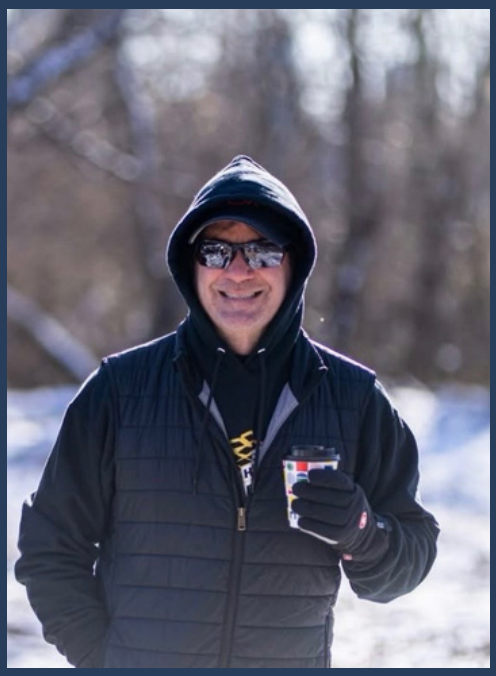
Ms. Brooks-McCoy

Assistant Climate Manager



I am excited to support our middle school students, strengthen school culture, and help develop systems that encourage cadets to be successful.
I am a U.S. Navy veteran with 10 years of military experience, and I transitioned into education last year. I have a bachelor's degree in Human Resources and recently completed my master's degree in Project Management.
I am most excited about building relationships with our middle school students and creating more opportunities for them to enjoy being at school. I want students to have things to look forward to, while still maintaining accountability and high expectations. I am also excited to support our staff and help strengthen the positive systems that are already in place.

I am a Philadelphia-area wife and mom, and someone who genuinely enjoys serving my community. I love spending time with my family, traveling, planning events, decorating, and finding new ways to bring people together. I am passionate about continuing my education and personal growth. And when it comes to Philadelphia sports, I'm definitely rooting for the Eagles!



Mr. Cottrell

High School Math and Science

I have 17 years' teaching, and 25 in the field of education. In that time, I've taught every kind of class to almost every kind of student.
I'm excited to have a chance to work with kids who are ready to learn!
I am a Rhode Island native that's lived in Philly for 35 years. I love being outside and with my friends and family.
I hike, bike, cook, brew, and play disc golf.

New Instructors and New Roles

Ms. Dugan

6th Grade Reading and Language Arts



This is my 3rd year teaching! I have previous experience at other local Catholic and Charter schools. I have taught/student taught a variety of 6-12 grade students. My degree/certification is in secondary English so I am very excited to teach RELA at Maritime.
I love listening to music; One Direction is my favorite band! I also enjoy moving around and exercising. I am a Zumba teacher and love to do yoga every day.

I am so excited to join Maritime's school culture and meet the amazing cadets!



Ms. Rushin

8th Grade Science

I started my teaching career in NY in 2003 and I am a Lincoln University Alumni. I taught History and Science for 6 years then left the classroom to work as service coordinator for individuals with disabilities writing IEP's. I came back to teaching after the Pandemic.
I'm from Queens, New York. I have 3 sisters and 3 brothers. 3 of my siblings are also in education.
I moved to Philly and have been teaching Science since 2022. I am excited about providing the best Science PSSA prep for my kiddos!

New Instructors and New Roles

Ms. Glacken

4th Grade Teacher



I worked in childcare for 4 years and was a Pre-K Teacher for 1 year before coming to Maritime. I graduated from Saint Francis University with a Bachelor's in Early Childhood Education.
I am from Altoona, Pa and am the youngest of four girls in my family. I have two dogs named Kato and Xo. In my free time I love to read and be out in nature. I love to take walks and enjoy the fresh air.
I am excited to work with a new age group, get to know my students, and help them to achieve greatness in the classroom.



Ms. Heslop

High School Physics and Chemistry

I taught STEM classes from K-12; this is my 5th year teaching. I have a Bachelor's in Biology and Psychology, and Master's in Educational Leadership with a STEM Endorsement. I am currently pursuing a SPED Certification.
I love to draw and paint! I like to use everyday materials in my art, like glass, wood, and twine. I am also a licensed and practicing esthetician of 14 years.
I am excited to help students tap into their curiosity and explore the world they experience every day on a deep and scientific level.

Elementary and Middle School Review

Summer Maritime Activities

Maritime's newly promoted first and second graders enjoyed trips to splash pads, playgrounds, nature centers, and the Camden Aquarium as part of our summer CLC program!













Elementary and Middle School Review

Summer Maritime Activities

Eleven 6th and 7th grade Cadets participated in the Shipwrights and Scuba CLC program. The program was inspired by meetings in the spring with the local TWSBA members. Cadets learned carpentry skills at Urban Boatworks; had two days of scuba diving with Mid-Atlantic Scuba Diving, and journeyed in 10-person voyager canoes, paddleboarded, and tubed on the Delaware River.

--Mrs. Robinson









Elementary and Middle School Review

Shipwrights and Scuba Program, cont'd.









Elementary and Middle School Review

Shipwrights and Scuba Program, cont'd.







Elementary and Middle School Review

Summer Maritime Activities 4th Grade

4th Grade Cadets spent some time exploring and getting their feet wet at the Palmyra Nature Cove on the Delaware River.







Elementary and Middle School Review

Summer Maritime Activities 3rd Grade

3rd Graders took a summer trip on the North Wind schooner.



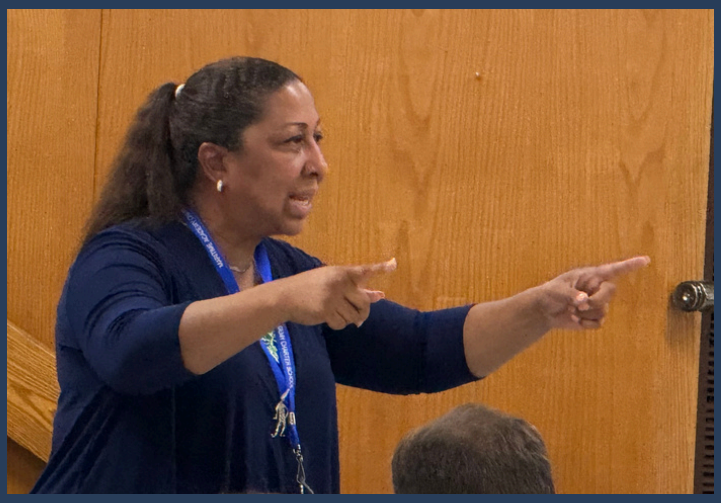




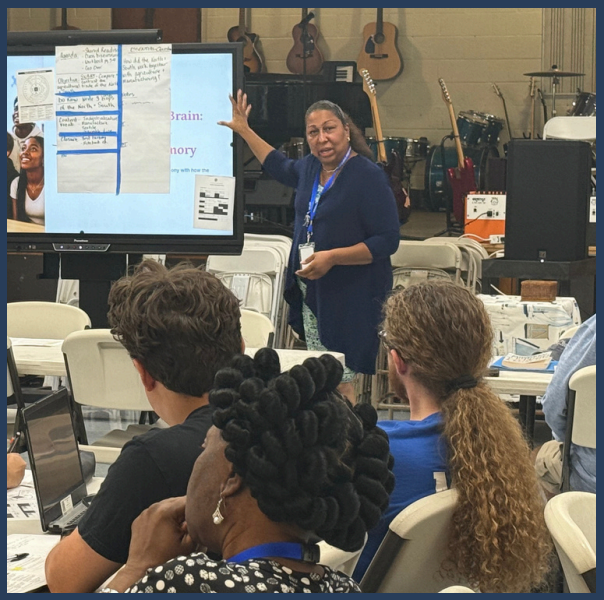


Permission to Board

Staff and Rising 9th Graders Prepare for the School Year



Dr. Baptiste welcomed staff through a week of intensive professional development and alignment prior to the first day of classes.
The next week, 9th grade cadets were welcomed by staff. Off to a good start!







High School Launches Career Readiness Initiative

Mr. Wilson and the Board of Directors launched the Career Readiness Program this year. The program is designed further the MACS mission of exposing cadets to careers, especially skilled trades, in the maritime field.
The program's electives are Math for the Trades, Workplace and Wellness Foundations, High School Robotics, and Marine Construction.

Participants will compete in the annual Seaperch and Seaglide programs.
Middle School cadets will be prepared for the courses through a revised Maritime Studies curriculum.



New Program Develops Career Pathways for MACS Graduates





The new STEM lab at the MACS High School

A Deeper Dive Into the STEM Lab

“Every trade, skill, and talent is represented aboard a ship,”

Mr. Wilson said, “All of our school subjects can be exemplified through the maritime lens, but their practical application in the lab will really open our cadets’ minds to their career opportunities.”

Mr. Wallis discussed the new Maritime and Marine Robotics Course. The class is part of a larger STEM initiative to bring technology and project based learning to the high school, and direct exposure to maritime fields in ways with measurable outcomes.



“The course is a class where cadets learn about problem solving, electrical and mechanical engineering. The cadets can combine all the skills we are teaching them through our projects, Mr. Wallis said.

“They will be able to learn technical design and communication—thinking about a problem set, then developing a device or system that can solve that problem. We will give them all the opportunities to solve the problems, from CAD drawings, ‘sandboxing’ the solution, to presenting the final design.”

“I am most excited about seeing where it goes. I am excited about seeing Cadets get lost in building and creating and then seeing where it goes.”

The first major concept and skill they are going to master is electronics and circuitry components, and thinking systematically about it. Cadets will begin by building simple motorized pool-sized boats. Cadets will iteratively develop more and more remote and autonomous capabilities into their crafts.

For cadets who are not in the class or who want more exposure or practice, Robotics Club will still meet after school. “I’m really excited to build on the great success we had last year with Seaglide. We’re ready to come back swinging--with the new and improved STEM lab we will be a competitive team.

In the Winter Edition of The Anchor, we will take a closer look at Mr. Ruschman’s 9th Grade Maritime Studies.

First Week In The STEM Lab

Cadets in the STEM Lab pushed full steam ahead on returning to school. Cadets in the Robotics class familiarized themselves with safety and procedural protocols, shop tours, then began exploring electronics tools and soldering methods.

Cadets in Marine Construction began with a safety and procedural briefing, shop tour, then completed their first project; building and delivering bookcases to the ELA classes. Cadets practiced working in teams, using simple tools, following non-verbal assembly instructions, and communicating with clients.



Marine Construction cadets will spend the first semester exploring different skills and trades, including electronics, carpentry, hydraulics, and basic construction.





Summer Jobs Report

Gabe McGuigan (class of ‘26), Sammy Quiles, Jowell Quiles, Devon Moore, and Damon Nuessi accepted summer internships for the inaugural year of the summer internship with Philadelphia Barge Company and McAllister Towing at the Navy Yard. The internships were facilitated and funded by Teaching With Small Boats Alliance (TWSBA), McAllister Towing and Maritime Academy.



McAllister Towing operates a fleet of more than 60 tugboats, crew boats, and barges in 13 locations along the U.S. East Coast from Eastport, Maine to San Juan, Puerto Rico. In each port, McAllister is engaged in ship docking (servicing more than 1,000 steamship companies), general harbor towing, coastal towing, windfarm support, and bulk transportation.



TWSBA is a collaboration of educators and programs that teach math, science and other essential skills through the process of boat building. Through bi-annual conferences and virtual collaboration, TWSBA works to improve the effectiveness of our member organizations by sharing information and best practices about program development and leadership, hands-on building projects, and integration of maritime-based lessons into the school curriculum.

The program was a success this summer: Gabe was hired by Philadelphia Towing Company; one Cadet has expressed an interest in pursuing the apprenticeship program with Hanwha Shipping; and the other Cadets recognized the opportunities the maritime industry can provide, and have expressed interest in continuing their involvement.

Summer Jobs Report

cont.d.











Alumni Update



MACS Alumni deserve a place in the Anchor to stay in touch and show their continued strength, growth and community. This serves the dual purpose of inspiring future generations of MACS graduates to see the potential fullness of their lives.

Each issue we propose to highlight alumni activities as well as 1-2 individuals throughout their journey. If you have an update or are interested in being featured, please contact Ms. Watts, Alumni Coordnator, at Watts.J@maritimecharter.org

Alumni and Staff at the winter gathering.







Alumni and Staff at the spring (L) and summer (R) gatherings.

Happy Birthday Mr. Wilson!

Nothing gets past the staff at the Arsenal Campus where they celebrated Mr. Wilson's Birthday. Thanks for your service building Maritime Charter!







Thank you

to all our contributors this quarter!

Mr. Wilson	Dr. Baptiste	Dr. Tizer	Ms. Watts
New Staff Respondents	Mr. Wallis	Mrs. Harvey	Mr. Gosse

Get Involved!

Please send photos, news briefs, articles, class activities, sports, or SeaDog shout-outs to:

theanchor@maritimecharter.org

THE ANCHOR Invites you to contribute to the next issue! Write about your sport, a club you belong to or a school event you attended. We would love to hear about it!