

**Carisa Harris Adamson, Board Chair and Founder of the Treasure Island Sailing Center
Awarded the 2019 US Sailing's Virginia Long Award**

***San Francisco Nonprofit's Board President Recognized for Sail Training Service
and Support***

***Honoring individuals who, through their efforts, unselfishly assist and enable a sailing
program or sailing instruction***

San Francisco, CA – January 31, 2019 - At the 2019 US Sailing National Symposium held in Jacksonville, Florida, Carisa Harris Adamson and the Treasure Island Sailing Center (TISC) were recognized for their significant efforts that enable and support excellence and safety in sailing instruction and/or programs. The Virginia Long Award is given annually by US Sailing, the national governing body for the sport of sailing, to honor individuals who, through their efforts, unselfishly assist and enable a sailing program or sailing instruction in a supportive role.

“This year’s winner had a vision for San Francisco. She saw an opportunity to create a world class sailing location to grow the sport, to provide another avenue for high level sail training and competition and, most importantly, use sailing as a tool to enrich the lives of San Francisco's school children and to help prepare them for adulthood and citizenship. So, with very little besides her passion and perseverance, she and other elite racing sailors from the Bay Area founded Treasure Island Sailing Center. Selected as Chairperson of the Board of Directors 18 years ago, she has remained in that role ever since, overseeing the tremendous growth and success of TISC”, said Charlie Arms, US Sailing Board Member and Education Division Chair.

“Over the years, we have built a place where every child has the opportunity to connect with nature, with science and with kids who are different than they are. And by doing so, we are not only giving kids the opportunity to thrive, but helping sailing to thrive as well. Each year, around 2,800 sailors take over 28,000 hours of instruction at TISC; 85% of our kids qualify and receive partial or full scholarships. We never turn a child away.” said Carisa Harris Adamson, Chair of the Board of Directors and one of the TISC founders.

In 2018, nearly 3,600 children, youth and adults sailed, paddled or kayaked on Clipper Cove in San Francisco Bay through TISC programs. TISC has been providing the Bay Area sailing programs since 1999. A short list of their accomplishments are:

- Providing scholarships to 80% of youth sailing campers
- Starting a girl's empowerment program for underserved and at-risk girls. It started with 10 girls and, within two years had grown to include 230 kids.
- Hosting a number of elite regattas including the High School National Championships, Collegiate PCCs and 2000 Olympic Trials.
- Collaborating with the St. Francis Sailing Foundation on the *Puddles to Podium* initiative, which focuses on building the base of the pyramid for competitive excellence, but also ensuring that there are many 'on ramps' and few 'off ramps' for sailors in their care to keep sailing.
- Recognition as one of the first accredited US Sailing Community Sailing Centers in the country.

- Outstanding fundraising success including a \$43,000 grant to support a 5th grade STEM program, a five-year, \$965,000 award to support their Summer Camp from DCYF and a \$50,000 grant from the St Francis Sailing Foundation which they are using to supplement NOAA's grant for Sailing to Save the Sea.

“Being a volunteer at TISC has given me all of the same gifts that sailing gave me as a child—courage, grit, and community. Most of all, TISC has given me the joy of passing forward the gift of sailing and all of the opportunities that accompany it”, Harris says. “I invite you join us at TISC by passing on the gift of sailing to all kids in your community. We guarantee that, like us, you will receive much more than the time or money that you give.”

“Carisa Harris Adamson has shown that, as the leader of one of the most vibrant public access programs in the country, she is truly deserving to be recognized as the winner of this year’s Virginia Long Award”, says Arms. “Her leadership has helped ensure that TISC will continue to provide opportunities for sailors of all interest and skill levels for years to come.”

“I’ve known Carisa since the early days of the Treasure Island Sailing Center. Her passion and commitment to youth from all walks of life, and her firm belief that sailing is the best youth development tool in sports were always an inspiration to me. Her creation of and years of high level cultivation and support of TISC make her a model for us all to follow.” Richard Jepsen, US Sailing Vice President and retired OCSC Sailing CEO

For more information, please visit www.ussailing.org.