



A Partner in Education
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Eco-Art Adventure Program via Kayak – Building the Capacity to serve all Members of the Upper Texas Coast

Final Report
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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Artist Boat is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting awareness and preservation of the coastal margins through the disciplines of the sciences and arts. Our programs are to provide participants or learners with ancillary classroom, studio-based, and/or field experiences in order to fulfill our mission. We believe and see the results of our programs via positive feedback, excellent workmanship and products, and long-term and newly added partnerships with schools and organizations. Artist Boat has gained a collaboration of funders (e.g.: Environmental Protection Agency, Texas Education Agency, 21st Century, Gulf of Mexico Alliance, Gulf of Mexico Foundation, NOAA B-WET, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, etc) representing local, regional, and national support. Our largest focus is to interpret for participants the affects within the coastal watershed and Galveston Bay caused by human, industrial, or natural impacts as well as the importance of our wetlands. During this interpretation we teach participants how to use artists' tools to create art that not only interprets what they see, but that can later be used as an educational outreach tool with community members. Since the beginning of Artist Boat in 2003, we have seen an increase in demand for this unique, experiential learning based environmental education.

For this project, Eco-Art Adventures via Kayak were delivered to the general public, Houston-Galveston middle schools, non-profits with an environmental mission, and universities/colleges to increase awareness among and instill a stewardship ethic in citizens in the lower Galveston Bay watershed. This program promoted preservation of the habitats of Galveston Island and the Galveston Bay estuarine system. Overall, 156 participants experienced the kayak adventure program through universities and colleges creating 4 partnerships; 1448 participants experienced the environmental program through Houston-Galveston Middle Schools creating 4 partnerships; 68 participants of non-profits with an environmental mission experienced the kayak adventure; and 177 participants experienced the general public outreach program. Throughout this project year a total of 1849 participants in 122 adventures were served via the Eco-Art Kayak Adventure.

II. INTRODUCTION

Artist Boat's Eco-Art Workshop and Adventure Program is designed to combine the arts and sciences for exploration and appreciation of coastal habitats. This program offers two-hour workshops at land-based sites (schools, community centers, etc.) that are interactive and include: 1) educational hands-on activities about the benefits, multiple uses, non-point source pollution, flora/fauna, and historical perspectives of the Galveston Bay system and Gulf of Mexico; 2) demonstration and application of artists' watercolor materials to interpret nature; and 3) introduction to Eco-Art Adventure interpreted tours of Galveston Island and Galveston Bay habitats.

During the Eco-Art Adventure via kayak, degreed artists and biologists, who are certified kayak instructors, provide paddling and safety instruction, hands-on outdoor environmental education activities and site-specific interpretation of Galveston Bay's natural history, and watercolor demonstration. Participants explore Galveston Bay's habitats, make their own watercolors, and leave with non-consumptive outreach tools in the form of artworks and stories to tell members of

their families and communities. This program is available to schools, universities, community organizations, parks and recreation departments, non-profit organizations, corporations, and the general public.

Artist Boat’s current fleet of kayaks serves over 2,500 participants annually for a total of approximately one hundred ninety two (192) events. The *Eco-Art Adventure Program via Kayak – Building the Capacity to Serve all Members of the Upper Texas Coast* project could increase the capacity of the Eco-Art Workshop and Adventure Program via kayak by a minimum fifty-five (55) kayak events and 900 – 1,375 participants annually. The table below is a breakdown of the proposed goals and the proposed new level of capacity.

Table 1. Summary of number of partnerships, events, and participants.

User	Number of partnerships	Kayak events	Approximate participants	Notes
Houston-Galveston region MS	2-4	15	300	Schools are to utilize Pre/Post Activity Curriculum
Public trips	2 trips per month	16	160	Kayak destinations other than GISP
Non-profits	3-4	4	100	To help organizations directly related to environmental mission
Parks and Recreational Departments	2	8	160	Program to be used as summer enrichment
Universities and Colleges	4	12	180	
TOTAL	13-16	55	900	

The final long-term outcome is the empowerment of an environmentally literate community able to speak to and make decisions about the specific issues affecting the Galveston Bay estuary system and the coastal margins of southeast Texas.

III. METHODOLOGY

The establishments of committed and new partners were facilitated through meetings, letters, phone calls, press announcements, and e-mail communications. Outputs included: a schedule of meetings and meeting notes; copies of press releases; a confirmed list of partners; published calendar of public events; final letters of commitment from administrators; a schedule of all Eco-Art Workshops, Adventures, and meeting days; a timeline for teachers to implement and deliver the pre- & post-lessons, student questionnaires, and environmental literacy tests on their campuses; statistical tracking of each event and the ethnic breakdown of participants; evaluations filled out by teachers, group leaders, and participants for each event; final analysis of questionnaires, evaluations, and environmental literacy tests; photo-documentation of events; and financial documentation of program. Analysis of participant evaluations, participant diversity, questionnaires, and environmental literacy tests were utilized to further justify the program, showing progress toward the outcomes stated above, and to encourage school districts, area foundations, and businesses to commit to providing the financial means to make the program sustainable.

For this grant and others during 2008 and 2009 we combined workshops and adventures in a way that allowed the expansion of knowledge and reached the highest number of participants. Through the 2006 Texas Education Agency Grant a second workshop was designed to expand on knowledge learned from the original workshop. This workshop allowed returning students to view a larger ‘image’ of the coastal watershed, Galveston Bay, and Gulf of Mexico. Adventures for returning participants included kayaking at other locations around Galveston Bay other than Galveston Island State Park. Through the Galveston Bay Estuary Program grant a second fleet was purchased in order to accommodate the high demand and deliver the program at other locations around Galveston Bay such as Trinity River, Armand Bayou, East End Lagoon, Drum Bay, and Christmas Bay. This second fleet allowed schools to save money on bus transportation by double booking the kayak adventures, which helped in increasing the number of classes/students to participate, in some cases doubling the attendance.

IV. RESULTS/PROGRESS

(a) Participation

During the course of this grant...

- 1448 participants were involved with the Environmental Program via 11 Houston-Galveston region middle schools, attached is a spreadsheet of the adventures;
- 177 participants were involved with our public outreach adventures, attached is a spreadsheet of the adventures;
- 68 participants were involved with the Eco-Art Adventure via 2 non-profit group, attached is a spreadsheet of the adventures;
- No parks and recreational departments registered for any of the Eco-Art Adventures; and
- 156 participants were involved with the Eco-Art Adventure via 4 Universities/Colleges partnerships, attached is spreadsheet of the adventures.

Below is a table summarizing the overall deliverables and accomplishments for the grant regarding Eco-Art Adventures.

Table 2. Summary of number of partnerships, events, and participants delivered.

User	Number of partnerships needed	Number of partnerships achieved	Kayak events needed	Kayak events delivered	Approximate participants needed	Participants served
Houston-Galveston region MS	2-4	11	15	86	300	1448
Public Trips	2 trips per month	3 trips per month	16	23	160	177
Non-profits	3-4	2	4	3	100	68
Parks and Recreational Departments	2	0	8	0	160	0
Universities and Colleges	4	4	12	10	180	156
TOTAL	13-16	20	55	122	900	1849

Using the Summary (Table 2) the Houston-Galveston region schools and public adventures exceeded the deliverables expected, non-profits met more than half of the deliverables, no parks and recreational departments deliverables were met, and of the

universities and colleges partnership deliverables were met and kayak events and participant numbers were not met. As a total all deliverables were exceeded. However, in September of 2008 Hurricane Ike hit land in the Galveston Bay area. After Hurricane Ike, there was about 6 months of time that no programs were being delivered due to extensive damage and recovery occurring around the Galveston Bay area (you can see in the spreadsheet of the adventures that there is 6 months of time undocumented). If Hurricane Ike had never made landfall near the Galveston Bay area, all deliverables would have been met and most likely exceeded.

Some deliverables exceeded in numbers due to funding by other grants. The Houston-Galveston schools were supported through the Texas Education Agency, Environmental Protection Agency, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration BWET grants; and Houston Independent School District – North Region. The Hotel and Motel Tax Fund grant helped by paying for advertisement of public adventures in local newspapers (ex: Galveston Daily News, Houston Chronicle, Houston Press) and magazines of Houston-Galveston area, printing by Minute Man for rack cards to be distributed around Dallas/Ft. Worth, Austin, Houston, and Galveston areas by Certified Folder Display Services Inc, and website announcements (ex: Galveston.com, Artshound.com). Attached are samples of the advertisements for Houston Chronicle and Houston Press and a rack card.

(b) Participant Feedback

Evaluations were used as a measurement to ensure that Artist Boat was delivering the program with the best quality. These evaluations were handed to the teacher during the program and retrieved from the teacher at the end of the program. Attached is a spreadsheet breaking down evaluations filled out by the lead participant.

A Pre/Post Test was used as measurement for this Eco-Art Workshop and Adventure Program. A copy of the Pre/Post Test is attached. The tests measured the amount of knowledge gained after participating in the 2-hour classroom workshop and 4-hour in-field adventure. Attached is a spreadsheet of the amount of knowledge gained. There was a 50% gain in knowledge after our program. However, this percentage could alter to be higher or lower if all schools had turned in or delivered the posttests. The pre-tests were easy to obtain because it was given at the beginning of the workshop which allowed us to collect the tests and walk away with them to be scored and calculated, whereas, the posttests were left in the trust of the participating teachers.

An environmental literacy practicum was to be administered by participating teachers to students after delivering all pre and post activities from the Environmental Curriculum designed by Artist Boat in 2006 and funded by the Texas Education Agency. Attached is a spreadsheet of the scores. Out of the 11 partnerships made during this project with Houston-Galveston region schools only 5 of the schools delivered the entire curriculum and environmental literacy practicum. Artist Boat has now designed a professional development to teach participating teachers how to deliver the Environmental Curriculum pre and post activities as well as the environmental literacy practicum to their students. The Environmental Curriculum can be found on the Artist Boat website, artistboat.org.

During this professional development a pacing guide was designed for teachers to use in order to implement and deliver the pre- & post-lessons, and practicum throughout the year. Attached is the designed pacing guide. A total average for the practicum is 41.9%. This low percentage is a sign that either the teachers did not deliver the entire curriculum or the test had a higher cognitive thinking than the students are used to.

(c) Distribution of materials funded through the grant

Attached are outputs, which include: a calendar of schedule meetings, public events, and Eco-Art Workshop and Adventures; letter announcement of award sent to schools, non-profits, universities and colleges, parks and recreational departments and mailing lists; a confirmed list of partners; published calendar of public events; copy of an example of program contracts signed by participating teacher and principals of the Houston-Galveston region middle schools; and financial documentation of program.

(d) Photograph

Attached is a power point presentation of photos with explanations.

(e) In-Kind contributions

All events were made possible by the grant Texas Commission on Environmental Quality/Galveston Bay Estuary Program grant, and furthered by Environmental Protection Agency, Texas Education Agency, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration BWET, and Hotel and Motel Tax Fund grants. These grants deliverables were to serve 7th and 8th grade students of Houston-Galveston Counties with the Eco-Art Workshop and Adventure via Kayak Program or to provide support for outreach/advertisement of public adventures. Below is a table describing the cost share of the grants.

Table 3. Summary of Cost Share

Contributor	Project Dates	Project Award Amount	Cost Share Total provided during Project Time	Notes of Contribution
Environmental Protection Agency	July 2007 - July 2008 (extended to December 2009)	\$50,000.00	\$32,535.90	This grant helped with school participation.
Texas Education Agency	April 2008 - May 2009 (extended to December 2009)	\$100,000.00	\$61,364.04	This grant helped with school participation.
National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration - BWET	October 2009 - November	\$300,000.00	\$11,890.82	This grant helped with school participation.

	2011			
and Motel Tax Fund	Yearly	\$23,000.00	\$20,084.81	This grant helped with advertisement of public adventures.
		Total	\$125,875.57	

This table below represents the amount of contribution made by private parties for adventures.

Table 4. Summary of Contribution of Private Parties

Group	Date	Amount
Texas Kayak Fisherman	6/14/08	\$50.00
Houston Independent School District – North Region	6/16/08	\$33,200.00
Galveston Island Nature Tourism Council	4/4/09 - 4/5/09	\$1,389.50
Ellen Huft	4/22/09	\$650.00
High Point Fellowship	7/11/09	\$650.00
Houston Audubon society	5/30/09	\$650.00
Texas A&M University; SeaCamp	6/19/09 & 6/26/09	\$1,300.00
Texas A&M University; Elderhostel	7/15/08, 7/29/08, 7/31/08, & 7/14/08	\$2,600.00
Texas A&M University; Succeeding in Science Course	3/7/09, 3/29/09, & 4/8/09	\$1,750.00
University of Houston	4/18/09 & 6/19/09	\$1,400.00
Texas A&M University; Administration	6/5/09	\$650.00
	Total	\$44,289.50

V. CONCLUSIONS/LESSONS LEARNED/OUTREACH

Without the help of multiple grants collaborating in several programs Artist Boat would not exist due to Hurricane Ike. It was amazing to see and experience how much the coordinators of grants are willing to do in order to help their recipient(s). The willingness to collaborate in programs and understand our need for collaboration during the time of the recovery period was crucial for our organization in order to function and carry on with grant deliverables.

Through out the years of Artist Boat delivering the Eco-Art Workshop and Adventure Program to schools and organizations we developed long-term and positive relationships. In fact, some of these relationships expanded beyond the Eco-Art Workshop and Adventure Program. The belief in our program and differences noticed in students were overwhelming to some schools and they requested specific programs that were more tailored to their needs and also fulfilled our mission. Programs designed range from specific field-based experiences to yearlong ancillary classes. Ancillary classes are designed to incorporate science and art into experiential learning lessons. Most classes focus on one large theme and design lessons to support the theme. For example, at Fonville Middle School the ancillary class is based on ocean awareness and has resulted in large projects being worked on throughout the semesters to design radio broadcasts and pod casts to be transmitted out on an AM radio station set-up at the school and the Artist Boat website, and design and build a native, water-smart habitat.

