

## **Final Report**

**Project Title:** A Mobile Classroom for Aquatic Education

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**Prepared for:** The Galveston Bay Estuary Program (TCEQ)  
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**Project Description** – JrAHA's mission is to foster inner-city youth and families' connectivity to nature by providing outdoors recreational opportunities and by teaching outdoors recreational skills, safety and ethics, environmental responsibilities and conservation practices.

JrAHA utilizes the potential life long recreational benefits of fishing, hunting and boating as the primary vehicles to engage those persons.

This grant provided for the development of the mobile classroom and funding support for dedicated staff supervision of volunteer instructors to teach the Galveston Bay-related Introductory Aquatic classes, Master Aquatic classes, and Boating Safety classes and engage citizens at events/exhibits.

**Project Results** – July 1, 2008 through December 31, 2009 the project connected with 4,086 individual youth's participating in 8793 course/field trip enrollments. 3522 participants were minority (1540 Afro-American, 1658 Hispanic and 150 Asian). 2036 were females and 2,664 came from low income families (federal standards).

The project has generated a potential 4086 persons to the lifelong recreational aspects of fishing and outdoors activities through education and hands on experiences, catching their first fish in an outdoor setting. The education included conservation practices, environmental responsibilities and ethics as Anglers. 2025 persons completed the Introductory Angling courses, 553 completed the Master Angler level of courses and 1557 went on fishing trips of 4-8 hours.

**Benefit to Jr. AHA** – This project benefitted JrAHA in building its foundation of a mobile class room and successfully launching an ongoing program of Angler Education with HISD (the nation's 7<sup>th</sup> largest school district) . Due to economic changes during 2009, plans for a permanent facility had to be placed on hold when two principal donor pledges

were not fulfilled. The development of the mobile concept proved to be the best insurance for continuity of the program in these uncertain economic times.

Lessons Learned - The program developed from a pilot project with HISD and 3 schools to 12 schools by December 2009. Teachers relate that when these classes are scheduled, they have the highest rate of attendance and the students own comments reflect they consider going fishing, COOL! We are launching in 2010 along with TPWD formal research into the quantitative results of the program. We are also instituting a scholarship fund for the best anglers, male & female in 2010.

Photographs – Numerous photos have been previously submitted and also produced by TCEQ staff. More are available at our website or by request.

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