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## **ABYC Introduces the Marine League of Schools** *Using Standards-based Curriculum to Improve Marine Education*

**October 7, 2008, Annapolis, MD:** Today, the American Boat & Yacht Council (ABYC) is formally announcing the establishment of the Marine League of Schools, a new educational initiative for the marine industry. This small group of 8 – 10 select schools in the major geographical regions in the United States, are all affiliated with ABYC through a common standards and systems-based curriculum and commitment to quality technical marine workforce education and training. The first schools to join the Marine League include: the International Yacht Restoration School (IYRS) in Rhode Island, Broward College in Florida, Rappahannock Community College in Virginia and Skagit Valley College in Washington State.

Because ABYC is a leader in standards development and marine industry workforce certifications, ABYC will be acting as the sponsoring organization responsible for creating affiliation opportunities between ABYC and Marine League schools. ABYC will also provide the necessary leadership to assemble and organize the top marine technical schools in the country into a consortium, and to work with the schools to keep the curriculum current with market trends.

Each school will teach to the current systems-based National Marine Trades Curriculum-Post Secondary (NMTC-PS) that was co-developed by ABYC and the International Yacht Restoration School (IYRS). And as part of this curriculum, students at these schools will have the option to sit for the industry recognized ABYC Certifications before they graduate.

Together, ABYC and IYRS collaborated on the development of the curriculum and the supporting materials for this ground-breaking post-secondary curriculum for the marine industry. ABYC and IYRS will remain engaged in an ongoing relationship to continually update course content until such a time when the Marine League will take over the updating and maintenance process. IYRS will also serve as a curriculum development laboratory for all users of the NMTC-PS.

Mike New, ABYC's Education Director stated, "Over the past several years, we have had a lot of schools that have wanted to use the ABYC curriculum to teach with. However, we did not have a system to support the

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schools, or a way to ensure the schools were using the most current version of the curriculum appropriately.” New continued, “Therefore, we decided to look at the relationships we had with some schools, and introduce ourselves to a few new ones, and develop this consortium. At the end of the day, we are trying to ensure that we have a steady stream of educated, qualified candidates to join the marine industry’s workforce. By using this curriculum, students will be exposed to the latest tools in the marketplace, as well as the safety based standards used in our industry for building and repair, and be on their way down a solid career path with educational and industry-recognized credentials.”

“Working with ABYC has enabled us to develop a program that is truly built around industry needs,” said Terry Nathan, President of the International Yacht Restoration School (IYRS). “The combination of IYRS, an international standards authority like ABYC, and the industry itself has been a very powerful mix: it has given birth to a program that we hope will become a valuable training resource on a national scale.”

The Marine League of school’s mission is to promote continuous improvement in the quality and delivery of ABYC standards-based marine technical education, and to ultimately provide industry with a consistent flow of educated, responsible, employees.

ABYC has been developing, writing and updating the safety standards for boat building and repair in the United States for over 50 years. ABYC is actively involved with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) as well as education and certification programs for marine technicians. These standards are available on CD-ROM, online (*Web-STIR* and *ABYC Standards Powered by Rulefinder.net*) and in printed form. Membership and general information can be requested by visiting the ABYC web site at [www.abycinc.org](http://www.abycinc.org).