

National Boating Industry Safety Award Winners Announced by Sea Tow Foundation's North American Sober Skipper Advisory Council

Southold, NY, December 10, 2020 – The Sea Tow Foundation and its North American Sober Skipper Advisory Council announced winners of the **National Boating Industry Safety Awards** which recognize the best boating safety work in the for-profit section of the recreational boating industry. Sponsored by **KICKER Marine Audio**, the six top contest winners were revealed in a special awards recognition segment held during the Marine Retailer Association of America's virtual Dealer Week on December 10, 2020.

The **Top Powerboat Manufacturer Award** was presented for the second year to **Sea Ray Boats**.

Sea Tow Foundation Executive Director Gail Kulp said, "Sea Ray's messaging clearly shows a corporate commitment to a strong boating safety culture with a special emphasis on new boaters," she said. "They successfully incorporated the COVID-19 pandemic into their safety messaging through multiple platforms including videos, photos, customer emails and social media posts."

Another second-year repeat winner is **MarineMax** who took home top honors in a new category for the **Top Marine Retailer with More Than Three Locations**.

"MarineMax showcased a solid, proven plan for providing boating safety education and they were able to adapt this to the constraints imposed by the COVID-19 Pandemic," said Kulp. "While previous years allowed for their educational classes to be conducted in person, their virtual classes attracted as much boating participation if not more than previous years."

A new category was **Top Marine Retailer with One to Three Locations**, and it was won by **Bridge Marina, Inc.** of Lake Hopatcong, NJ.

"Bridge Marina, Inc. clearly put a lot of work into creating a multi-faceted safety program specific to the area and type of boat people are using," said Kulp. "They have developed an integrated marketing campaign including web, social, phone follow-up and in person that appears to be quite successful in reaching the intended audience. For a small company with limited resources, their campaign represented an impressive effort to promote boating safety."

Due to the important role marine media play in how they position boating safety among their readership or viewership, the Sober Skipper National Advisory Council created a special category last year to recognize top media for their outstanding contributions in consumer education and marketing. The 2020 award for **Top Marine Media Outlet Award** was won by **Rapid Media** which focuses on the human-powered/paddling market.

Kulp noted, "Rapid Media offered a solid campaign featuring a mix of digital ads, pre-roll, video, e-blasts, newsletters and contests to promote their boating safety messaging to the paddling community. Their videos were especially well done, relevant and authentic,"

The **Top Marine Marketing and Outreach Award** was won by **Freedom Boat Club** who last year received a special Sober Skipper Award for its national adoption of the Sober Skipper program.

Media Contact

Gail R. Kulp, Executive Director
Sea Tow Foundation
631-876-5077; gail@boatingsafety.com

Said Kulp, "Freedom Boat Club delivers clear, concise and consistent safety messaging and programming to a well-defined and highly targeted audience. They utilized every touchpoint available to communicate their messaging, coupled with a solid national boater education and training program. Safety is clearly a big part of their overall operation."

Another new category for 2020 and one of the highest scoring submissions was the **Top Gear & Equipment Manufacturer Award** won by **FELL Marine**.

"FELL Marine knows its core demographic and provides outstanding demonstrations on their website to educate customers on how to install and use a wireless man-overboard device," said Kulp. "They provided a diverse selection of many high-quality advertising materials to review and outline future business opportunities to increase the adoption of their product and further promote boating safety."

"Our Sober Skipper Advisory Council and Sea Tow Foundation are extremely pleased by the growth of this awards recognition and the quality of the work being done by recreational for-profit, boating industry organization to promote boating safety," she said. "We also appreciate the hard work of our council members in judging this year's competition and the support of our sponsor KICKER Marine Audio in making this year's competition even more outstanding."

For more information about the North American Sober Skipper Advisory Council and the National Boating Industry Safety Awards, visit www.boatingsafety.com/awards where a video of the awards presentation from Dealer Week will be available along with future highlights of each award winning company and campaign.

Members of the Sea Tow Foundation's North American Sober Skipper Advisory Council include David Connolly, Thomas H. Connolly and Sons; David Dickerson, NMMA; Jim Emmons, Water Sports Foundation; Kevin Falvey, *Bonnie/Boating Magazine*; Adam Fortier-Brown, MRAA; Mike Hankins, American Marine Sports; John Jost, Ken Cook Company; Captain Keith Lake, MarineMax; TK Krumenacker, Admiral's Insurance Corp; Dave Marlow, Brunswick Corporation; Tyler Mehrl, Mercury Marine; Mark Pillsbury, *Cruising World Magazine*; Angie Scott, The Woman Angler & Adventurer; Eric Shepard, retired; Captain Frank Stoeber, Regal Boats; Nic Thomas, Freedom Boat Club; Stephanie Vatalaro, RBFF; Annamarie Worrell, Emerald Coast Marine Group; and Leslie Zlotnick, Yamaha Watercraft Group. The council's executive committee includes Kristen Frohnhoefer, Sea Tow Services International; Gail R. Kulp and Michael Wesolowski, Sea Tow Foundation; and Wanda Kenton Smith, Kenton Smith Marketing.

Sea Tow Foundation

With a focus on safe boating practices that result in fun on the water, the Sea Tow Foundation – a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization – was established in 2007 by Sea Tow Founder Capt. Joe Frohnhoefer. After his passing in 2015, Captain Joe's legacy continues as the Foundation brings attention to the number of preventable boating-related accidents, injuries, and deaths, and directly addresses prevention methods through education and awareness. More than 750 life jacket loaner stands are now available across the United States and the Foundation's Sober Skipper program continues to grow. For more information on the Sea Tow Foundation, please visit BoatingSafety.com.

###

Suggested [Tweet](#) and [Facebook Post](#): Six winners have been announced for the annual **National Boating Industry Safety Awards** recognizing the best in boating safety promotion in the for-profit recreational marine industry. Hosted by Sea Tow Foundation and the North American Sober Skipper Advisory Council, the annual competition is sponsored by KICKER Marine Audio. For a winners list, visit www.boatingsafety.com/awards.

Media Contact

Gail R. Kulp, Executive Director
Sea Tow Foundation
631-876-5077; gail@boatingsafety.com