

THE TRUST FOR
GOVERNORS ISLAND



Contact:

Governors Island – tgi@risaheller.com

School Construction Authority – KORTIZ2@nycsca.org

The Trust for Governors Island and the School Construction Authority Announce Expansion of Urban Assembly New York Harbor School

New facility to support an additional 18 classrooms, pool and gymnasium

Council Member Margaret Chin and Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer provide capital funding to support pool

NEW YORK (April 5, 2021)— Trust for Governors Island President & CEO Clare Newman and Nina Kubota, President and CEO of the New York City School Construction Authority, announced plans to expand the Urban Assembly New York Harbor School on Governors Island into Building 515, located adjacent to the school’s existing facility within the Governors Island Historic District.

Located on Governors Island since 2010, the Urban Assembly New York Harbor School offers a unique career technical education curriculum built upon New York City’s maritime experience, environmental stewardship, and careers on the water for over 500 high school students. The 60,000-square foot expansion into Building 515 will add 18 classrooms in addition to the existing school building, adding approximately 400 seats to the Harbor School. The planned expansion will also include a pool and a gymnasium, supporting the school’s water-dependent maritime programs. Council Member Chin and Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, long-time advocates of the school and its unique curriculum, have committed capital funding to support the expansion and the construction of a new pool.

The expansion comes at a transformational moment as the Trust moves forward with plans to attract a leading center for climate solutions, which will expand partnership, learning and training opportunities for students on Governors Island.

"The Harbor School has been a key partner of Governors Island for over a decade, and I'm thrilled that it will be able to nearly double in size to support their innovative curriculum focused on marine and environmental work," said **Deputy Mayor Vicki Been**. "This expansion dovetails perfectly with the City's ongoing work towards creating a climate hub on Governors Island -- we look forward to Harbor School students' involvement in this critical field for years to come!"

“The Harbor School holds a special place in our school system, giving students unparalleled exposure to our local bodies of water and hands-on experience with environmental stewardship. With this expansion,

even more New York City children will have the opportunity to experience on-water educational programming and access state-of-the-art facilities for generations to come,” said **Schools Chancellor Meisha Porter**.

“The Urban Assembly New York Harbor School exemplifies the unique promise of Governors Island – a place of historic significance at the center of New York Harbor, with unprecedented opportunity for learning and engagement with our waterfront,” said **Clare Newman, President and CEO of the Trust for Governors Island**. “This new facility will expand access to this unique curriculum to even more New York City high schoolers, and we thank Mayor de Blasio, Council Member Margaret Chin, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and our elected officials for their ongoing support of the school’s community. We look forward to expanding partnerships and educational pipelines with the Harbor School as Governors Island continues to grow as a hub for learning, research and public engagement in response to the climate crisis.”

“At the SCA, we are thrilled at the opportunity to add more seats to the Harbor School and expand access to this wonderfully unique maritime learning institution to more New York City students,” **Nina Kubota, SCA President and CEO**, said. “This project embodies our core mission at the SCA to design and construct safe, attractive and environmentally sound public schools for children throughout the many communities of New York City.”

"This expansion is exciting news for future of the Harbor School," said **Manhattan Borough president Gale A. Brewer**. "I'm pleased to support The Harbor School and to help provide more opportunities to students with the addition of 18 classrooms and 400 seats, as well as the construction of a new pool, which will be appropriate for certification for marine diving and lifeguard training."

"When I first visited the Harbor School for its groundbreaking in 2010, I could see that this educational institution is truly special. I am so happy to see the long-awaited expansion realized after so many years of hard work and collaboration with the Trust for Governors Island and the School Construction Authority," said **City Council Member Margaret Chin**. "The school's development includes a gymnasium and inground pool, and will allow the Harbor School to welcome hundreds of new students who are currently on a wait-list. Two years ago I committed \$1.2 million of my own capital funding for this project and I cannot wait to see its construction completed. Maritime students will now be able to scuba dive in their own facilities; this place is truly the only school of its kind in New York City. I am so proud to have secured this next chapter in the Harbor School's environmental stewardship of Governors Island."

“I am pleased that the Harbor School will finally get their long-awaited pool and gymnasium,” said **Senator Brian Kavanagh, who represents Senate District 26, which includes Governors Island, Lower Manhattan, and parts of Brooklyn**. “For nearly 20 years the Harbor School has offered unique educational opportunities to a diverse student body. Learning marine biology, sailing and other watercraft skills, and participating in the Billion Oyster Project all prepare students for careers engaging with and being good stewards of our natural environment. The aquatic center will allow students to take full advantage of the school’s maritime-themed academics. I am glad that the school will be expanding, giving more students the chance to experience this exceptional education on Governors Island. Thank you to the Trust, the School Construction Authority, Principal Jeff Chetirko, the Harbor School PTA, and the other dedicated advocates who helped make this possible.”

“I am thrilled this long overdue expansion to the Harbor School is finally taking place,” said **Assemblymember Yuh-Line Niou**. “When the conversion of Building 515 is complete, the Harbor

School will have 18 brand new classrooms and additional multi-use space. That's enough capacity for more than 400 new students, and makes the Harbor School an even more flexible space to meet the growing educational needs of our community. In its past life, Building 515 served New Yorkers as a hospital. It's reassuring to know 515 will continue bettering our lives and our community as a place of learning."

"Urban Assembly New York Harbor School is grateful to the Governors Island Trust, Councilmember Chin, Manhattan BP Brewer and the School Construction Authority for their support of the school's unique career and technical education programs in marine science and technology," said **Jeffrey Chetirko, Principal of the Urban Assembly New York Harbor School**. "By providing equitable space and resources to our New York City public school, it will enable high school students from all five boroughs to acquire the skills and experience to successfully navigate through post-secondary opportunities and swim to the top of the maritime industry candidate pool after graduation."

"The Urban Assembly New York Harbor School integrates academics and career readiness in a way that exemplifies the kind of innovation in public education that the Urban Assembly has built its reputation on," says **David Adams, CEO of the Urban Assembly**. "We couldn't be more excited about this expansion. The fact that more students in New York City have the opportunity to learn hands-on about the City's marine systems and environmental technology at the Harbor School is truly monumental. Congratulations to Jeff Chetirko and the entire team at Harbor."

"We were thrilled and deeply grateful to hear that the long-promised pool, including a gym and additional classrooms, for the Harbor School has at last become a reality at site 515 on Governors Island," said **Tammy Meltzer, Manhattan CB1 Chairperson and Tricia Joyce, Chair of Manhattan CB1's Youth and Education Committee**. "We understand the challenges sustained in prioritizing this important infrastructure. We want to thank all of those who made this happen, especially CM Margaret Chin, Gigi Li, Clare Newman, Sarah Krautheim, Lorraine Grillo and the NYC School Construction Authority, Dept. of Education, as well as MBP Gale Brewer, Senator Brian Kavanaugh, AM Yuh-Line Niou and all of our other elected officials and the families from the Harbor School led by Nan Richardson, who wrote, called, tweeted, and attended all of our CB1 meetings. We look forward not only to opening day, but to all of the rich opportunities this pool will create for the students of this cherished and unique program at the Harbor School. The world will be watching."

"Brooklyn Community Board 2 is pleased that the Trust is able to extend their support for the good work of the Harbor School," said **Lenue H. Singletary, III, Brooklyn CB2 Chairperson**. "Although the School is not geographically located within our boundaries, a large percentage of their students live in our District and benefit from the unique maritime and ecological studies that their curriculum affords."

“The PTA is thrilled and grateful that after parent advocacy for a decade, and help from many well-wishers, especially Margaret Chin and her chief of staff Gigi Li, the Trust for Governors Island President Clare Newman and VP Sarah Krautheim, the School Construction Authority and Lorraine Grillo, the Department of Education, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, Senator Brian Kavanagh, Assemblywoman Yuh-Line Niou, Speaker Corey Johnson, CB1, especially Tricia Joyce, and all of our other elected officials,” said **Nan Richardson, President of the Urban Assembly New York Harbor School PTA**. “The Harbor School will finally get the space and facilities needed to fulfill this unique school’s mission. As our city faces many challenges with climate change, our students trained in marine and maritime science hope to help meet that future with imagination and now will have the skills and tools to do so. We look forward to the realization of this dream.”

“The Harbor School expansion is a huge step in Governors Island’s growth as a year-round resource for our city,” said **Merritt Birnbaum, Executive Director of the Friends of Governors Island**. “From its very first days, the school has breathed new life into the historic district and helped reinvent the entire Island as a place for learning and discovery. In addition to using their surroundings as a real-world classroom, Harbor School students are valuable contributors to our organization, with many serving as summer interns in our visitor services department where they share their passion for Governors Island with the public each summer. We are so excited to continue working with the growing student body and faculty for years to come.”

The first year-round tenant on Governors Island since its transfer from federal to local control, the Harbor School’s mission is to provide a college-preparatory education built upon New York City’s maritime experience with a focus on environmental stewardship. With its partners, including the Billion Oyster Project, the school develops authentic activities for its students on, around, and related to the water that create a sense of responsibility to New York Harbor and develop a new generation of maritime advocates, enthusiasts, workers, and decision-makers. The Harbor School currently occupies nearly 80,000 square feet across two buildings located within the Governors Island Historic District, including Building 550 and the Marine and Science Technology Center (“MAST Center”) , which supports the school’s water dependent activity.

In Fall, 2020, Mayor Bill de Blasio and the Trust for Governors Island announced plans to expand Governors Island into a year-round publicly accessible destination, including a proposed center for climate solutions. The proposed center will expand educational, research and public engagement opportunities surrounding the climate crisis while expanding the Island’s open space, and complementing its use as a cultural, educational, and recreational destination, as well as the work of the Harbor School in educating New York City high schoolers in science, policy and maritime related fields. The Mayor’s Office and the Trust expect to release a solicitation to attract an academic or non-profit research institution in 2021, which will expand partnerships with the Harbor School and other educational and cultural tenants working on climate and environmental issues on the Island.

About The Trust for Governors Island

The Trust for Governors Island is the nonprofit corporation created by the City of New York that is responsible for the redevelopment and operation of 150 acres of Governors Island. The Trust’s mission is to realize the full potential of Governors Island for the inspiration and enjoyment of all New Yorkers, demonstrating a bold vision for public space.

For more information, visit www.govisland.org.

About the School Construction Authority

The School Construction Authority’s (SCA) mission is to design and construct safe, attractive, and environmentally sound public schools for children throughout the many communities of New York City. We are dedicated to building and modernizing schools in a responsible, cost-effective manner while achieving the highest standards of excellence in safety, quality, and integrity.