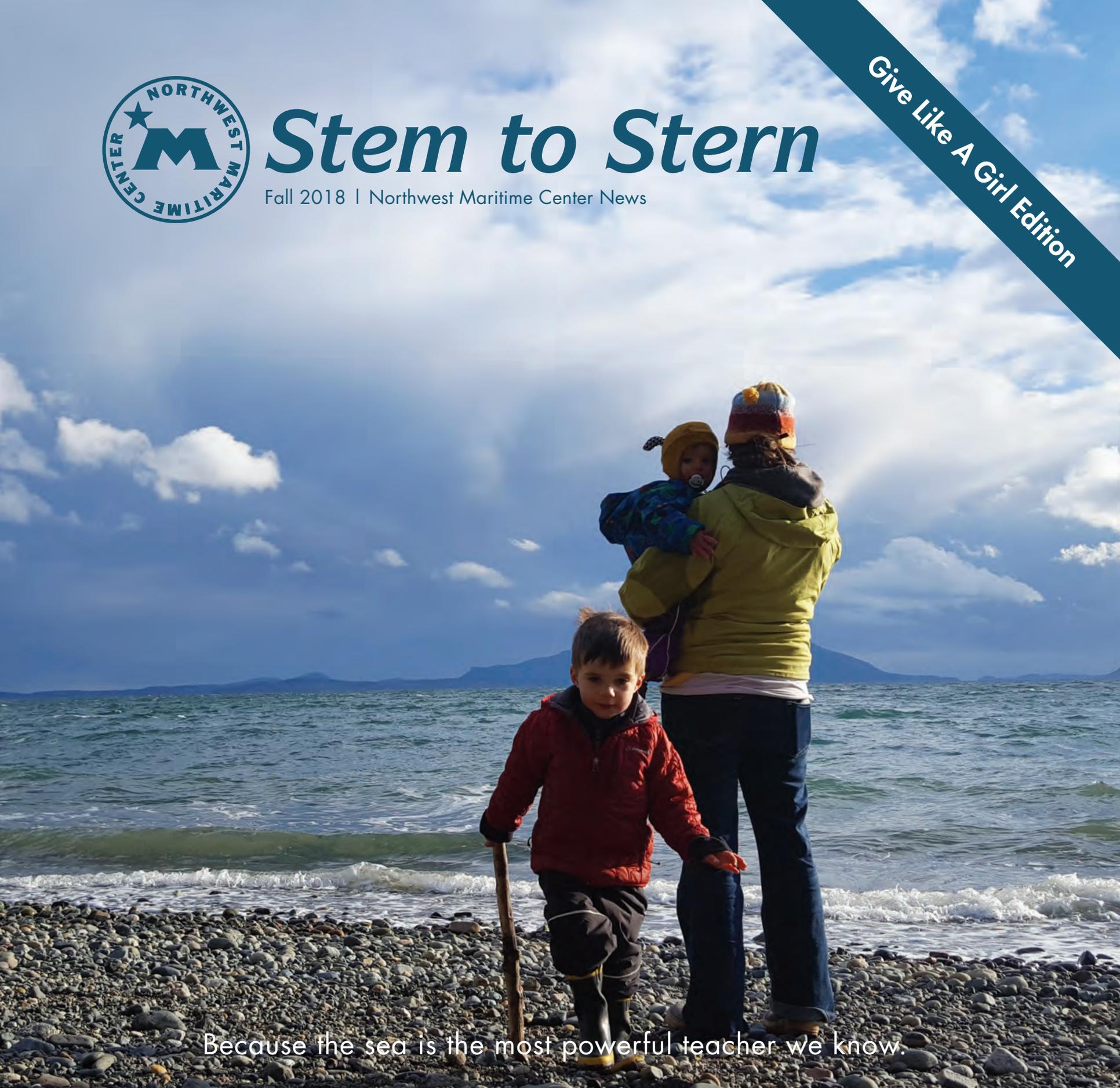




Stem to Stern

Fall 2018 | Northwest Maritime Center News

Give Like A Girl Edition



Because the sea is the most powerful teacher we know.

On the cover: SEVENTY48 racer,
Liz Vidana and children.

Letter from our COO

I've had the good fortune to sail on some of the most beautiful boats in the area, and, like many of my local friends and neighbors, I am a Race to Alaska 'Tracker Junkie.' Last summer my eyes were glued to the tracker watching local teams and, keenly, the all-girl team from our region: First Federal's Team Sail Like a Girl. I imagined the camaraderie on their boat, harkening back to one of the best years of my life.

Rewind to 2006 when I befriended Guy Hupy, one of the owners of *S/V Sparkle*, and told him I wanted to get out on the water and that his boat looked fun. He was leaving for the winter, his sailing partner was going to be gone the next season, and he needed crew. He challenged me to pull together a crew of my favorite women for the spring/summer Port Townsend Sailing Association race series. My friend, Caroline Gibson, and I thought through the list of the women with whom we would want to sail. We recruited experienced sailors and novices alike. Our one criteria was that they needed to have a good sense of humor.

Over the course of that spring and summer, we sailed our hearts out. We had a core group of eight women sailing each week; about 30 ladies sailed with us over the course of that season. We sailed hard, winning most of the races in which we competed, but what I remember most is that we had a blast and were graceful as a team. I remember my friend, Sym, actually asking, "Are there any objections to tacking?" (pause) "Hearing none, we shall tack."

That season on *Sparkle* changed my life, not only bringing me closer to a fantastic group of friends, but also showing me what is possible with skills, trust, grit, and laughter. And now, here at the Northwest Maritime Center, I have a front row seat to see how 'the sea is the most powerful teacher we know.'

In the following pages, we hope you enjoy reading about the impact of our events, races, and programs like the Girls' Boat Project.

Back to trimming the jib,

Heidi Eisenhour
Chief Operations Officer

nwmaritime.org



Photo credits: Tulip Morrow, Teresa Allen-Martin, Sol Gutierrez, Katrina Zoë Norbom and Liv von Oelreich -- THANK YOU!



The Girls' Boat Project

To hear more from Chrissy McLean, Associate Program Manager and Girls' Boat Project lead, contact chrissy@nwmaritime.org.

I smiled as an eighth-grade girl excitedly told me about her neighbor's skin-on-frame paddleboard, which he had built in the Port Townsend High School Boat Building class. She proceeded to tell me about all of the design changes that she wanted to make and the colors she wanted to use when she takes the class next year and builds her own paddleboard. In short, after two years with the Girls' Boat Project, this girl saw herself as a boat builder—and that made me smile.

The Girls' Boat Project meets every Wednesday afternoon here at the Northwest Maritime Center. We start the day with a snack and a chat. The conversation is often funny, and we laugh a lot, but we also spend time discussing serious topics that impact how it feels to be a girl in our culture. We talk about times we felt brave, or strong, or scared. We share how we help others and what to do when we are frustrated. We play challenge games to build our teamwork and communication skills. And then, depending on the weather, we head to the boat shop or out on the water. Our program provides an inclusive, supportive space for young women to work together and gain confidence through learning skills in boat building, woodworking, and sailing.

In the shop, girls from grades fifth through eighth take turns working on our 12-foot boat or on their own individual bench projects. Most of our shop work includes the use of hand tools. For our first project, each girl builds her own tool tray and then makes the tools to store in it—so far, we've made bevel gauges and mallets. Having the con-

fidence to make mistakes and fix them can be a challenge for young women, especially in an era where answers and information come so quickly. We emphasize that mistakes are part of learning, and we practice problem solving—whether we measured incorrectly, need better form for using a tool, drilled a crooked hole, or sawed off our line—there is always a solution. Even if it simply means starting over.

These girls experience powerful moments in our program while working alongside strong, professional women to learn skills that are traditionally taught by men such as woodworking and boating. They are exposed to a field where less than 3% of the professional workforce is female. They work in a boat shop occupied with working boatbuilders—it's exciting to see the same skills we are learning being applied at a professional level. The freedom to bond and develop friendships in an all-girl setting, without pressure from boys their age, is unique.

We are excited for the future of the Girls' Boat Project! There is growing support for this type of program that teaches skill building and instills self-confidence in young women. We are already seeing alumni taking advantage of the maritime vocational training opportunities through Port Townsend High School and the Northwest Maritime Center. My hope is that the Girls' Boat Project will continue to be a stepping stone on that pathway for young women to find or follow their passions as capable, smart, and strong individuals who may even join the maritime industry in our state.

REAL WORLD READINESS

A 10-week program to help our community's adjudicated youth

A challenge we face in our community was brought to my attention last fall by a conversation I had with the local sheriff. We talked about the generational rut of poverty, criminal justice and closed doors. He grew up in Chimacum and sees the same families cycling through the court system that he remembers seeing as a young person.

This conversation reminded me of a program I worked for in 1996 and 1997 in Hawaii. I was crew on a boat that worked with adjudicated young men who were "sentenced" to time on board the *SSV Tole Mour*. We taught them mariner skills such as navigation, standing watch, sailing, and other deck duties. While on board, they did school work, worked with their social workers, and grew into being positive contributors to our maritime community. The young men graduated from the program with a set of skills they could use for employment, and also with life skills to help them succeed in the future.

I asked the sheriff if he thought the opportunities at the Northwest Maritime Center could serve the same purpose as those that I saw in Hawaii—opening doors for youth to gain both the soft skills of leadership, confidence, responsibility and teamwork, and the hard skills needed to move into a maritime career. He connected me with the Juvenile Court, and this fall we took steps to build programming to serve our local adjudicated youth.

Working together, we have launched the, "Real World Readiness Program." This program will teach students a combination of skills: mariner skills such as sailing, boat maintenance, CPR & FA training, and WA State Boaters Card training; as well as the soft skills of industry, communication, responsibility, and collaboration. Since October, the program meets weekly and has had 7 participants ages 16-18, all of whom are considered moderate-high risk in terms of their risk to re-offend.

This pilot program was made possible thanks to the generosity of the Jefferson Community Foundation's "Better Living Through Giving Circle" and two donors from our community. This is a beautiful example of the power of community and the good that comes from working together. We are thankful for the opportunity to pilot this program and are already seeing the benefit for these youth. They are engaged in their work, learning the value of showing up and participating as positive members of their community.

*For more information about the Real World Readiness program, contact Program Director Robin Mills at robin@nwmaritime.org.
To support this program, contact Lisa French at lisa@nwmaritime.org.*





ROCK PAPER SCISSORS

Get to know our 2019 Port Townsend Wooden Boat Festival poster artist, Hannah Viano, and her connection to the Festival. She will begin her poster art design process this month during a week-long artist residency at the Jefferson County Museum of Art and History. Hannah's art will be on display at Northwind Art Center November 2018 and at the Northwest Maritime Center's Tretter Gallery September 2019.

I grew up a sailor on the rocky coast of Maine and have spent most of my life messing about in boats—from open lifeboats full of students in the Florida Keys, to research vessels off Cape Horn, a German brigantine in the North Atlantic, and a sharpie full of kids in the San Juans. I landed in Port Townsend at the age of 22 as a wide-eyed longboat captain pestering Brion Toss for an apprenticeship, and left a few years later, heading north on an old wooden scow. As I moved slowly from sailing and guiding towards art and motherhood, Port Townsend became my touchstone for the watery life I still hold dear. I have returned as a racer (and finisher!) of the inaugural R2AK, an educator for the Northwest Maritime Center's Maritime Discovery Program and the Cedarroot Folk School, an artist for local nonprofits, and most often to visit the many dear friends and inspiring colleagues that have made this lovely place their home.

These days I live and create in the mountains and cherish my sea time and connections to the wooden boat life all the more. Making the poster for the 2019 Wooden Boat Festival is a dream I've had tucked away for a long time, and it comes as a special honor. This month I will be working on ideas and sketches during a research residency at the Jefferson Museum, using my time spent deep in their vast archives to generate inspiration and sketches for the poster art and accompanying exhibit next September. My artistic process usually starts with some research, adventure, and the development of sketches and ideas through words and notebooks, pens and watercolors. I distill down images and refine lines before moving on to cut paper, creating the final image from layers of bold colors, sweeping movements, and the intricate textures of water, wood, and sky.

In my artistic life, I strive to mix education and art while fostering an appreciation for the natural world and sense of place. This aim comes to life in children's books, teaching residencies, public art projects, and collaborations of all kinds. To see some of my work, visit hannahviano.com or [@hannahviano](https://www.instagram.com/hannahviano). See you in September!



3%

THE MARITIME 'GLASS
CEILING' IS BASICALLY
THE FLOOR.
WE CAN CHANGE THAT.

At this point, women being only 3% of anything should sound alarm bells. 3% is the common percentage that represents the proportion of female Nobel Prize winners, female CEOs of venture-funded startups, and the female percentage of the maritime workforce. Of more than 1.25 million sailors worldwide, less than 3% are women.

While the scale and the scope of the NWMC precludes us from taking a swing at fixing Nobel or venture capital, we can make sure that the door is open for everyone to participate in maritime pursuits. We're about to launch an initiative to take this work to the next level, but empowering women and girls through the lessons of the sea isn't a new idea to us: we have the Girls' Boat Project where middle school girls build boats, the annual 'She Tells Sea Tales' event that celebrates and inspires through the stories of women, all-girl sailing camps, women-only sailing instruction, and all-female lead staff for our programs—inclusion is a central tenant of who we are.

Our programs are still gaining on the parity that we are striving for, and it's clear that our strategy of inclusion is working. In 2018, girls comprised 43% of our youth program enrollment, women were 42% of our adult programs—both well over 10 times the average rate of participation. Our popular adventure race, Race to Alaska (R2AK), had a 45% female participation rate in 2018—including

the winning all-female team. In contrast, the America's Cup, the sport's pinnacle event, had exactly 0 female participants. Inclusion is working here, and a big reason is our community.

For the decades that led up to the all-female First Federal's Team Sail Like a Girl winning the 2018 Race to Alaska, Port Townsend has long been a bastion of strong women in the maritime fields. Women here have circumnavigated the globe, run sail lofts, raced classic boats, fished commercially, hung planks, spliced lines, captained schooners, and paddled and rowed (sometimes to victory) in adventure races. Women are strong everywhere, but especially here—and we want to bring that to the rest of the region.

As of this fall, the Northwest Maritime Center is proud to build on our community's legacy of powerful women on the

16 

Youngest Female R2AK Racer

73 

Oldest Female R2AK Finisher

44%

Female Participants
Youth Sailing Programs

42%

Female Participants
Adult Sailing Programs

45%

Female Participants in
Race to Alaska



water, and is announcing the launch of a regional initiative to increase on-the-water participation for girls and women; inspired and in partnership with Sail Like a Girl and their R2AK win. This initiative is a growth of our established female forward programs, and while the specifics are still being hammered out, the initial year of programs will include:

- **Scholarships for women and girls pursuing maritime skills (both at the NWMC and region-wide);**
- **New classes and programs to train women to take leadership roles on the water;**
- **Creating a fund to support female-led maritime adventures;**
- **A new international award program to elevate and recognize women's accomplishments on the water.**

We see the opportunity to close the gap between 3% and the split that ought to be. At the same time, we strive to use the sea to inspire and empower women and girls who otherwise might not find themselves on the water—not every woman needs to rise through and attain a role as Puget Sound Pilot (but that just happened for the first time in 150 years, amazing!), but the sea possesses a path to empowerment regardless of employment. Our guiding principle is, 'the sea is the most powerful teacher we know,' and we are seizing this moment to make the difference we can for the good of our community here and throughout the region. We couldn't be more proud.



TEAM BELLINGHAM MAMA TAKES HER 2ND CHANCE

I spent the 3 ½ years leading up to SEVENTY48 making and raising babies. This took a significant toll on my body, leaving me with a non-healing pelvic fracture and the words, "You'll never run again," ringing in my former ultra-trail-runner ears. Ugh. Two days later, SEVENTY48 was announced, and I felt I'd been given a chance to show that I could still be an athlete, to prove that I had not lost my former self in motherhood.

I launched my spritely sea kayak the afternoon of the race amongst those who'd spent hours paddling to train. I, on the other hand, had trained on a rowing machine at the gym because they had childcare. It was hard to find time to train, hard to find dusty and ignored paddling gear, hard to visualize finishing.

The race was hard and wonderful and everything I wanted it to be. I felt small and invisible during night crossings with my single, dinky headlamp. I felt powerful and swift riding the wakes of tankers off Bainbridge Island. I felt sneaky as I paddled two feet off Point No Point to avoid a foul current. I ate countless chocolate covered coffee beans. I taped blisters and retaped blisters. I fell asleep while paddling off Foulweather Bluff and spent a blissful 20 minutes napping on the sand before racing the tide through Hadlock Cut. My burning wrists screamed "stop!" the last 7 miles; I taped them too. I rang the bell almost 20 hours after the winners, finishing both exhausted and wanting to paddle on forever.

I can never fully explain how profound it was to complete SEVENTY48 as the mother of an 18-month-old and 3-year-old, how this sufferfest helped to connect me to my former self. I am a mom and an athlete, and racing in SEVENTY48 gave me the permission to be both.

SEVENTY48 is a human-powered race from Tacoma to Port Townsend covering 70 miles in 48 hours. Race start is May 31st, 2019. Applications open. Visit seventy48.com for details.

#GIVINGTUESDAY is November 27th!

Remember to:

GIVE *like a* GIRL

All gifts made now until #GivingTuesday on November 27, 2018, qualify for a 1:1 match up to \$10,000. Double your gift and help us bridge the gap and increase the number of women and girls in sailing and maritime professions. Gifts of all sizes are appreciated and will make a difference. Please join us! To make a gift go to: nwmaritime.org/givelikeagirl/

Who we are: We are a philanthropic group whose goal is to provide resources that advance maritime education programs as well as promote and honor adventure and exploration. We're using our philanthropy to drive change, promote gender equity, empower women and girls, and transform lives. We are passionate about working together to provide the funding needed for women and girls to discover their most authentic and strongest selves.

Questions: Contact lisa@nwmaritime.org or phone: 360.385.3628 x127

The time is now
to show your
support for
women and girls!
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