

Flagship Niagara League



chris gagliano
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2018 Annual Report



ABOUT US

OUR MISSION

The Flagship Niagara League is a 501(c)3 non-profit educational associate organization of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission chartered to facilitate citizen participation and operation of the U.S. Brig *Niagara* and its homeport, Erie Maritime Museum.

The Erie Maritime Museum and the U.S. Brig *Niagara* educate the public regarding the region's maritime heritage, The War of 1812 in Lake Erie including the building of Oliver Hazard Perry's fleet, and the experience of the U.S. Brig *Niagara* under sail. The Erie Maritime Museum and the U.S. Brig *Niagara* are administered by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and are actively supported by the Flagship Niagara League.



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Executive Director / Fleet Captain | William Sabatini
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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & FLEET CAPTAIN



Dear Erie, donors, and supporters of the league,

I began at this organization fourteen years ago in 2005, and have been sailing longer than some of our trainees have been alive. This is a new position for me, however I am well versed in this organization and am excited to bring my ideas and vision to the Flagship Niagara League and Erie.

As the Captain of *Niagara*, I've been setting higher goals and standards each year, and I plan to do the same as Executive Director. In 2018, we made a huge leap in bringing a second ship to the League in a programmatic collaboration with South Street Seaport Museum. The Fredonia schooner *Lettie G. Howard* made her appearance in Erie this summer, hosted a number of passengers and campers, and continues her programming even now as she makes her voyage back to Erie for her second season here at the Erie Maritime Museum.

Both ships made a huge impact on the students of Erie County. *Niagara* hosted 8th grade Erie County students on school sails, and this fall, *Lettie* hosted the 5th graders. Since students can't get on the brig until they're twelve, *Lettie* helped give younger kids a chance to get on the water, and a more rounded experience to all of the students within Erie, which most cities can't say. We now have two tall ships readily accessible to them, and we're giving them that access when they're as young as ten. The 5th graders were also able to witness *Niagara's* carronade going off, which always warranted an excited and enthusiastic response from the students on *Lettie*.

Each tier in the Flagship Niagara League has people who help facilitate each piece of the League, be it the ships with the crew, volunteers, and students, all of the knowledge and craftsmanship in the wood shop, the experience of our educators, the office staff, the board, and a host of others. There's not one person that isn't contributing to our cause. The Flagship Niagara League and its ships stand on a sturdy foundation of hard workers who care about *Niagara*, *Lettie*, their missions, and the city of Erie as a whole. Tall Ships Erie 2019 is coming later this year, and it exemplifies all of that hard work. As the largest fundraiser in Erie, we strive to make it a community event for everyone, and we are excited to bring fifteen ships and two giant ducks to our city's bayfront.

I am excited for this year, and I am proud of what we accomplished in 2018. The Flagship Niagara League, the U.S. Brig *Niagara*, and the *Lettie G. Howard* wouldn't exist without the continued support from Erie and beyond, and we're bringing you another summer full of sailing.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William Sabatini". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

WILLIAM SABATINI

2018 EVENTS

8th Annual Mariner's Ball

June 2, 2018



Mariner's Ball is the biggest fundraiser the league hosts each year. This black tie event includes a live band, a dance floor, multiple open bars, auctions, and a fireworks show to close out the evening.

Arrival of *Lettie G. Howard*

June 3, 2018



Exactly one month after leaving the South Street Seaport Museum, *Lettie G. Howard* and her crew made it out of the Welland Canal and into Lake Erie in the early morning hours of June 3rd. Upon arriving at the Presque Isle Lighthouse, they were greeted by small boats driven by *Niagara* shipmates, and escorted into the slip of the Erie Maritime Museum.



Friends and Family Day

July 4, 2018



Each year on the Fourth of July, the Erie Maritime Museum opens its doors to the public, where visitors can come see the *Niagara* and the museum free of charge. Additionally, *Lettie* took a number of day sail passengers out for day sails.

2018 EVENTS

7th Annual FNL Open July 16, 2018

The Flagship Niagara League's annual golf tournament took place at Lakeview Country Club, where participants could underwrite for different levels of sponsorship. This event, sponsored by Erie Federal Credit Union, helps *Niagara* to keep operating, and included steaks, drinks, and fun had by all.



Halloween Spooktacular October 20, 2018

Visitors of all ages came down to see the *Niagara* transformed into a haunted ghost tour, as well as trick or treat through the Erie Maritime Museum.



Boos on the Brig October 27, 2018

This 21+ event featured spooky drinks served on the *Niagara*, such as Vampire's Kiss, the Green Goblin, and the Grave Digger.

There was live music featured, as well as food trucks and a costume contest.



Christmas Tree Ship December 8, 2018

Every December, the crew puts a tree on top of the *Niagara* and invites everyone down to the museum, where Santa and his reindeer visit! The crew worked diligently the week before to put the lights and a tree on the brig, and there was a countdown to light-up time on the night of the event.



NEW FACES IN THE LEAGUE



William Sabatini **Executive Director / Fleet Captain**

Captain William Sabatini grew up in southeastern Massachusetts, on Cape Cod, and so has been around water his entire life. He began sailing tall ships in Newport, RI, before attending Tabor Academy, an academically rigorous high school in Marion, MA. While at Tabor, Billy sailed for four years on the Schooner *Tabor Boy*; he also crewed on various other schooners during his summer breaks. In the latter half of his senior year, he restored a 1939 Alden Coastwise Cruiser, *Luau*, which he sailed throughout New England after graduation. The following year, he sailed *Luau* to Maine Maritime Academy, where he spent the next four years earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Small Vessel Operations, with a concentration in Sail Training. While at Maine Maritime, Billy worked his way up to the position of Chief Mate of the Academy's schooner *Bowdoin*, where he designed and implemented *Bowdoin's* student run sail training program. During his college career, he also assisted in the development of a supplemental seamanship program, applicable to both traditional and modern vessels, for students in all majors at the Academy.

Billy began his time with the US Brig *Niagara* in 2005, as 3rd Mate, advancing to Chief Mate in 2008 and Captain in 2014. During the winter months, he has served as Mate or Captain on a number of tall ships on every coast of the United States. Over the last two decades, he has sailed the East coast from Nova Scotia to Venezuela, the West Coast from Alaska to Mexico, and the entire Great Lakes system, as well as crossing the Atlantic twice.

As Billy enters his fifteenth season with *Niagara*, he has transitioned to the role of Executive Director and Fleet Captain with the Flagship Niagara League. He is very much looking forward to the opportunity to bring his passion for sailing and sail training to this new leadership role.

Billy lives in Erie, PA with his wife Megan, an elementary art teacher at Grandview Elementary School, their dogs Bruin and Queen Charlotte, and their cats Commodore and Dory.



Sydnee Groenendaal **Operations Manager; Vice Chair Tall Ships Erie 2019**

Erie native Sydnee Groenendaal began her career on *Niagara* as a volunteer back in 2005. She went on to work through the ranks onboard, eventually becoming a mate on *Niagara* in 2014 as well as Relief Mate on *Lettie G. Howard* in 2018. Additionally in 2018, she became the Operations Manager for the Flagship Niagara League, as well as the Vice Chair for Tall Ships Erie 2019.



Denzel Keith **Accountant & Captain's Clerk**

Denzel Keith graduated from Cathedral Preparatory School in Erie before attending Gannon University, where he received his BA in accounting with a marketing minor. He worked at Felix and Gloeckler for two years before joining the FNL. Denzel is currently pursuing his CPA.

NEW FACES IN THE LEAGUE



Christopher Cusson **Captain, U.S. Brig *Niagara***

Captain Christopher Cusson is a graduate of Maine Maritime Academy, the University of Connecticut and is an Alumni of the Williams Mystic Maritime Studies Program. Captain Christopher Cusson grew up along the coasts of New England and Newfoundland. His father served in the United States Navy and because of this, he grew up by the sea which guided him to a career as a professional mariner. After high school, Captain Cusson enlisted in the United States Coast Guard and served 4 years in Homer, Alaska. After his enlistment ended, he enrolled in Maine Maritime Academy in Castine, Maine, where Captain Cusson discovered his love of traditional sailing vessels and sail training when he sailed aboard the Arctic Schooner *Bowdoin* as a trainee to the southern shore of Newfoundland. This experience, and his time at MMA, led him on his course to specialize in Traditional Sail and Sail Training as a maritime profession. It was also at MMA where Captain Cusson first sailed with Captain Sabatini, the FNL Executive Director and Fleet Captain, as a classmate.

After his time at Maine Maritime Academy, Captain Cusson pursued experience on Tall Ships on both coasts of the United States until his path led him to Erie in the spring of 2008 as 3rd Mate on the *Niagara*. It is here in Erie, sailing on the *Niagara* for the better part of the last 10 years that Captain Cusson has honed his craft as a Mariner and Sail Trainer. Sailing in many different roles on the *Niagara* has allowed him to understand the vessel in many different capacities.

In the winter of 2018, Captain Cusson took a 3 month leave from *Niagara* to serve as Master of the brig *Lady Washington*, sailing along the coast of California. Captain Cusson managed the *Lady Washington* during her educational programs and voyages from Southern California to San Francisco Bay. This past sailing season, Captain Cusson had the opportunity to be Relief Captain of the Schooner *Lettie G Howard*, sailing on Presque Isle Bay for public day sails and to various ports on Lake Erie for summer festivals.

Captain Cusson would like to express that, “it is an honor to be a care taker of such a unique maritime treasure and to continue to live in my adopted home of Erie.”



Emily Hoffman **Day Sail Coordinator & Digital Media Manager**

Emily Hoffman came to *Niagara* as a trainee in 2013 after serving as a public defense investigator in Washington, D.C. and Boston. She stayed through the winter of 2013, and became an Ordinary Seafarer in 2014, as well as the ship’s purser. Emily maintained this position for two seasons, and then spent the winter of 2015-2016 dog sledding in Vermont. During the 2016 season, she was the ship’s Marine Operations Coordinator, and in 2017 sailed again as the ship’s purser / OS. In 2018 she became the Day Sail Coordinator and Digital Media Manager. Emily originally

hails from Pittsburgh, PA and holds a BS in Criminal Justice from Northeastern University.

U.S. BRIG NIAGARA

2018 SEASON

FROM CAPTAIN GOLDMAN



Hello Erie,

I've been sailing with the Flagship Niagara League for about a decade now. I began as Captain of *Niagara* in 2015 after serving as an AB, mate, and Chief Mate. 2018 was an exciting and successful season, with three new programs offered and an enthusiastic crew to help carry out the programs.

In 2018, we hosted our first rigging practicum, wherein students of all ages from around the country came to the Erie Maritime Museum to help the crew and volunteers uprig the ship for the coming sailing season. They experienced firsthand the challenges of working outside during Erie's frigid spring months, and the reward of finally casting off the dock lines to go sailing on a ship they helped put together. They also experienced the drills and preparation that comes with each year's Coast Guard Inspection.

The Waves of the Past, Leaders for the Future is a program in conjunction with Mercyhurst University, and was the second year the program came aboard. We brought this program back because it helped us connect with college students from the Erie area, and helped them get to know the bayfront and Erie's maritime history in an immersive setting. This voyage included a stop at the Western end of the lake at the Great Lakes National Maritime Museum in Toledo, Ohio. It was also the catalyst for the AIM program on *Lettie G. Howard* this past January from Miami to St. Petersburg.

We also introduced the first Girl Scout program, meaning that all of our trainees were girls, and we purposefully primarily had female professional crew onboard for the duration of their two weeks. The crew believes this was the most successful program on *Niagara* to date, and the students similarly had a rewarding experience with their time onboard, especially with the festival we attended in Sandusky, Ohio during this program.

Discovery Bound was the third new program to come aboard. This was a Christian Science program for high school students, and one of the first faith-centered programs on *Niagara*. The students learned from the ship, as well as from each other. The crew also learned different things from these trainees than our usual group of students.

Along with these programs, we also hosted the Environmental Science Field School program onboard for the 8th year. These students came from Niagara University, Lock Haven University, as well as others to sample the Eastern and Western basins of Lake Erie. They also studied sinkholes, ecology, and got to participate in one of my favorite festivals, Port Colbourne's Canal Days.

Niagara sailed over 3,000 miles in 2018, and held over 100 sail training students, over 1,000 day sail students, and over 700 8th graders from Erie County on school sails in the fall. I'm looking forward to another summer of sailing and sail training in Erie.

Captain David Goldman

U.S. BRIG NIAGARA

2018 SEASON

April 1 – May 15: Rigging Practicum

This apprentice-level program for professionals and aspiring professionals in the traditional sailing vessel field was the first of three new programs in 2018. Students helped up-rig *Niagara* while learning and practicing traditional marlinspike seamanship skills, as well as participated in pre-season training sails.



May 16 – June 5: Waves of the Past, Leaders for the Future

This award-winning college-level program focused on the fundamentals of square-rig seamanship and comparative public history in partnership with Mercyhurst University's history department. The program began and ended in Erie, PA, and included sailing voyages to the major maritime museums and monuments of Lake Erie. In 2019, this program was given the Institutional Award of Merit from PA Museums at the Annual Statewide Museum Conference.

June 6 – 19: Exploring the Great Lakes, First Session

This program was designed for students age 14 to 18, also began and ended in Erie, PA, and included a voyage to Put-In-Bay, OH for the island's maritime festival. The curriculum focused on the fundamentals of square-rig seamanship and developing the skills and personal qualities to meet the challenges of life onboard a ship.

June 21 to July 5 – Discovery Bound

The second of the three new programs offered in 2018, the Discovery Bound Program hosted a group of Christian Science students from all over the United States and the world. The ship explored Lake Erie and its various monuments.

July 11 – 25: Girl Scouts Program

Offered in partnership with the Girl Scouts of Northeast Ohio, this was the third of three new programs offered in 2018. The majority of the crew were women, and the scouts earned the water badge for their participation in the program.

July 27 – August 10: College Environmental Science Field School

Our eighth Environmental Science Field School was a multi-disciplinary experience incorporating marine sciences, underwater archaeology, and square-rig seamanship. In past years, the science program has contributed leading-edge research on micro-bead pollution in the Great Lakes.

August 10 – 26: Exploring the Great Lakes, Second Session

This program was designed for students age 14 to 18. The curriculum focused on the fundamentals of square-rig seamanship and developing the skills and personal qualities to meet the challenges of life onboard a ship.



INTRODUCING 1893 FREDONIA SCHOONER *LETTIE G. HOWARD*



History & Background

Lettie G. Howard is one of the few surviving schooners built for commercial fishing in the United States. A schooner is a vessel fore and aft rigged, with at least two masts, where the main mast is taller than the foremast. This rig originated in America, and was subsequently adopted in England and much of Europe. Schooners were built for many purposes, carrying cargo, pilots, law enforcement, naval use, and fishing. A designated National Historic Landmark, the *Lettie G. Howard* was a smaller schooner than most Grand Banks vessels. Most of her trips would be to George's Bank off Cape Cod, out of Gloucester or Boston. After an active life in the fisheries of the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts, *Lettie* arrived at South Street Seaport Museum in New York in 1968. In 1994, after an extensive two-year rebuild that restored her to her original appearance, she was certified as a Sailing School Vessel by the U.S. Coast Guard and began a new career carrying students of all ages on life-changing voyages.

INTRODUCING 1893 FREDONIA SCHOONER *LETTIE G. HOWARD*

In 2018, a programmatic collaboration began between the Flagship Niagara League and the South Street Seaport Museum, wherein the League would operate *Lettie* from Erie in the summers and down the Atlantic coast in the winters. Crew from the Flagship Niagara League spent the month of April uprigging the schooner in her homeport at the Seaport Museum before departing from New York on May 3rd. After travelling north and stopping in Gloucester, MA, Lunenburg, NS, Gaspé, NS, and finally passing Prince Edward Island, she turned south into the St. Lawrence Seaway. *Lettie* passed through the eight locks of the Welland Canal and triumphantly arrived at the Erie Maritime Museum on the evening of June 3rd.



Mate Sydnee Groenendaal & deckhand Meghan Haviland teaching campers about navigation.

The next week began a summer filled with day sails, Tall Ships Summer Camp, and port stops in Ashtabula, OH, Sandusky, OH, and joined the *Niagara* in Port Colbourne, ON for Canal Days. The schooner hosted over 5,000 passengers and 84 campers over the summer months, and nearly 400 Erie City 5th graders on school sails in the fall.



The last line is cast off for *Lettie's* departure from Erie at Dobbin's Landing.

Lettie departed from Dobbins Landing on the evening of September 30th, heading once again for the Atlantic Ocean by way of the Welland Canal and the St. Lawrence Seaway. She stopped at North End Shipyard in Rockland, ME for the month of November before continuing down the East Coast. *Lettie* reached Florida just before the New Year, accumulating 2,520 nautical miles on her journey south.

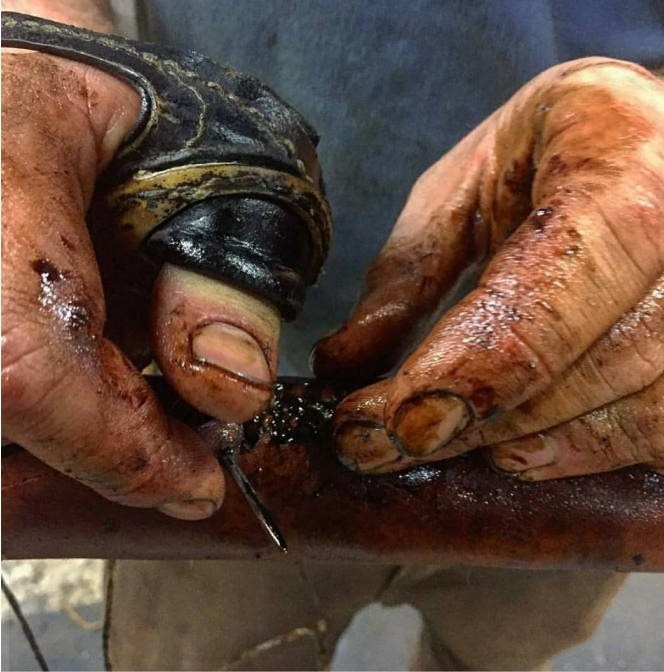


Shipyard in Rockland, Maine.



Lettie's winter crew on Christmas Day 2018.

REPAIR & MAINTENANCE



2018 was a frenetic year for the carpentry department. We kept busy with major projects on *Niagara*, *Lettie*, our small boats, and in the museum itself. In the winter and early spring of 2018, we built an entirely new fighting top for *Niagara*'s mainmast and replaced more than twenty feet of waterway timber on the port side. We made a new snow mast--the 50-foot-tall mast that sits directly behind the mainmast and allows us to set the spanker--and complete repairs to the fiddley combing, a complex structure that sits above the engine room and provides ventilation and protection for the equipment inside.

We repaired the ship's capstan, replaced almost a dozen short sections of deck planking, and reefed and re-caulked a number of seams, hoping to help the sailing crew stay a little drier below decks. As the day

of the shakedown sail approached, we shaped and installed two new lodging knees that been removed as part of the waterway timber project earlier in the winter. Getting the right stock for those particular pieces was a difficult and time-consuming process, but we finally found a piece of oak of the necessary quality and dimensions: when it arrived at the museum, it weighed more than two thousand pounds.

As spring gave way to summer, we began preparing for the much-anticipated arrival of *Lettie G. Howard*. To make room for the new crew, we built an office space where the sail locker used to be, and constructed a new sail locker down in the rig shop. Once *Lettie* arrived in Erie, we undertook a series of modifications to make her ready for her busy day-sailing season: she got new stairs, deck boxes, life lines, mast wedges, and weatherboards, as well as a number of repairs to her aft cabin top.



REPAIR & MAINTENANCE

Meanwhile, inside the woodshop, Cutter I underwent a transformation. Over the course of the summer and fall, we sanded, painted, installed sole boards, shaped and fitted inwales, cap rails, and thwart risers, and designed bulkheads. We pored over boat building books during lunch breaks, determined to carve out enough time to keep working on our favorite project.

In mid-fall, *Lettie* left for her long trip south, but before she headed to Florida she stopped in Maine for a maintenance period in North End shipyard. While she was there, she was hauled out of the water, got a fresh coat of bottom paint, and was inspected by the Coast Guard. We reefed and caulked below and above the waterline on the hull and transom, as well as on deck, and undertook a host of other small repairs.

In the midst of downrig, we demolished all of *Niagara's* hammock rails and made several repairs to the cap rail in preparation for building and installing new hammock rails in the spring. In the late fall and into the winter, we replaced several covering boards around the starboard side hawse hole (where the anchor rode runs through the hull) and replaced another sixteen-foot section of waterway timber, this time further aft on *Niagara's* port side. And then, we headed back into the shop to keep working on Cutter I and to gear up for another year's worth of repairs and maintenance in the upcoming 2019.



-Alethea Gaarden, shipwright



From left: Shipwright Alethea Gaarden, Senior Project Manager & Lead Shipwright Adam Stanisz, Shipwright Paul Kirby

ERIE MARITIME MUSEUM

Display at Penn State Behrend's Family STEM Night

Funded in 2017 through Erie Community Foundation's Steamship *Niagara* Fund, Erie Maritime Museum completed and premiered a hands-on display at Penn State Behrend's Family STEM Night in February, 2018. Using this series of simple machines, a student can both feel and measure the mechanical advantage gained with the addition of pulleys. The Museum's design elements are unique – students lift 12-pound cannon balls using a rig constructed with a maritime feel: proper hand-made ship's blocks and hempex lines secured to a rail of belaying pins.



EMM STEM team proudly debuts their hands on exhibit (l to r, Ed Bolla, Brett Eckstrom, Rich Hall, missing from photo Chris Laird and Linda Bolla).

The exhibit was designed to be easily portable, constructed and rigged by Museum volunteer docents. Lesson plans and an assembly/safety manual were drafted by Museum Intern Brett Eckstrom, a PSU Behrend History Major then in his junior year.



EMM Intern Brett Eckstrom teaches a lesson in mechanical advantage.

National Water Dance Biennial Performance

Erie Maritime Museum once again hosted the National Water Dance biennial performance and event in April, 2018. Led by Mercyhurst University's Departments of Dance and Chemistry, a collaborative collective of performing and visual artists came together to celebrate our waters, as well as to focus attention on critical water issues facing the United States.

The event was unique in its scope: in addition to dance, the museum floor came to life with live jazz, sculpture, poetry and infographs created by Mercyhurst students along with a multitude of partners from the community, including Harborcreek Youth Services and the Neighborhood Art House. Poetry and art remained on exhibit until May. The event culminated with a mainstage performance in the Hirt Auditorium. Plans are already underway for April, 2020!



Photos by Ashlyn Duke



Left to right: Emily Black, Caitlin Cummings, and Olivia Duke

ERIE MARITIME MUSEUM

Daven Anderson's *A Celebration of Life and Work on Our Waterways*

A Celebration of Life and Work on Our Waterways was the featured exhibit in Erie Maritime Museum's West Wing Gallery and Orientation Theater, August through October, 2018. This two-gallery exhibit featured the work of noted American marine artist Daven Anderson and of artists from Erie's own BLOOM Collaborative.

The exhibit opened with a gallery talk by Daven Anderson. Anderson's work featured large format watercolors of people and work on America's inland waterway system, including three paintings created especially for and premiering in this show. A U.S. Coast Guard artist and a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, Anderson is currently Managing Director of the American Society of Marine Artists and Executive Director of the Missouri Watercolor Society. Creations from artists with the BLOOM Collaborative reflected on our local waters and maritime history, primarily in ceramics.



Daven Anderson's watercolor, *Heading Home*



Emmalee Agostini's ceramic, *Deep Lake Lurker*



Ron Strecker's painting, *Painted Turtle*

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FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

SUPPORT & REVENUE

Sailing School Fees:	\$367,125
Contributions and Membership:	\$130,554
Museum Admissions and Store Sales:	\$171,658
Grants:	\$401,833
Fundraising Events:	\$165,075
Investment Income (loss):	(\$32,863)
Port Fees:	\$146,292
Summer Camp:	\$19,966
Contributed Materials & Services:	\$900
Other:	\$33,742
Educational Programs:	\$6,973

TOTAL SUPPORT & REVENUE **\$1,411,255**

EXPENSES

Program Services

Education & Museum	\$31,293
Museum Store	\$125,789
Sailing Program	\$1,307,456

Support Services

Management & General	\$409,467
Fundraising	\$188,431

TOTAL EXPENSES **\$2,062,436**

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS **(\$651,181)**

NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR **\$404,423**



A CLOSING WORD FROM CAPTAIN CUSSON

With the 2019 sailing season beginning soon, we look ahead to what will be an exciting summer for the Flagship Niagara League. As the U.S. Brig *Niagara* begins her 28th sailing season I am honored to serve as captain and work with such passionate staff, volunteers, and crew to be worthy of the challenge of sailing our iconic ship. This winter, the maintenance crew and volunteers worked hard to get the ship ready for up rig and the sailing season.

So far this year *Niagara* ship volunteers have contributed nearly 5,000 volunteer hours that will ensure *Niagara* is ready to sail this summer. *Niagara*'s Winter Sail Training Program, which offers free seamanship classes to the public, is going strong with good retention and averaging over thirty students each class. Many of those students have become ship volunteers. The final Winter Sail Training Class will be *Niagara*'s Shake Down Sail on May 4, 2019.

This season *Niagara* will sail on all five Great Lakes and visit 8 Tall Ship Festival Ports as part of Tall Ships America's Great Lakes Challenge. As part of Tall Ships America Challenge Series, *Niagara* will be part of a fleet of over a dozen ships participating in festivals from Toronto to Duluth and back for our own festival, Tall Ships Erie, in late August 2019.

During our sailing season as we visit all the Great Lakes and Tall Ship Festivals, *Niagara* and her crew will continue to focus on one of her foundational missions, Sail Training. People are *Niagara*'s cargo and our goal is to have a positive impact on all those who sail onboard. We strive to offer meaningful experiences and to foster growth in individuals through the platform of a 19th century sailing ship. The seasonal crew are dedicated professional mariners and sail trainers who are tasked with not only sailing the ship, but investing in each trainee who comes onboard. This is our collective goal and we have a great crew that will meet this challenge.

I am grateful for the support and hard work of all our staff, crew, volunteers and community partners who keep the commonwealth's Flagship sailing and our important programs changing lives. I want to thank all those who continue to invest themselves in keeping our ships sailing and programs thriving. Let's go sailing!



Christopher Cusson
Captain, U.S. Brig *Niagara*



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This report was compiled by Hope Collins