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For Immediate Release

**Non-Profit Treasure Island Sailing Center Raises \$35,000 with
its 5th Annual BIG Team Regatta Event**

*Bay Area Businesses Collaborate to Provide Experiential Sailing Events That Enable
Underprivileged Youth to Learn Critical Teamwork, Communication and Decision
Making Skills*

Treasure Island, CA, October 7, 2009 – Non-profit Treasure Island Sailing Center (TISC) raised \$35,000 at its popular [“BIG Team Regatta”](#) held at the Olympic Circle Sailing Club (OCSC) in Berkeley on Friday, October 2. Several local businesses set sail in the pursuit of bragging rights and the chance to support TISC’s youth programs. The funds raised allow hundreds of underprivileged youth to attend a special summer sailing camp.

The BIG Team Regatta is a major part of TISC’s programs, which help children learn life skills and instill teamwork, communication and responsibility. Full and partial scholarships go to over 80% of its youth participants.

“The regatta gets people out on the water for the thrill of sailing and experiences that stick for a lifetime, all in the spirit of giving,” said Lacey Todd, operations manager for TISC. “To pull this off, we require an army of volunteers and generous sponsors who make this possible. This year marks the fifth successful BIG Team Regatta thanks to their efforts.”

Seven four-person teams represented by Wells Fargo Bank, PG&E, Northrup Grumman, Mechanics Bank, Hanson Bridgett and Almar Marinas, competed in seven races over the course of the day.

This year’s winning team, Wells Fargo, was joined onboard by veteran sailor and Olympic silver medalist Will Baylis of Tiburon, who coached them with great skill to their place on the podium.

During the awards ceremony, 10-year-old Isabella Duan from Hillsborough, Calif., took the microphone and gave thanks to TISC staff and the corporate racers for giving her three years of summer sailing camp.

“I have been sailing at Treasure Island Sailing Center with my brothers for the past three years. I have really enjoyed sailing because it has taught me a about staying focused,

perseverance, and sportsmanship. I hope to come to TISC for many more years and someday I would like to be on a team and sail competitively.”

The San Francisco BIG Team Regatta came about five years ago in collaboration between two Bay Area businesses, [Group Experiential Learning](#) and [OCSC Sailing School](#). Their founders, compelled by personal experience to support youth sailing, created a non-profit version of their corporate team-building programs.”

“Sailing is perhaps the most empowering opportunity parents and organizations can provide young children,” said Jay Palace, founder of BIG Team Regatta and president of GEL. “Learning to solo-sail a small dinghy gives a seven-year-old complete control and a huge sense of accomplishment. Braving the elements ignites excitement, instills confidence and inspires curiosity about weather, tides and science.”

Palace served as a volunteer sailing coach for Treasure Island in the late 1990’s and came up with the BIG Team Regatta fund-raising concept to benefit a Washington, D.C. non-profit in 2003. Since then, the organization has helped non-profits like TISC raise a combined \$500,000 with 14 regattas in four cities – San Francisco, Chicago, Washington, D.C. and New York.

To watch videos of the 2009 BIG Team Regatta visit:
<http://www.gelcorp.com/clients/bigteamregattasf2010.html>

To make a donation please visit TISC’s Sponsor a Sailor Donation Website at <http://tisailing.org/sponsor-a-sailor/>. For more information on TISC, go to www.tisailing.org or email info@tisailing.org. And for more information on BIG Team Regatta please visit <http://www.bigteamregatta.com/>.

You can also join TISC on [Facebook](#).

About Treasure Island Sailing Center

The Treasure Island Sailing Center (TISC) is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to improve the Bay Area community and the sport of sailing by providing access, facilities, and sailing instruction to people of all socioeconomic backgrounds, skill levels, and physical abilities. To learn more about our youth, adult and adaptive sailing programs, call (415) 421-2225 or visit www.tisailing.org.

About GEL

Group Experiential Learning specializes in leadership and team building programs that capitalize on active, outdoor activities. We help organizations improve communication, collaboration and leadership skills through challenging sailing exercises and adventure racing events. Participants learn more effective ways to communicate, work together as teams and develop problem-solving skills, all while enjoying a day on the water. GEL conducts sailing programs at port cities around the country and in select international locations. In San Francisco, we regularly work with OCSC to deliver amazing experiences. Contact GEL at 1 888 GEL TEAM or visit www.gelcorp.com.

About OCSC SAILING

OCSC SAILING is the premier sailing club in North America. For over 30 years, we have taught sailing on the San Francisco Bay. Because of our years of experience in sail training and corporate entertainment GEL has chosen OCSC SAILING as its San Francisco Bay partner. Together GEL and OCSC Sailing are able to provide your company with the exact sailing event desired. From simple sails for client entertainment and socializing to large celebrations and structured training in leadership and teambuilding, including landmark events in the Caribbean and Europe, GEL and OCSC SAILING can do it all. Contact OCSC SAILING at 1 800 223 2984 or visit www.ocsc.com.

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