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Build A Boat With Your Family In A UNH Weekend Workshop

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Editor's note: Photos available. To arrange an interview with a past participant, please contact project coordinator Ray Belles at 603-868-7180 or ORfarm@comcast.net. As the workshop application deadline is April 15, this story should run as soon as possible.

DURHAM, N.H. -- This spring the UNH Marine Docents will host the fourth annual Family Boat-Building Workshop, offering six families an opportunity to strengthen their bonds while building a wooden skiff.

"This program gives each family the joy of completing a complex task together as well as a means of enjoying our marine resources," said Mark Wiley, NH Sea Grant Extension Specialist for Marine Education. "We guarantee a 100 percent success rate."

To qualify for the boat-building workshop, families must include one or two adults and at least one child age 12 or older. No prior woodworking experience is required, although participants should have basic skills using hand tools. An experienced docent boat builder will assist each family.

The UNH Marine Docents are a group of trained volunteers dedicated to the preservation and wise use of marine resources. They are sponsored by NH Sea Grant and UNH Cooperative Extension.

"Without the docents I wouldn't have known where to begin. They provided logistics and guidance every step of the way," said Jon Greenberg of Concord, who participated with his family last year. "There is enormous satisfaction in making way in a vessel our family built together."

Because space in the program is limited, each family interested in participating must submit an application by April 15. The \$500 program fee includes all of the boat-building materials, oars and three lifejackets. Each family will build a 12-foot Bevin's Skiff, which can safely carry a family of three for a day on quiet water. Through the generosity of the Durham Great Bay Rotary, limited scholarship funds are available to aid local families.

Participants will meet Thursday night, May 12, for an overview of the project and a discussion of the habitat and wildlife of the Great Bay Estuary. Construction will take place Friday through

Sunday, May 13-15, at UNH's Kingman Farm in Madbury. The following weekend docents will help families launch their boats on the Oyster River in Durham.

For more information, an application or scholarship guidelines, contact Mark Wiley at 603.749.1565 or mark.wiley@unh.edu. Applications are also available at www.unh.edu/marine-education.