

# BUENA PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT

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## PRESS RELEASE

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## Buena Park School District Students Set Sail, Learn About Ocean Conservation

**BUENA PARK, CA** – Buena Park Junior High eighth-grader Andres C. is building waterproof robots while perfecting his swimming and sailing techniques thanks to the Long Beach Sailing Foundation's Middle School science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) program.

The program is a partnership between Buena Park School District and the Long Beach Yacht Club. It provides 35 junior high Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) students with the opportunity to participate in swimming safety courses, build aquatic robots to perform science experiments and learn about aerodynamics by making model sailboats.

Buena Park Junior High teachers are certified to teach the U.S. Sailing Reach curriculum, which applies classroom STEM learning to careers in ocean conservation, while the program's sailing coaches are experienced volunteer sailors from the Long Beach Yacht Club.

Andres C. said being part of the program has given him a better understanding of how science and robotics can be used in real life applications, and careers in ocean conservation.

"I like the STEM Sailing Academy because I get to experience new things that I never had the chance to do before," Andres C. said. "This program has helped me become more confident, more open and helped me make more friends."

The 2019-20 academic school year marks Andres C.'s third year in the program.

Debbie Clark, Buena Park Junior High's program specialist, said the program brings together students who are interested in science and water sports, which helps them bond, make new friends and ultimately come back multiple years.

"The goal of the program is to foster an interest in science, technology, engineering and math through sailing and ocean conservation education," Clark said. "The program shows students how STEM can apply to future careers, and many of our students who join the program go on to be involved in extracurricular activities in high school such as water polo or swimming."

Launched in 2016, the program has since graduated 140 students, who receive an official Long Beach Yacht Club jacket and collectable patches, similar to skill badges earned by Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

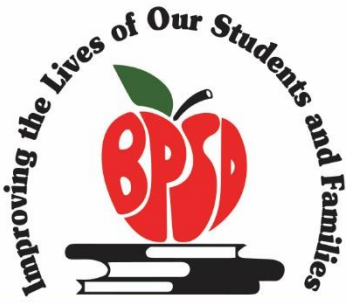
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"Buena Park School District's partnership with the Long Beach Sailing Foundation and Yacht Club provides our AVID students with an additional STEM program that is not only enriching, but exclusive to our District," Superintendent Ramon Miramontes said. "This program prepares students for college and introduces them to new and exciting career pathways in ocean conservation."

The program's next field trip will allow students to visit the Dana Point Ocean Institute on Friday, Oct. 4 to learn about ocean conservation efforts with tidepools.

### PHOTO CAPTIONS:

**092319\_BUENAPARK\_STEMSAIL\_1:** Buena Park Junior High eighth-grader Kulani D. builds a waterproof robot with classmates for a lesson in ocean conservation and ocean water sampling through the Sailing Foundation's Middle School STEM program in the Long Beach Yacht Club.

**092319\_BUENAPARK\_STEMSAIL\_2:** Buena Park Junior High eighth-graders Thomas S. (left), Enrique C. (middle), Brian R. (right) learn how to sail through the Sailing Foundation's Middle School STEM program at the Long Beach Yacht Club in Long Beach Harbor.

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