

SMALL BUT MIGHTY



The U.S. Coast Guard releases student built boats.

Send off the fleet

Student built boats sail toward Japan

BY MARIANNE MONSON

You may remember the aftermath of the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan, when debris from the wreckage washed up along the coasts of Oregon and Washington.

In fact, one of those items, a fishing vessel, is still on display at the Columbia River Maritime Museum. That boat — and its journey across the Pacific Ocean — became the inspiration for building the Columbia River Maritime Museum's Miniboat Program.

Supporting vessels

The program was developed by the Columbia River Maritime Museum

in partnership with the Consular Office of Japan in Portland, Educational Passages and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. It's also supported by Pacific Power, the U.S. Coast Guard and many others.

Elementary and middle school students in both Oregon and Japan work on separate sides of the Pacific to cooperatively design, build, launch, and track GPS-equipped, seaworthy vessels. Built from nautical roots, this one-of-a-kind education program introduces students to ocean science, international exchange, and the STEAM fields of science, technology, engineering, the arts and math, helping to inspire future careers.

Gather at the summit

Now in its third year and with more than 55,000 nautical miles traveled to

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Students from Warrenton, among others, design and build boats made to sail across the Pacific.