

Students from kindergarten to college are learning about the fishing industry Curriculum materials under development

Phil Mello of Bergies Seafood speaks with with a group of international graduate students from the Fisheries Program at the University of Rhode Island on an industry tour organized by the New Bedford Fishing Heritage Center. Photo by Laura Orleans.

The New Bedford Fishing Heritage Center is providing a variety of educational opportunities for students of all ages. In late March, the Center will present insider tours of the seafood industry for international fisheries students from the University of Rhode Island and agri-science students from Cumberland Valley High School in Pennsylvania. In addition to taking a guided walking tour of the waterfront, students will tour the Whaling City Seafood Display Auction, Bergie's Seafood, and a dockside scallop vessel at Eastern Fisheries. Later this summer a similar tour will be offered for a group of biology students from UMass Dartmouth.

In April the Center will present a program for kindergarten students at New Bedford's Gomes Elementary School. Following their in-class reading of Chris Demarest's book *Mayday! Mayday!* about a Coast Guard rescue, students will participate in an assembly program of maritime music and storytelling presented by Essex based performers Daisy Nell and Stan Collinson. The following week, safety instructors Rodney Avila and Ted Williams of Hercules will offer a presentation about safety at sea. This program is funded through a grant from the New Bedford Education Association.

Additionally, the Center has been working with local teachers to develop a variety of curriculum materials that fulfill grade-appropriate standards. The activities are designed to use the fishing industry as a topic for exploration while strengthening skills in math, ELA, history, science and the arts. The curricula will be available to teachers free of charge from the Center's website (www.fishingheritagecenter.org) in mid-April.

The Center plans to offer teacher workshops and site-based programs for students beginning in the fall of 2016 using their exhibits and archives as a springboard for learning about the fishing industry.

New Bedford Fishing Heritage Center, Inc. (FHC) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and presenting the story of the fishing industry past, present and future through exhibits, programs, and archives. The Center will open to the public in June of 2016. For more information visit www.fishingheritagecenter.org