



27 October 2026

AN OPEN LETTER TO MARINERS

K-12 AND THE FIRST MISSION OF NORTH 37 · LETTER NO. 4

To the Mariners,

Fellow mariners,

Every child should be required to learn navigation — not as a novelty, and not as a trade school pitch, but so the art does not die ashore before anyone ever ships out. Charts, bearings, the voyage triangle, time and longitude, a true heading told honestly: these are ways of seeing. When a generation never learns them, the craft thins. When a generation does learn them, the fleet has a chance.

That is why North 37's intentional K-12 program — grades 3 through 12 — is a **critical first mission** of this academy. We are not building maritime education as a narrow vocational lane alone. We are building it as philosophy and wisdom carried into intelligence and technology: inquiry first, tools you can keep second. The working theme we hold for that rebuild is *The Intellectual Lives of Seafaring Men* — a masculine authorial identification, not a sexist or racist agenda. The aim is freedom and self-governance: the right of seafarers, and of the children who may become them, to own their minds, their tools, and the written record of their material life. Anyone who stands a watch, keeps a log, or teaches the next hand belongs inside the same rebuild.

I have long cited advice from MARAD to this effect: **the future of maritime training depends on K-12**. That is not a slogan I invented for a brochure. It is counsel I take seriously. You cannot rebuild a fleet's education infrastructure only at the pier, and only after a man or woman has already signed articles. You start earlier. You keep navigation, seamanship, and honest inquiry alive in classrooms and homes — so that when a young person finally walks a gangway, the language of the sea is already half familiar.

North 37 is a seaman-built academy. Letter No. 3 in this series argued that quality assessment belongs at sea. This letter says the other half out loud: you cannot fix credentialing ashore alone if the shore never taught the craft. Start with children. Then adult mariners study underway — free curriculum, Hitch keeping the questions and the assessment record straight, officers still holding the judgment and the signature. The pipeline into the fleet is not only a hiring problem. It is an education problem that begins years before the first sea day.

Education is free. The tools to get the credential often are not.

We publish curriculum for the public to study. We are actively becoming U.S. Coast Guard-approved — in the process of obtaining Coast Guard approval through NMC pathways, and from there possibly other nations' recognition. The Coast Guard still sets the credential rules. North 37 prepares minds early, and organizes adult mariners honestly for the work that follows.

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North 37 — especially this K–12 and teaching mission — is a **group project**. It is not a solo founder speech. We need more teachers. Captains, mates, tankermen, ABs, deckhands, and families who keep the lights on at home: everyone is invited to participate. Bring what you know into classrooms and into the academy. Teach a lesson. Sponsor a handout. Put a chart on a desk. Stand beside a child who has never held a parallel rule. Argue with us about what every child ought to know before the sea asks harder questions. An academy funded by mariners can insist that intelligence at sea remain public, teachable, and owned in writing — and that the first mission is to keep that intelligence alive ashore, in the young, before anyone ever ships out.

If that sounds like the kind of first mission worth standing watch over together, join us. Bring the academy into a school. Bring a shipmate who can teach. Bring your questions. Keep the art from becoming a lost one — as a crew, not as one voice alone.

Fair winds,

CAPTAIN WAYNE ERIC HENRY

Master, Oceans Towing

Founder, North 37 Maritime Academy

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