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## **Schooner *Virginia* Awarded Grant from The American Sail Training Association (ASTA) for its Youth Sail Training Program**

*For Youth Sail Training Information Aboard Schooner Virginia, contact 757/627-7400 or visit  
[www.schoonervirginia.org](http://www.schoonervirginia.org)*

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**Norfolk, VA** – The Virginia Maritime Heritage Foundation, owners and operators of Schooner *Virginia*, will receive \$10,000 via ASTA's (American Sail Training Association) Tall Ship Youth Adventure Program grant from the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Program (OJJDP).

Schooner *Virginia*'s program was selected from a nation-wide group representing eighteen proposals rich with excellent ideas, rigorous programs, appropriate assessment instruments and program sustainability. Two other member organizations were selected for the honor, BaySail from Bay City, Michigan and Call of the Sea in Sausalito, California.

The ASTA was founded in 1973 in Newport, RI with a mission "*to encourage character building through sail training, promote sail training in North America, and support education under sail.*" ASTA raises money for scholarships and administers grants directly supporting youth education and leadership development programs that shape young people's lives and build tomorrow's leaders. ASTA primarily fosters youth education, leadership development and preservation of North American maritime heritage through over 250 tall ships and sail training vessels representing more than 26 US states and 30 countries sailing around the globe.

Schooner *Virginia*'s Youth Sail Training for 2007 will occur between June 26 and August 31, with a total of 6 youth sail training trips. During each trip 12 young sailors will be provided the opportunity to tackle the daily tasks required to safely sail the 157-ton vessel. Youth Sail Training aboard Schooner *Virginia* proves to be a unique team building, character adventure for young people and offers an unparalleled learning experience for anyone. Sailing the hand-built 122-foot re-creation tall ship requires continual work and problem solving, with everyone having an equally important role. The tall ship keeps young sailor's attention focused on the teamwork and cooperation needed to sail

in the waters of the eastern seaboard. Each student learns to sail a tall ship and in turn learns more about themselves, others, and how to become “goodwill ambassadors.”

Another component of Schooner *Virginia's* Youth Sail Training is a scholarship program that puts underserved teenagers through the youth sail training program to help set him or her on a new course in life. During 2006, Schooner Virginia provided over twenty scholarships to underserved teenagers, many coming from the Boys and Girls Clubs, Achievable Dream Academy and the Norfolk Marine Institute. The goal for 2007 is to increase the number of scholarships and this grant from ASTA will help this endeavor.

For more information on youth sail training voyages call 757-627-7400 or visit [www.schoonervirginia.org](http://www.schoonervirginia.org).

The Schooner Virginia, a two masted gaff-topsail knockabout schooner, is certified by the United States Coast Guard as a passenger carrying vessel and a sailing school vessel.

The Virginia Maritime Heritage Foundation enriches lives and builds character by using the adventure of sailing a tall ship to domestic and international ports of call. We train our crew, students, teachers, and guests to serve as goodwill ambassadors of Virginia aboard the Commonwealth's maritime icon, the Pilot Schooner Virginia, while maintaining the highest standards of professionalism and safety and by honoring the traditions of seafaring life.

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