



## Hudson River Sloop Clearwater

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## Clearwater Hosts Youth Empowerment Programs on the Hudson River

BEACON, NY– Over two weeks in August, Hudson River Sloop Clearwater will host their annual youth empowerment programs onboard the sloop *Clearwater* based in Beacon. The Young Men at the Helm program and Young Woman at the Helm programs introduce Hudson Valley youth to the river through an intensive three-day leadership training program. Annually, 20-25 young women and young men are accepted to the program and participate in various on-board and shore based activities. Clearwater also hosted a group of teenagers who identify as LGBTQ+ and Allies in June to kick off the summer overnight adventures with the much adored “Queerwater Program.”

“Our Youth Empowerment Programs change lives. Teenagers challenge their bodies, minds, and world views while setting a course for their futures aboard our beloved boat” said Maija Niemisto, Education Director at Clearwater.

Young Men at the Helm will take place on August 7-9<sup>th</sup> and Young Women at the Helm on August 21-23<sup>rd</sup>. Both programs will kick off in Beacon and finish with a small ceremony at the dock in Beacon on the final day of both programs.

The first Young Women at the Helm took place in 2001. The program was designed to encourage young women from the Hudson Valley to get engaged in sailing and to see themselves as active youth leaders. Participants sample experiential activities involving ecology and pollution, sailing and navigation. The two nights of the program are spent ashore camping and meeting with female guest speakers from varied professions: politicians, doctors, environmentalists, scientists, historians and sea captains. At the end of the program, each group presents what they have learned to their peers. Many of our participants have gone on to work on the boat as volunteers, apprentices, and crewmembers.

Young Men at the Helm started in 2009. Since its inception, many participants have gone on to work on board the *Clearwater*, as well as succeed in environmental and maritime careers. The hard work of learning and living as a crew provides the young men as an opportunity to learn more about thriving, in a small community and overcoming challenges.

During the sailing season *Clearwater* serves the Hudson River with unique education programs where the focus is experiential. Students come aboard and learn about Hudson River ecology, history and navigation. The sloop is also available for private charters and public sails.

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### About [Hudson River Sloop Clearwater](http://www.clearwater.org)

Hudson River Sloop Clearwater has been at the forefront of the environmental movement as champions for the Hudson River. To date, more than half a million people have experienced their first real look at an estuary’s ecosystem aboard the sloop *Clearwater*. Clearwater has become the grassroots model for producing positive changes to protect our planet. For more information, visit [www.clearwater.org](http://www.clearwater.org).