

Nonprofit Organization Grants:

Coast Guard Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety
Recreational Boating Safety

Federal Grant Title:	National Non-Profit Organization Grant Program
Federal Agency:	United States Coast Guard
Funding Opportunity Number:	DHS-USCG-2020-001
Type of Funding:	Cooperative Agreement
CFDA Numbers:	97.012
CFDA Descriptions:	Boating Safety Financial Assistance

Grantee: Unites States Powers Squadrons
Grant Number: 3320FAN112023
Grant Title: Boating Skills Virtual Trainer VIII
Period of Performance: 1 year grant

Award Amount: \$60,000.00

Summary:

Boats move in a unique way and handling them can prove challenging. Learning, understanding, and practicing the characteristics and movements of boat handling and the “rules of the road” will help increase boater safety and reduce boating casualties in the United States. In order to cultivate these safe boating behaviors, United States Power Squadrons proposes to continue its boat operator simulation training program (Boating Skills Virtual Trainer) by merging current technology and teaching methods in simulation training with practical hands-on boating education and classroom instruction.

What the Project Will Accomplish: With United States Power Squadrons’ robust network of knowledgeable members and certified boating instructors, the Boating Skills Virtual Trainer will create a realistic learning experience and method of virtual on-water training commensurate to and requiring the same level of competency complementing the USPS on-water training programs to recreational boaters across the country. This project will help create a boating public better prepared to engage in safe boating behaviors and reduce the number of boating casualties.

Summary of Activities and Deliverables: To better penetrate the user base with a model that can be used on a regular basis for teaching and practicing basic boating skills, USPS will take its BSVT software to a laptop version accessible to all. This will include development of an eighth-generation Boating Skills Virtual Trainer, a portable realistic training simulator compatible with laptop technology, to provide an experiential learning environment for boaters across the U.S. The laptop simulator will allow students to encounter virtual on-water scenarios where they

contemplate and make decisions using critical thinking to navigate in a dynamic, interactive boating environment, preparing and educating the students before they take the helm of an actual boat on the water. The introduction of a laptop version will further leverage the six years of program development of a realistic boating experience to a level accessible to all members. Personal Licensing fees from the sale of this laptop software to the USPS member base will also help sustain the maintenance, repair and technical support of an existing fleet of full-size virtual trainers, which will be necessary to perpetuate the valuable learning environment.

Description of Broader Impact upon Successful Completion: While simulation training does not replace live, on-water instruction, a simulation program that recreates the challenges of boating without the present, real-life dangers will allow boaters to practice and building confidence in their boating safety skills, learn the rules of the road, and exhibit better compliance to federal, state, and local regulations and rules, which in turn will reduce the risk and occurrences of accidents, injuries, and fatalities on the water.

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