



P R E S S R E L E A S E

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Contact: Jim Rhodes
 757-451-0602
 jrhodes@rhodescomm.com

MARINE MARKETERS OF AMERICA LAUNCHES PRO BONO INITIATIVE TO DEVELOP DEALER-BASED WOMEN'S EDUCATION PILOT PROGRAM

***Proof-of-Concept Trials to Take Place with Select Dealers This Summer – National
Rollout Planned for 2009***

ORLANDO, Fla. – April 21, 2008 – Marine Marketers of America (MMA) has unveiled plans to launch a pilot women's boating education program this summer as a pro bono initiative for the recreational boating industry.

The MMA Pro Bono Committee will develop and validate a dealer-based program aimed at teaching the basic principles of boating safety and boat handling. The curriculum will be tailored specifically for women boaters. With a national rollout planned for 2009, the pilot program will be tested with five retail marine dealers across the country this summer.

"Our research shows that there is a pressing need for an educational program to give women the skills and confidence to operate a boat safely," explained John Wisse, co-chair of the MMA Pro Bono Committee. "Many women are concerned that they might not be able to bring a boat back safely if their male companion is disabled on the water."

"By establishing this program as a dealer-based initiative, we believe we can provide an important industry service by enhancing boating safety. This program also creates a selling opportunity for boat dealers, who can leverage the education programs to build qualified leads and close sales," added Wisse.

Jim Rhodes, committee co-chair, added, "We will provide a turnkey marketing tool kit that includes branding guidelines, logos, taglines, advertising slicks, direct mailer and brochure templates, press kits and other promotional materials, as well as guidelines for course curriculum

and instruction. Dealers can either collaborate with local certified boating education providers, such as the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, U.S. Power Squadrons, state boating agencies or other experts, or can use our curriculum outlines to teach the courses with properly trained and certified in-house staff.”

Participating boat dealers selected for inclusion in the pilot program are Atlanta Marine, Atlanta; Basa’s Marine, Chicago; Boat Tree, Orlando; Land N’ Sea, Cincinnati; and Gander Mountain, Dayton. Pro Bono Committee members will work closely with each dealer location to develop, fine-tune, implement and evaluate the training program during the 2008 boating season. Buckeye Marine, which has developed and implemented an effective women’s educational program in Toronto, is serving as a project consultant.

“This is a wonderful opportunity for our members to contribute their talents, resources and skills as professional marketers to accomplish positive results which will benefit the entire boating industry,” said Wanda Kenton Smith, MMA president. “Once we develop and validate the concept, our plans are to work with national and regional trade organizations and marine industry associations for implementation through interested dealers nationwide.”

Members of the MMA Pro Bono Committee are John Wisse, Ohio Department of Natural Resources Watercraft Division; Jim Rhodes, Rhodes Communications; Jean Tikusis, Ken Cook Co.; Derek Robinson, Glen Raven Custom Fabrics; and Capt. Mark Kellum, Kenton Smith Advertising & Public Relations.

MMA (www.marinemarketersofamerica.com) is a professional development organization working to enhance the success of marketing and communications professionals involved in the recreational marine industry. The association was established in 2007.

###