

News Release
For Immediate Release
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Changing Lives at Sea – the MDL Sail Training Awards

On the 6th April six young people embarked on a life changing five-day sailing experience having won a place onboard the Ocean Youth Trust South's flagship, Prolific, through MDL's Sail Training Awards.

MDL's Sail Training Awards were created to reward inspirational young people between the ages of 12 and 18 who have overcome adverse personal circumstances or shown other exceptional accomplishments and achievements.

The awards rely on third party nominations from people who are in contact with young people, including teachers, guide or scout leaders, youth group leaders, friends and employers.

MDL has run the Sail Training Awards, in conjunction with OYT South, for over 30 years now and the number of nominations has grown year on year.

Once the nominations are in the hard work starts for the team at MDL who have to go through all the nominations and choose just six who will be awarded the opportunity to go on the voyage. "All the children have their own story as to why they should be included, it is really hard to choose the final six," says Hazel Craik from MDL who organises the Sail Training Awards.

This year's winners, Josh Loman (14), Alex Salisbury (13), Adam Slim (12), Millie Nation (14), Katie Anderson (15) and Ella Plummer (15), completed the five-night voyage which took them from MDL's Ocean Village Marina in Southampton around the Solent and further afield to Poole and Portland. The experience included night pilotage, a tour round Cowes RNLI Lifeboat Station and an impromptu man overboard recovery session when a bucket was dropped over the side! Each of these deserving young people also earned their RYA Start Yachting certificate. This is a recognised qualification that can be kept in their Record of Achievement, used as evidence of transferrable skills or potentially lead to the start of a more enduring relationship with the sea and sailing.

In 2017 following a nomination from teachers at his school Ciaran Robinson won a place on the Prolific through the MDL Sail Training Awards. Not only was this a 'trip of a lifetime' for Ciaran but has completely opened up a whole new side of life for him. "The voyage taught me important tools for life like perseverance, communicating and teamwork. I enjoyed it so much that I have already been back, I have even gone back as crew," says Ciaran. "Gaining a place on Prolific has been the best opportunity that I have been given. It has definitely changed my life and shaped who I am today."

Ciaran is now waiting to be old enough to undertake his RYA Day Skipper qualification and hopes to then volunteer for OYT South and become a member of their 'incredible' team. None of this would have been possible without MDL's Sail Training Awards and the OYT South.



MDL MARINAS

MDL will host a presentation of the Sail Training Awards at the Southampton Boat Show where the young winners will receive their trophies and a memory book. This book is a compilation of photos from the trip coupled with the OYT South's personalised sail report, detailing where they went, what they did and each individuals' highs and lows from the journey. The presentation at the Southampton Boat Show highlights how important it is to give children the opportunity to go sailing and possibly change their lives at sea. "They come back off the boat as different people – we look forward to offering the opportunity to more children," comments Hazel.

ENDS

Notes for editors:

Image attached: 2019 Sail Training Award Winners (Top Row, Left to Right – Alex, Millie, Ella, Josh Bottom Row, Left to Right – Katie, Adam)

MDL Marinas

- MDL Marinas is Europe's largest marina group, offering members over 120 destinations to cruise to in the UK, France, Italy and Spain through Freedom Berthing. Currently MDL Marinas manage 18 UK marinas, 1 in Italy and 1 in Spain.
- MDL Marinas is proud to be landlords to over 500 marine business companies, with nearly 260 staff delivering the unique MDL experience to all members, guests and commercial partners.
- The company also advises on worldwide marina developments including Europe, China and Crimea.
- For more information visit www.mdlmarinas.co.uk

MAA

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