



2019 AAPA COMMUNICATION AWARDS SUBMISSION

Port of Baltimore

“Inspired By Trash Wheels, Sea Bots Explore Masonville Cove”

Classification 13: Videos

Port Category: 3

Summary:



[“Inspired by Trash Wheels, Sea Bots Explore Masonville Cove”](#) demonstrates how the Port of Baltimore can touch lives in different ways through its operations, environmental efforts and educational outreach. The story demonstrates how much impact and influence the Port of Baltimore has on the community. The Baltimore trash wheels, funded in part by the Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Port Administration (MDOT MPA), inspired the creation of a grant-funded project for SAFE Alternative Foundation for Education. The founder and director of the organization chose to bring students to the Port of Baltimore’s terminals for a tour plus operate

sea bots at Masonville Cove Environmental Education Center, which is a urban nature preserve owned by the MDOT MPA. The students interviewed in the video demonstrated their excitement for what the Port can do.

1. What are/ were the entry’s specific communications challenges or opportunities?

The story was an opportunity to share the impact the Port of Baltimore has on the community, but it was tough fitting all of the tidbits in a short video.

The video had to explain what these sea bots were, how they were inspired by the trash wheels and what the connection was to the Port of Baltimore. A benefit is the founder of the organization, Van Brooks, is very familiar with the Port of Baltimore because his father is a longshoreman. That connection led Brooks to meet with the MDOT MPA general manager of safety, environment and risk management. (That was mentioned in the video as well.)

The purpose of the students visiting Masonville Cove was to test their sea bots that they assembled as a lesson on water quality and STEM.

Two months before the video was published, Captain Trash Wheel was put into service at the Masonville Cove Environmental Education Center. The trash wheel is a kid-friendly trash wheel that serves both as a mitigation tool to help prevent trash from reaching the Chesapeake Bay and as an educational outreach lesson. There were no guarantees that the students were familiar with the Captain during the interviews or had understood the impact of Captain Trash Wheel or the Port of Baltimore. The students in the piece were enthusiastic about Captain Trash Wheel and witnessing how the Port of Baltimore operates.

Underwater GoPro footage was also obtained from MDOT MPA subcontractor Maryland Environmental Service of the students testing the sea bots at the local YMCA to help add interesting visuals.

The MDOT MPA shot footage, conducted interviews, acquired additional b-roll, wrote the script, recorded the voiceover and edited the video for the story.

2. How does the communication used in this entry complement the organization's overall mission?

The Port of Baltimore has a dedicated program for education and environmental outreach, branded as being the "GreenPort of Baltimore." That outreach includes providing tours to school groups and hosting students for field trips at the Masonville Cove Environmental Education Center. Masonville Cove's primary mission is education. The Port owns the property and partners with the Living Classrooms Foundation to operate the center and provide educational instruction along with MES, National Aquarium and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The students' comments in the video demonstrate those lessons learned.

"I like learning about the ports and how they import cars, coal, salt and all types of things like that."

—Sanaayah Henderson.

"The most main event of this place is Captain Trash Wheel. It's nice seeing how run-off and stuff that comes in through the cove is filtered into a big dumpster that someone came up with, which is really cool. I think it's really interesting how someone can just think of the idea and it can have a big impact on our environment." — Che Stokes

"The sea bots were an idea similar to Mr. Trash Wheel. Mr. Trash Wheel is there to pick up the trash and keep the water clean. We developed the sea bots to try to do something simpler. Of course we had to do it on a much smaller scale. They were just an introduction to everything we're trying to teach them as far as their actions in their community, their environmental footprint and the importance of keeping trash out of sewers and into the water." — Van Brooks

3. What were the communications planning and programming components used for this entry?

The MDOT MPA focused on self-defined "proactive social media" that is produced feature storytelling.

This story about students visiting Port facilities for educational purposes demonstrates the unique stories at the Port that go beyond announcements about cargo. The story also demonstrates how the Port is a good steward of the environment.

4. What actions were taken and what communication outputs were employed in this entry?

A broadcast news approach was taken to this story to tell it in a way to get all of the points across.

The MDOT MPA coordinated interviews with students and the founder of SAFE Alternatives and recorded it with a Canon XF200 and edited the footage in Adobe Premiere Pro.

Archived footage of port operations and of Captain Trash Wheel was used in the production of the video as well as contributed GoPro footage from subcontractor MES.

The public information officer recorded the voiceover, wrote the script and exported the video individually for settings to match Facebook, Twitter and YouTube uploads.

5. What were the communications outcomes from this entry and what evaluation methods were used to assess them?

On Facebook, the video garnered 19,732 impressions; reached 11,872 users and had 5,663 unique video views.

On Twitter, the video had 1,736 impressions and had 12 engagements. The YouTube video was viewed 174 times.

Anecdotal evidence also showed greater interactions among followers who were eager to share good news.

The MDOT MPA uses the video at outreach fairs and events to show to the community one of the many educational and environmental Port initiatives.

Social Media Comments:

[Healthy Harbor](#) shared a [video](#).

August 28, 2018 ·

Students from the [Safe Alternative Foundation for Education](#) created and operated their [Captain Trash Wheel](#) inspired "sea bots" at [Masonville Cove](#)!

This project is a great example of how engineering and environmental education can be intertwined.

[Chesapeake Bay Trust](#) shared a [video](#).

August 28, 2018 ·

We can't get enough of this project! The environment, STEM education, creative collaboration, kids outside...it's everything we work toward all in one awesome program! Thank you for sharing [Safe Alternative Foundation for Education](#) and [Port of Baltimore](#)!

[Safe Alternative Foundation for Education](#) shared a [video](#).

August 27, 2018 ·

It was such a pleasure partnering with the [Port of Baltimore](#), [Chesapeake Bay Trust](#), and [Masonville Cove](#) to teach our students about the impact of their environmental footprint.

[Your Watershed, Your Backyard](#) shared a [video](#).

September 19, 2018 ·

This is a great project for these students from Baltimore!

[Society for Science & the Public](#) shared a [video](#).

August 31, 2018 ·

STEM in action!

We're proud to support [Safe Alternative Foundation for Education](#), which provides educational programming and vocational exposure to kids in Baltimore, through our STEM Action Grant Program.

[Van Brooks](#) shared a [video](#).

August 28, 2018 ·

STEAM collaboration at it's finest with [Safe Alternative Foundation for Education](#), [Port of Baltimore](#), [Masonville Cove](#), [Chesapeake Bay Trust](#), and [The Y in Druid Hill](#) all to benefit students of the SAFE Center located in West Baltimore.