



SALTWATER
CLASSROOM.®

2024

Annual Summary



First Form students at Saint Catherine Academy in Belize City, Belize clean-up marine debris along the seawall abutting the Caribbean Sea.

A Preface *by Founder, Alexandra Doudera*

As I reflect on 2024 and Saltwater Classroom's growth, I think of the ways in which we found our groove—delivering hands-on education, advancing Phase II, growing partnerships, strengthening our Board, and expanding events. I felt confident and energized—that is, until my world turned upside down. In mid-December, my father, Ed Doudera, unexpectedly passed away, leaving a gaping hole and jumbling my path forward. It is taking me time to regain my footing, but I am proud of our work this past year and am eager to share it with you. My dad would have gently nudged me about this report weeks ago!

As many of you know, my father had a tremendous impact on Saltwater Classroom and was an incredibly important presence in my life. Among many things, he instilled in my brothers and me a love for the natural world, of travel and culture, and encouraged my passions as a student. He played an integral role in Saltwater Classroom's early days—lending his expertise as an attorney while we incorporated as a 501(c)(3). As Board Treasurer, he dedicated countless hours, contributed ideas, raised thoughtful questions, and introduced others to our work. We corresponded almost daily, often about tasks to tackle or connections to make.

Undeniably, the beach was one of my dad's favorite places. As a child, his family took annual trips to Montauk, where my grandfather set up camp, lashing driftwood and rigging an army-style canvas tent—memories my dad often recalled. Throughout his life, whether walking the shoreline, collecting shells and shark teeth, reading with his toes in the sand, or body-surfing, he was perhaps his happiest by the ocean. In 1986, he and my mom settled in Camden, ME, kindling a deep connection to Penobscot Bay, where we spent time as a family sailing to nearby islands. A lifelong traveler, my dad was equally drawn to tropical beaches, remembering fondly and often daydreaming of St. Croix, the cays of Belize, Baja California, and beyond.

Ever a dutiful Board member, my dad completed Saltwater Classroom's short survey about our connections to the ocean in October 2023. When asked to share his favorite aspect of the ocean, he succinctly wrote, "the peace that watching it brings". Now, as I grieve his passing, I take a breath of solace thinking of him living fully in that peace, and feel flooded with gratitude for the person, father, and ocean-lover that he was.

I invite you to continue on to explore our shared impact this past year. Wherever this note may find you, I thank you for your support of Saltwater Classroom and of our vision for a global community of lifelong learners connected and inspired by our planet's ocean. We're in this together, and for that I am grateful. Thank you.



Ocean Education in Action

Our in-person work this past year was marked by several key milestones. We kicked off 2024 with our fourth program at Costa Verde International School in Sayulita, Mexico. The relationships we've built in this small village feel stronger than ever, and we're eager to continue expanding our programming there. In April, our Saltwater Classroom team, along with videographer Austin Mills, traveled to Belize City for a weeklong program at St. Catherine Academy. With over 200 young girls participating, this was our largest program to date and an incredibly impactful experience. Following the program, we visited Ambergris Caye to connect with ocean experts, explore the local environment, and produce content for our online ocean literacy platform.

In Maine, we continued our hands-on ocean education with our second weeklong program at Friendship Village School, this time focusing on sustainable fisheries. We also ran a weeklong program on North Haven Island in collaboration with Waterman's Community Center. In September, we partnered with Cliff Island Elementary School to organize ocean education activities for students from small island schools along Maine's coast.



North Haven, Maine



Sayulita, NAY, Mexico



Belize City, Belize



Friendship, Maine

PHASE II: *Online Ocean Literacy Platform*

We have continued developing our innovative platform to expand ocean literacy, focusing on foundational software exploration, advancing design elements, and refining curriculum development.

Over the past year, our curriculum has grown through key content collaborations. We partnered with Rippleffect, a Portland, ME-based nonprofit dedicated to outdoor adventure and leadership, to integrate ocean education into their programming. Additionally, we collaborated with CLYNK to develop lessons on the circular economy, specifically around beverage redemption. We also collaborated with Nauti Sisters Sea Farm on lessons focused on diversity in oyster aquaculture and regenerative farming.

Looking ahead, we plan to expand our partnerships with other mission-aligned companies and nonprofits to further enrich our curriculum and broaden our impact. We will continue developing the platform, working toward a testable iteration with our first users, gathering valuable feedback, and refining the experience. These next steps will be instrumental in ensuring the platform is both engaging and effective in advancing ocean literacy.

This is a big project — YOU can help us get there!

- Join our Ocean Educator Team.
- Make a contribution.
- Suggest funding opportunities.
- Brainstorm ideas together.
- Share your experience.



Badge illustrations for the platform, designed by illustrator Jess D'Amelio.



A shot from one of our content collaborations, CLYNK! Renee Lassow from CLYNK and SC Team Member Parker Richardson begin an introduction to circular bottle redemption.

PHASE II OBJECTIVES & GOALS:

Equitable Access to Ocean Education

A major goal of Phase II is to increase and diversify the reach of our curriculum by offering transformative learning experiences with reduced financial and geographic barriers. The accessible nature of our platform will help create a more diverse network of ocean-focused learners and problem solvers.

Hands-on Nature Learning

Through our tech-integrated approach, we aim to provide engaging and interactive activities that allow students to explore and connect with the marine environment, even if they are unable to physically visit the coast. Through virtual activities, real-life experiments, and interactive modules, we seek to create a dynamic and inclusive experience that fosters a deep connection to the ocean.

Blue Economy Workforce Development

We hope to increase interest among young learners in marine careers through heightened exposure to marine and STEM trades, as well as Blue Economy career pathways. The Saltwater Classroom Platform has the power to motivate a diverse generation of tenacious leaders in the ocean-driven workforce.

Activities & Events in 2024

This year provided even more opportunities to connect with our growing community of ocean stewards. We're incredibly grateful for these events, which allowed us to share our work, expand our reach, and build new relationships. Here's a look at the past year's community events:

- [Cliff Island Inter-Island Day](#)
- [Rubbish Project Clean-Ups](#)
- [Flatbread Portland SC Community Bake](#)
- [Flatbread Portland Rubbish Community Bake](#)
- [Camden Classics Cup Regatta](#)
- [Rozalia Project Crew Stint](#)
- [Summer Fundraising Party](#)
- [Groundwater Institute Training](#)
- [Maine Marathon Beneficiary](#)
- [Reuse Maine Coalition](#)



Learners venturing through the wrack line on Cliff Island during our inter-island workshop in September.



Board of Advisors member, Anna Conathan, delivering impassioned—and hilarious!—remarks at our Summer Party in Portland.

ANNUAL SUMMER FUNDRAISING PARTY



In 2024, we hosted our 4th Annual Summer Fundraising Party, bringing together our incredible community to celebrate ocean education and support our mission. This event has grown each year, and we're so grateful for the enthusiasm and generosity of everyone who participated.

A special thank you to our hosts, the **New England Ocean Cluster**, and to **Bombazine Oysters** for providing and shucking fresh oysters. We are also deeply appreciative of the countless individuals and businesses who contributed to our silent auction, raffle, and the incredible food and beverage spread. Each year, we are blown away by the generosity and support of our community—we truly couldn't do this without you!

This year marks a major milestone—our **5th Anniversary** Summer Fundraising Party—and we're planning a big celebration! Stay tuned for details, and be sure to join us for what promises to be our most exciting event yet.



Rubbish Project Recap

In 2024, Rubbish Project hosted **12 clean-ups** in Portland and three **Rubbish Midcoast** events, bringing together over 550 community volunteers to remove **1,192 pounds** of trash from the environment. A collaboration between Saltwater Classroom and [GoGo Refill](#), these efforts aim to inspire engagement and spark conversations about waste issues and the power of individual action. We invite you to join us for a clean-up in 2025 or reach out to explore collaboration opportunities!

Thank you to our 2024 Rubbish Partners:

- [Austin Street Brewery](#)
- [Oxbow Brewing Co.](#)
- [Bissell Brothers Brewing](#)
- [Tandem Coffee Roasters](#)
- [Coveside Coffee](#)
- [Allagash Brewing](#)
- [Maine Surfers Union](#)
- [Orange Bike Brewing](#)
- [Smalls](#)
- [Rootwild](#)
- [Lucky Betty's \(Camden\)](#)
- [Ada's Kitchen \(Rockland\)](#)
- [High Tide \(Rockland\)](#)



Interested in collaborating?

The Rubbish Crew would be happy to chat about expanding our efforts to your community or business. [Send us a note](#) to connect, we would love to talk trash with you.



Clean-up efforts along Portland's Fore River during our Bissell Brothers clean-up in August. Photography by Marina French.

Our Valued Supporters in 2024



We are deeply grateful for the incredible support we've received over the past year. Thanks to the generosity of our community, we've made significant progress toward our goals and have the momentum to keep moving forward. A heartfelt thank you to the following businesses, foundations, institutes, and individuals for your generous support of our mission—it truly means the world to us.

BUSINESS, GRANT, & FOUNDATION



INDIVIDUAL DONORS

- Geoff & Margaret Dawson
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JOIN AS A SUPPORTER:

- Make an [online contribution](#)
- **Mail a check** to Saltwater Classroom, 18 Trim St., Camden, ME 04843
- Become a [Business Supporter](#)
- [Discuss other opportunities](#)

*As always, please reach out with **comments, questions, and ideas.** We would love to hear from you.*

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Unceded Land Acknowledgement

Saltwater Classroom acknowledges that our organization operates on the traditional, unceded lands of various Indigenous communities here in Maine, including the Wabanaki Confederacy: the Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, Maliseet, Micmac, and Abenaki peoples. We understand the profound importance of recognizing and respecting the history, culture, and sovereignty of these Indigenous communities. It is imperative to acknowledge that these lands were never surrendered or ceded. Saltwater Classroom is committed to fostering a greater understanding of the lessons we can learn from the Indigenous peoples who have stewarded these lands for millennia. Through our educational programs and interactions, we aim to amplify Indigenous voices and perspectives, recognizing that there is much wisdom to be gained from their deep connection to the land and water. In this spirit, we are dedicated to nurturing a relationship of mutual respect and cooperation with the Indigenous communities whose homelands we work and learn on.

2024 Board of Directors



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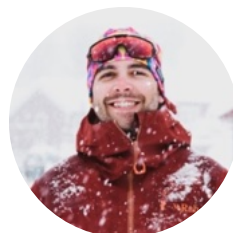
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Tessa Anable
PORTLAND, ME
Innovative Program Design & Business Consultant

Interested in serving on SC's Board?

We are always eager to hear from people who may be interested in joining Saltwater Classroom as a Board Director or Advisor. Please [reach out to Lexi](#) to discuss!

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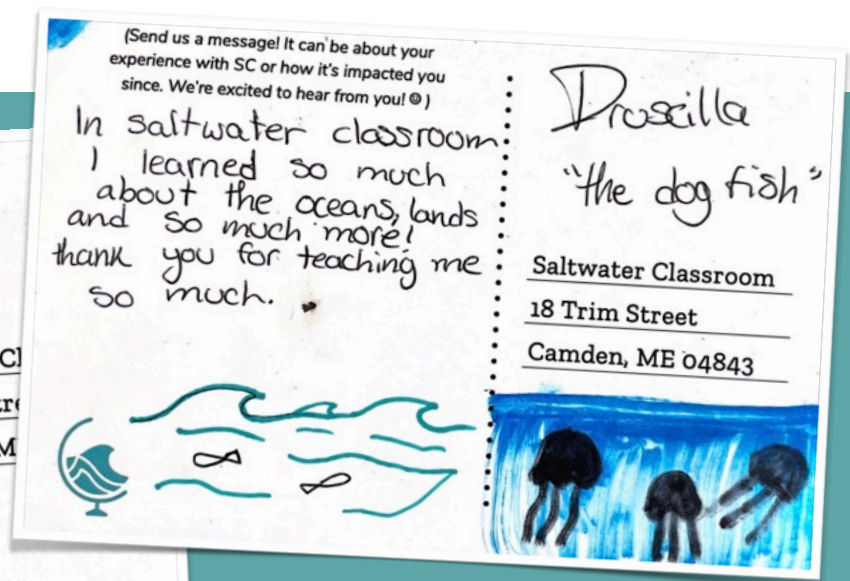
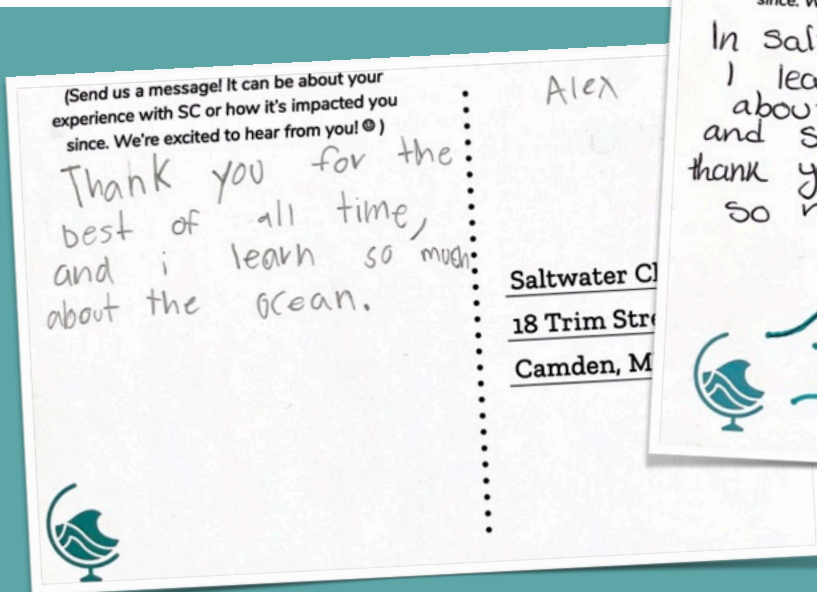
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Parker Richardson
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Grant Writer & Strategist



By the way, you can always send us a postcard too! Snail mail is our favorite.