

New Directions Southcoast, Inc. Talks About Their Organization's Grant



From left to right: Bernard LaBombard, Fireman's Fund; Kristian Boehmer, OMIA; Tim Donney, Fireman's Fund; Ed Dennehy, New Directions Southcoast; Scott W. Lang, New Bedford Mayor; Antonio Cabral, State Representative; Frank Muller-Karger, Dean of the School for Marine Science and Technology (SMAST).

The grant funds were used to launch a Fishermen Safety Training Program .

New Directions Southcoast, Inc. runs a Fishermen Safety Training Program which teaches critical safety and survival skills to commercial fishermen through workshops. The program was created in response to the sinking of a New Bedford fishing vessel in December 2004. It was the deadliest boating accident off New England shores in nearly 15 years.

Funding to launch the program was provided by a federal grant, but those funds have since been exhausted. Unfortunately, there is now only very limited funding for our training workshops, and that's why we're thankful Ocean Marine Insurance Agency, Inc. (OMIA) and Fireman's Fund Insurance Company have partnered to provide us with a \$5,000 grant.

The training workshops, administered by U.S. Coast Guard-certified instructors, incorporate a hands-on curriculum which includes, among other things: firefighting, emergency communications, life raft

equipment and deployment, damage control (including patching and flood control procedures), man overboard procedures, and proper use of an immersion suit.

Since the implementation of our Fishermen Safety Training Program, we have trained over 800 fishermen and there is a great need to continue on.

The grant was made through the Heritage ProgramSM. Under the program, agents and brokers across the country who sell Fireman's Fund products, like OMIA, have the opportunity to direct grants to fire departments and other fire service organizations for needed equipment, training and community education.

I want to thank OMIA and Fireman's Fund[®] for recognizing an essential need of the commercial fisherman industry and for providing their support.

By **Ed Dennehy**,
President and CEO of
New Directions Southcoast, Inc.

