It looks like water. It feels like...
Community Rowing Inc. (CRI) was founded in 1985 by a group of Olympic and national team rowers who wanted to widen the circle of rowing and secure public access for rowing on the Charles River. Today, CRI is a thriving non-profit with over 30 programs, and a fleet of over 180 sweep and sculling shells. With more than 4,000 participants, CRI is the largest and most successful community-access rowing facility in the United States.

Mission Statement

Rowing changes lives. At CRI we are dedicated to fostering a community that is both welcoming and supportive. Under the banner of Rowing for All we make rowing accessible without regard to individual ability, background or experience. We seek to raise the standard of rowing programs through internal excellence and to share our knowledge and expertise with others for the advancement of the sport at all levels.

Core Values

We believe that rowing offers good health and fresh air, but in its best and highest expression, our sport builds essential relationships between people from all walks of life that would not be possible without the shared discipline of shells, oars and water.
A Note from the President

This past year was a year of transition and continued program excellence here at CRI. Thanks to exceptional volunteer support and “stepping up” from our rowing community, I am pleased to report that we have raised the bar at all operational and programming levels.

Our outreach programming for the Boston Public Schools, Military Veterans and Para Rowers continued to grow and thrive in 2013. With generous grant and foundation support, we were able to add additional schools to our BPS schedule and bring many of these young athletes to CRI for on-the-water programming. Our Middle School Indoor Rowing Program is now serving as an effective pipeline for the high dosage, competitive program for BPS high schoolers.

In 2013, we said goodbye to our friend and long-time Comp Girls Coach Ethan Curren as he moved with his family to upstate New York. Boys Coach Marko Vukovic also left to pursue other opportunities. CRI was fortunate to have two exceptional in-house candidates who were hired in late summer and did not miss a beat with regards to getting our youth teams ready for the fall season. Welcome Veronika “Vee” Platzer and Will Congram!

As an organization, we have an award-winning boathouse, outstanding coaches and a high producing staff. We are continually looking to provide the best possible experience for our rowing population. To that end, we are exploring a comprehensive and proactive equipment replacement plan which will enable us to have high quality boats, oars and other crucial equipment to provide an optimal experience for everyone in our community. As always, we remain committed to “Rowing for All” through our outreach programs and scholarships.

I thank you for your support and input as we move these initiatives ahead this coming year. It is an honor to serve this fantastic organization.

Lila McCain, Board President
Letter from the Executive Director

Dear CRiers,

What did more than 200,000 hours of rowing accomplish in 2013. There are the headline stories - kids from Children’s Hospital who rowed in our OWL on the Water program who are so much healthier; the electric launch that CRI designed and built with the help of Boston Public School students; CRI’s LTA 4+ that took fourth for the United States at the Para World Championships; the multiple top-ten finishes at the Head of the Charles in youth and adult events. Every day there are literally hundreds of transformative moments on the Charles thanks to our community.

I am constantly staggered by the work and generosity that goes into making these programs available. The Annual Fund, corporate events and building rentals continued to bridge the revenue gap with our youth and adult programs. The electric wakeless launch program was supported by a generous gift from a CRI supporter that covered all of the materials, and we’re now applying for more than $500,000 in grants to cover the expense of more development and we are looking forward to the delivery of our first “production” launch after extensive testing on the prototype. The IRL received a $5,000 gift to support coaching education.

We’ve passed many milestones — the IRL is now an official USRowing partner, Let’s Row Boston is at capacity for the first time, and we met our goal for the Harry Parker Boathouse endowment. We’re so incredibly lucky to be a part of a community that has the potential to transform what’s possible, and I know that we will all work to make 2014 the year that rowing reaches a tipping point. Everyone needs to recognize that our sport, defined by cooperation and deferred gratification, is the most powerful tool we have to create a better life for ourselves and each other.

Sincerely,

Bruce H. Smith, Executive Director
Kevin’s Story

Kevin Dubois is a United States Marine who served two tours in Afghanistan. He is one of five veterans in the entire country who lost his legs up to the pelvis. His injury occurred when he stepped on an IED about half way (3.5 months) into his second tour. When Kevin competed in the Ride To Recovery, a wheelchair race from Boston to Philadelphia, a fellow racer was so impressed with Kevin’s incredible upper body strength that she introduced Kevin to Tom Darling, National Director of Para Rowing for USRowing. Tom was equally impressed and offered Kevin a spot to train at CRI for the Paralympics in Rio in 2016. Kevin has found a home at CRI. When Kevin trains, he is very focused. When asked what his goal is, he simply states, with a smile, “Rio.”

“Everyone is so nice, and the fact that there’s this free program available to vets, teaching them this sport, is fantastic.”

— Kevin Dubois
Impacts and Honors

• CRI’s generous supporters of the Military and Adaptive/Para Rowing programs, the US Olympic Committee, The MENTOR Network, the Liberty Mutual Foundation, the J.E. & Z.B. Butler Foundation, The Peabody Foundation, John W. Alden Trust, and the Craig H. Nielsen Foundation, have helped us to continue to expand these important programs. In 2013, we served 175 rowers: 37 in our General Adaptive Program, 131 in our Military Rowing Program, and 7 in our Advanced Para Rowing Program.

• CRI trained 17 adaptive athletes who participated in the 2013 Indoor Rowing World Championship (CRASH-Bs), and fielded ten individual military/para rowers and two crews of military veterans (one men’s, one women’s) into the 2013 Head of the Charles Regatta here in Boston.

• CRI achieved Paralympic Sports Club status with the US Olympic Committee in 2010. In 2013, we won the bid to become the official training center for the U.S. LTA (legs, trunk and arms) 4+. Coached by Ellen Minzner, our Director of Outreach and two-time World Champion. This team placed 4th at the World Championships in South Korea in September, 2013.

Military and Adaptive/Para Rowing

CRI’s Military Veterans and Para Rowing Programs enhance the quality of life for military service men and women, military veterans, and people with physical and mental disabilities by introducing them to the joys and rigors of rowing, improving their physical fitness and overall health, presenting them with opportunities to engage in fun and competitive events, and building a sense of connectedness through teamwork and support. Our programs serve all ages of athletes, and include persons with both physical and cognitive disabilities.

Military Rowing

Since 2010, CRI has provided free programs for military service men and women and military veterans. We are proud to say that CRI is one of the few programs that offer free programming not just to Wounded Warriors, but also to fully able-bodied veterans and those suffering from the psychological effects of war such as PTSD. In this way, our veterans can pursue their own rowing goals, while remaining in contact with one another despite differing abilities. This program primarily focuses on team camaraderie, fitness, and competition at local and regional events.

General Para Rowing

The General Adaptive Program introduces new athletes with physical and/or intellectual disabilities to the sport of rowing. The program starts with the basics and gives participants the knowledge, skills, and independence they need to row in a variety of team and individual rowing shells. In the winter, participants move indoors and focus on improving their overall fitness and strength by continuing to row on our indoor rowing machines.

Advanced Para Rowing

The Advanced Para Rowing Program is for individuals who have completed at least one season of General Para or Military Rowing, and are interested in competing at the national level in the paralympic rowing classes. Training is performance based and prepares athletes for selection to the US Paralympic Rowing Team.
Savion’s Story

Savion lives in Dorchester and attends Brighton High School, where he first heard about Community Rowing. CRI’s head boys’ coach, Drew Tennant, gave a presentation about the Boys Row program and afterward noticed Savion. “Drew just pulled me aside and said, ‘Hey – you’re tall. You should row!’ And that’s how it started.” Sandra Cardillo, also a coach in the Let’s Row Boston program, told Savion that CRI provided “great food,” which he admitted was also a big selling point. Savion started with Boys Row Boston in early 2013.

When asked what he likes about rowing at CRI, Savion has a one-word answer: “Everything.” Savion’s commitment is amazing. He’s been to every regatta since joining the team and never misses a practice. When he tells friends about rowing and what he does at CRI, they are puzzled – “‘What’s that?’” they say. But then he describes it, and they say “‘Ohhhh. Okay. Rowing.’” He laughs. Then he says, more seriously, “I actually have a couple friends who are going to sign up in the spring.”
Let's Row Boston

CRI’s ground-breaking Let’s Row Boston program is an ambitious year-round initiative designed to improve academic achievement, prepare teens for college, and combat childhood obesity among Boston’s most deserving youth. It is comprised of two main components – the Middle School Indoor Rowing Program (MSIRP) and Row Boston, CRI’s highly acclaimed rowing leadership and academic support program for Boston Public High School youth.

In April 2013, two schools were singled out as Innovative Schools in their creative adoption of the Let’s Row Boston program by Boston Public School Superintendent Carol Johnson at the Annual Health and Wellness Summit: James P. Timilty School for incorporating physical activity into the school day; and Brighton High School for providing Adaptive PE for students with special needs.

Middle School Indoor Rowing Program

The MSIRP is the newest component of our Let’s Row Boston initiative. In partnership with the Boston Public Schools, the MSIRP introduces students to the sport of rowing right in their own schools and neighborhoods. Bringing rowing machines directly into the schools for a 6-8 week period enables us to serve a wide range of hard to reach target groups, including youth who are not drawn to traditional sports. The MSIRP curriculum is directed and engaging, and incorporates games, competitions, and peer support. The program culminates in a field trip to the CRI boathouse for a day of indoor racing and on-water rowing.

Row Boston

Row Boston is a high-dosage rowing and academic program for girls (G-ROW Boston) and boys (Boys Row Boston), known collectively as “Row Boston”, which brings Boston Public School high school teens out of the city and onto the water and creates a safe place for them to find their strengths, grow together as a team, and ultimately make better life choices. The program meets five days per week throughout the school year and provides after-school tutoring and academic support, rowing and fitness instruction, swim lessons, and local and regional racing opportunities. Row Boston also helps BPS high school students build strong and lasting relationships, improve their academics, focus on college, and grow into healthy and confident young adults.
Launch

In 2013, CRI’s dedicated boatman Dave Snowdon and his associates, along with three students from the Boston Public Schools designed, tested, and constructed an innovative electric wakeless safety launch with applications in rowing, triathlon, swimming and other water-based activities. This project, which originated from our need to replace our current fleet of launches, grew into an incredible learning experience for these BPS teens.

In the coming years, we intend to take the next steps with this program—manufacturing and selling launches—and will continue working with the Boston Public Schools to provide relevant work experience and hands-on learning opportunities in math and sciences for underserved and at-risk youth.

“Designing and building this wakeless launch for CRI was a fantastic experience and a fun project. It will be great to eventually have a fleet of these at CRI.”
— Dave Snowdon
New Initiatives

• LAUNCH – is an innovative program, connecting the BPS with a curriculum involving the construction, marketing and engineering of a new wakeless launch design. This new launch has electric motor capacities, making it quiet, efficient and capable of applications in environmentally sensitive locations.

• Innovation Fund – working with a series of angel investors, CRI is leading the way toward rowing innovations, both in product and concept form. The Innovation Fund will use a RFP and grant-making format to fund new ideas and products that will improve the rowing experience.

• “Rowing Network” - subscription consulting services for other rowing organizations looking to expand their application using the Community Rowing, Inc. business model.

Rowing for All

CRI continued to lead the way in offering rowing for all in 2013. Adult or youth, novice or experienced, recreational or competitive, sweeps or sculling, CRI offers a program for everyone who wants to enjoy the thrills and rigor of this sport.

Adult Rowing Programs

More than 2,000 participants enrolled in our Adult Rowing programs which now provide recreational and competitive opportunities year round through summer and winter training programs. CRI’s competitive men’s and women’s teams excelled, competing in regional, national, and international regattas including the Head of the Charles (Boston, MA), Green Mountain Head Race (Putney, VT), Diamond State Master’s (Middletown, DE) and Canadian Henley Regatta (St. Catherine, Ontario). Sweeps and sculling recreational rowers took part in over 475 available classes, private lessons or in logbook rowing out on the Charles, with classes running from dawn until dusk.

Youth Recreational Rowing Programs

In 2013, Community Rowing provided additional learn-to-row and recreational programming for more than 1,000 Boston-area youth, enabling young athletes to develop their skills to become proficient oarsmen/women through the Crew League and Summer Skills sessions. These fun and shorter-term opportunities taught young athletes the benefits of exercise and the satisfaction of being part of a team.
Bringing Out the Best

CRI was fortunate to have two outstanding internal candidates who took over the roles of Head Varsity Coaches for the Competitive Girls and Boys programs in 2013. Veronika “Vee” Platzer and Will Congram both come with impressive athletic and coaching backgrounds and “hit the ground running” with their respective programs.

No stranger to athletic competition, Vee represented the USA at World Cup races in the single, double and quad from 1993-1998. Prior to her rowing career, Vee won three consecutive NCAA titles as a discus thrower, was a 13-time NCAA All-American, and was named “NCAA Female Track and Field Athlete of the Decade” (1980-1990).

Will Congram as been involved in the sport of rowing for most of his life and competed on the Northeastern University Varsity squad. Involved at CRI since 2005, Will has coached virtually every program CRI at some point and now focuses his attention on the Competitive Varsity Boys. Will employs his experience training and racing at NU, principles of mindfulness and body awareness taught in Yoga, and sports psychology in his coaching.

“CRI is fortunate to attract highly accomplished and motivated coaches. We look forward to seeing what these two great professionals will add to CRI’s Competitive Youth Programs.”

— Bruce Smith
CRI Executive Director
Youth Competitive Overview

With a full team of varsity and novice boys and girls, Community Rowing, Inc. continued to represent the finest in youth competitive programming in the Northeast.

Over 200 high school athletes participate in the CRI competitive youth program which runs year round at the Harry Parker Boathouse. This program fosters a progressive team environment where young athletes attain a high level of fitness and continue to develop and refine their technique and racing skills. Many of the athletes from this program go on to compete at the collegiate level.

Besides local fall “head” racing, CRI athletes traveled across the country and into Canada, racing at some of the premiere youth rowing events. Competitions in 2013 included Youth Nationals (Oak Ridge, TN), Club Nationals, (Camden, NJ ) and Canadian Henley (St. Catherines, Ontario).

Youth Competitive Rowing

“The Novice Girls continued their flourishing streak throughout 2013, with the Youth Novice 8+ scoring the top three finishes in every regatta. Aside from seeing the fiery red CRI blades rowing up front, we are extremely proud that we provided exemplary athletic experiences for 94 young women. Think big! In the spirit of our team, the 2013 girls created a slogan; neatly, our team is, and always will be, ‘Fun, Fast, Friends’.”

– Novice Girls Head Coach, Brent Bode

The CRI Competitive Varsity Girls team continued to define depth and excellence, qualifying 5 boats for USA Youth Nationals in Oak Ridge, TN. Head Coach Ethan Curren completed over 20 incredible years at CRI and moved with his family to upstate New York. Veronika Platzer, herself an accomplished sculler and successful youth coach, took the reigns of the program in the fall of 2013 and will continue the CRI Girls Varsity tradition of success.

“Dedicated winter and spring training brought success to the Novice Boys team. The boys swept the gold medals in the 8’s events all the way up to the USRowing Northeast Junior District Championships. The final race of the spring was an 8-legged “tubby” race in which the three coaches each rowed a leg for one of the teams. After settling in with a new Head Coach, the team improved through the Fall, taking home seven gold medals.”

– Novice Boys Head Coach, Karl Harshe

“The CRI Varsity Boys team had another successful season on the water in Spring of 2013, winning two gold and one silver medal at the Northeast Regional Championships and then went on to finish 9th in the Men’s Varsity 8+ and 4th in the Men’s Junior Lightweight 8+ at the Youth National Championships. In the Fall, the boys won the Men’s Varsity 8+ at the Head of the Fish for the first time in the team’s history.”

– Varsity Boys Head Coach, Will Congram
Financials

Revenue & Support

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<th>Source</th>
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<td>Contributions</td>
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<td>Facilities Fees</td>
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<td>Storage and Rental Fees</td>
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*This amount represents program fees’ total of $2,460,169.00 less the value of scholarships provided at $71,160.00.

Expenses

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</table>

**INCOME (LOSS) FROM OPERATIONS**  **$(567,325.00)**

For complete audited financial statements, please email our Director of Development at tracy@communityrowing.org.
Community Rowing’s Legacy Society

Founding Members:

Dr. Eugenia and Leonard Marcus
Jane Morse
Hugh Scott

Including CRI in your estate and overall financial plans ensures that the commitment and dedication you brought to securing CRI’s mission of “Rowing for All” will continue.

Please contact Tracy Smith at tracy@communityrowing.org or 617-803-8660 for more information.

$50,000 – $100,000
- The Boston Foundation
- $25,000 - $49,999
- J. E. & Z.B. Butler Foundation
- Liberty Mutual Foundation
- Craig H. Neilsen Foundation
- New Balance Foundation
- Amelia Peabody Foundation
- Carl and Ruth Shapiro Family Foundation
- $10,000 – $24,999
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- The Jessie B. Cox Trust
- J osephine and Louise Crane Foundation, Inc.
- Grand Circle Foundation
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- The Peabody Foundation, Inc.
- Rutland Corner Foundation
- Soros Fund Charitable Foundation
- United States Olympic Committee’s Paralympic Divisions
- $5,000 - $9,999
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Thank you.
"What I do is nurture traits that are already there within the rower. ... I create an environment that fosters those traits."

— Harry Parker

Never “Coach Parker,” always just “Harry.”

Coach, educator, and an inspiration for innovation and a commitment to excellence, Harry Parker, coach of the Harvard Heavyweight Men’s Crew for 52 seasons, passed on June 25, 2013 after a battle with cancer.

When the time came to name the CRI Boathouse, a group of Harry’s rowers from Harvard sought to honor him by naming our beautiful facility for their coach and mentor. Harry, as expected, demurred. After some thoughtful persuading by the rowing community and Harry’s wife Kathy, he finally accepted this honor and we are so pleased that Harry lived to see not only the completion of the building, but the tremendous growth of all our program sectors.

Thank you, Harry, for changing our world.
You are loved and missed.