

Student Testimonials & References

Steven Henkind, M.D.

ACA L3 Coastal Kayak Instructor Trainer

ACA L2 Touring Canoe Instructor Trainer

ACA L4 Open Water Coastal Kayak Instructor



“I highly recommend Steve Henkind as a Kayak Instructor. I am a recreational paddler and did not think I would be able to do his class – but I decided to jump in. I learned so much! Most importantly, I learned how to self-rescue and how to rescue others - which I think so many people do not even think of. Steve gave me the encouragement and instruction needed to succeed. Takeaway: I am a more confident recreational paddler knowing what I need to be safe, and better able to enjoy what I love with all the new cool paddle strokes that I learned. I encourage you to take a kayaking class – you never know what kind of paddler you are ... or could become.” [Beginner Kayak Student]

“At the age of 73, I took up canoeing and soon discovered that I could not control my boat. In fact, I could hardly make it move at all. I started training with Steve Henkind and after just my first lesson, was able to control the canoe! After some additional lessons, I could move the boat with much less effort, was even able to paddle in winds, and started learning how to do assisted and self-rescues. Steve was patient, extremely knowledgeable, and respectful of my limitations while encouraging me to challenge myself. My “graduation present” to myself was a solo 10 mile round trip – both upstream and downstream - on the Silver River. This would have been inconceivable prior to training with Steve. Because of training with him, I am much safer and a much more competent canoeist. I highly recommend Steve Henkind as a Canoe Instructor!” [Beginner Canoe Student]

“After struggling for over 20 years, I now have a real forward stroke that I can count on. Steve’s coaching was outstanding.” [L1 Instructor]

“Thank you for a wonderful ICW opportunity and experience!” [L1 Instructor]

“Not only was I able to learn how to teach, but also I was able to correct many poor paddling habits that I had picked up over the years. Steve was able to observe and diagnose what I was doing. He was then able to work with me to correct various aspects of my paddling, in a non-threatening, constructive manner. I came out of the course as a different, much improved, paddler.” [L2 Instructor]

“Steve uses a variety of teaching strategies to effectively teach everyone in the course. He cares about his students. The emphasis on process creates empowering results!” [L2 Instructor]

“This was truly a comprehensive training and I feel much more comfortable with rescues and re-entries.” [L2 Instructor]

“During one training event, Steven and I, along with another paddler, carried out an actual rescue of a couple in distress, who had capsized in coastal waters (they were not part of our group). Steven’s management of the situation was superb and we were able to deliver the husband and wife safely to shore. They might not have survived if we had not been there to intervene.” [L2 Instructor]

“By the end of a half day of his instruction, I was able to do a roll and at the second session I did six sweep and C to C rolls!” [L2 Instructor/Rolling Student (now an L4 Instructor)]

“From refining strokes and rescues and learning new ones to maneuvering in waves and surf I felt completely supported by Steve at every step along my journey. He didn’t coddle me. He simply met my expressed fears with a steady “we’re going to figure out a way to handle that today.” Knowing Steve’s extensive safety and navigation background with the Coast Guard, I always felt safe stretching my boundaries with him nearby. I can’t express how much that matters for someone testing new waters for the first time. Steve’s methodical approach to building one skill at a time in waves and surf also gave me a template from which to teach others in this environment. I saw it work wonders with our L3 practice students last week, which was such a thrill!” [L3 Instructor]

“Steve truly is a master of navigation” [L4 Instructor]

“Steve runs an exemplary course. He is well versed and highly proficient with strokes and rescues techniques and he has an exceptional grasp of sea kayaking related academics. His knowledge of seamanship and navigation is second to no one that I have encountered. He has a teaching methodology that is highly effective and that he is able to transfer to others. He is exceptionally well organized, and he executes his planning equally well, but also easily adapts to changing circumstances. In summary, I highly recommend him.” [L5 ITE]

“Thanks again for the amazing experience this weekend. I feel much more confident now going on the water, knowing where my skills lie, what needs attention, and what I can draw on should the need arise. You truly are a great teacher, and I especially appreciate your explaining the why of things, so I can understand the rationale and apply it to new situations. Also, you were absolutely right to insist on practicing rescues, for the safety reasons, and also to break through my qualms about going underwater. This will let me have some fun pushing the limits on edging and experimenting with bracing. Never thought I'd say it, but I think that at some point in the future, I may start asking you about rolls...” [Private Instruction Weekend]

“I have to say how helpful the training to date has been. My confidence is growing in a) not having to 'hug' the shoreline to feel comfortable on longer trips, (b) paddling longer distances thru open water and (c) paddling thru wind and current. I took my first two kayak camping trips with the group to the Ten Thousand Islands, and on the second trip, the return was in some challenging conditions. My mind automatically went thru the training, I used many of the skills covered, and was never 'scared' or 'not confident' in those conditions. Cautious yes, but I focused the mind on what I knew, the training, and executing what I knew I needed to do!” [L2/L3 Skills Student]

References

- Mary Lata (Beginner Kayak Student) 860-462-9760
- Margaret Agard (Beginner Canoe Student) public@agards.org 304-678-4300
- Gerard Nadeau (L1 Instructor) 617-501-9618
- Frank Fernandez (L2 Instructor) 786-553-3283
- Tom Joseph (L3 Instructor) 813-504-5785
- Dale Williams (L5 ITE) 912-844-9949
- Eran Tromer (Private Instruction Student) eran@tromer.org

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