

Charting Our Course

SCI Strategic Plan • 2018 – 2023

The Seamen's Church Institute

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MISSION

Founded in 1834, the Seamen's Church Institute (SCI) promotes the safety, dignity, and improved working environment for the men and women serving in North American and international maritime communities through pastoral care, training, advocacy, and thought leadership.

VISION

SCI leverages the interdisciplinary strengths of our institution by emphasizing cooperation among our employees so we can positively impact mariners' quality of life.

With an integrative approach connecting the Institute's work in maritime ministry to fields like law, education, public health, and public policy, SCI continues to provide thought leadership globally on the maritime workplace and mariner quality of life.

IDENTITY

The largest and most comprehensive mariners' service organization in North America, the Seamen's Church Institute (SCI) serves as a voluntary, ecumenical agency affiliated with the Episcopal Church. SCI affirms a basic precept of faith communities: welcoming the stranger, regardless of faith or background. Ministry is never sold or traded, but simply offered irrespective of financial support from any sector, company, or individual.

Utilizing our refurbished seafarers' center in Port Newark and state-of-the-art training centers in Paducah, KY and Houston, TX, SCI continually improves our practices in the areas of mariner education, rights, health and wellness, and ministry, and disseminates the knowledge we gain to the benefit of mariners throughout the world.

Through our relationships with maritime organizations worldwide, SCI influences policies, laws, and practices globally – among diverse nations, cultures, and employers – to benefit mariners.

STRATEGIC FUNDAMENTALS

- » SCI affirms our three-pronged mission of chaplaincy, advocacy (Center for Seafarers' Rights), and education (Center for Maritime Education) that covers international, domestic (coastwise and river) sectors, and the Port of New York and New Jersey.
- » SCI is mission-focused more than geographically oriented. SCI functions most productively, achieving maximum potential, when our staff cross-trains and assimilates lessons learned across its three mission anchors.
- » SCI has unique expertise and access to provide outreach to all mariners through chaplaincy, advocacy, education, hospitality, and thought leadership.
- » SCI and the Port of New York and New Jersey maritime community have worked together for almost two centuries, and our relationship is now based primarily on ministry and advocacy. SCI and the river industry have partnered for two decades in the fields of maritime education and ministry.
- » Recent material upgrades to our simulators and facilities in Houston and Paducah enable SCI's strong focus on programs and services to domestic mariners.
- » Significant improvements in financial reporting allow better decision-making with respect to achieving fiscal stability to fund SCI's missions.

MISSION ANCHORS

SCI commits to cross-training and cross-deployment across our three mission anchors: chaplaincy, advocacy, and education. Looking forward, the directors of our Center for Seafarers' Rights (CSR) and Center for Maritime Education (CME), and the chaplains for Port Newark and Ministry on the Rivers & Gulf will work even more closely together to maximize the beneficial impact on mariners in all sectors. Lessons learned in one sector should be considered for application in others. From a historic perspective, maritime education methods and chaplaincy initiatives that originated in the Port of New York and New Jersey have been implemented on the inland rivers and coastal waterways, and, in turn, initiatives from the rivers are now being implemented in the seaports.

CHAPLAINCY

SCI chaplains currently serve mariners on ships in Port Newark, towboats on the inland Ohio and Mississippi river systems, the Houston Ship Channel, and in the Gulf of Mexico. Chaplains offer counseling, fellowship, practical support, and priority response to situations in which pastoral care is needed.

Looking forward, SCI's Chaplaincy builds upon our current scope and brings together the best of international and domestic expertise to better serve all merchant mariners. To achieve this objective, we will:

- a. continue our Port Newark ship-visiting mission to serve international seafarers, providing pastoral care and support for seafarers' rights and well-being.
- b. expand our Ministry on the Rivers & Gulf team with additional one to two full-time and several non-stipendiary chaplain associates strategically placed along the river system, with Paducah as primary hub; provide occasional chaplaincy to Great Lakes vessels.
- c. train and certify all SCI chaplains and chaplain associates in Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)¹ and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)², as well as any other skills pertinent to supporting mariners.
- d. cross-train chaplains—with river chaplains spending a week at Port Newark and port chaplains spending a week on the rivers—to improve their capacity for crisis intervention across the United States and internationally.
- e. create the protocol by which SCI chaplains are deployed outside their current geographic range for crisis response interventions, to offset diminishing national and international non-SCI maritime chaplaincy resources.
- f. extend coverage from Port of New York and New Jersey to local tug and harbor operators, particularly on Staten Island, through recruitment of additional non-stipendiary ship visitors.
- g. explore avenues for collaboration with US merchant marine academies, in areas like seafarers' rights, pastoral care, and crisis and suicide intervention training.

¹ Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) is an adaptive, short-term psychological helping process. Its purpose is to enable people to return to their daily routine more quickly after a traumatic incident such as the death of co-worker, and with less likelihood of experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

² Offered by LivingWorks Education, ASIST is the world's leading suicide intervention workshop.

KEY PROGRAMS

CHRISTMAS AT SEA

In 2018, SCI celebrates 120 years of delivering hand-knit gifts, created by dedicated volunteers, to the men and women working on the water during the holiday season. The oldest continuous volunteer knitting program of its kind in North America, the Christmas at Sea program affords SCI and its supporters the chance to express deserved appreciation and recognition to mariners.

Each year, Christmas at Sea receives over 20,000 hand knit items from approximately 1,100 individuals and groups, many of whom do not have any other link with the maritime world. Thus, this program raises awareness of mariners and their crucial role in our modern economy, as well as benefiting mariners themselves through simple, personal gifts.

This strategic plan endorses Christmas at Sea's vital past and future service to mariners.

PORT NEWARK HOSPITALITY

The International Seafarers' Center in Port Newark represents an investment in our mission of hospitality to the stranger. Serving as the base for our core mission programs of seafarers' rights, port ministry, and the Christmas at Sea program, this unique and beautiful building reflects the dignity of the maritime industry and the noble profession of merchant mariners. Also, it is home to the only green space in the port.

SCI seeks to pursue opportunities that maximize the utilization of our Port Newark facility, and strengthen SCI's relationship with the Port Authority and our port neighbors. Current activities include hosting educational events and opening our facilities to the wider port community with amenities such as free internet service, access to fitness center and chapel, recreation opportunities (basketball, ping pong, pool table), and space for group meetings like Alcoholics Anonymous.

Future expansion of these services may include the creation of an urban farm and development of additional interior and exterior space, consistent with philanthropic support. This allows SCI to better serve the port community, introducing new friends and supporters to our mission and to the work of mariners.

CENTER FOR SEAFARERS' RIGHTS

The Center for Seafarers' Rights (CSR) continues SCI's worldwide mission of free legal assistance to seafarers and chaplains, seafarers' rights training, and legislative advocacy, materially benefiting from SCI chaplains' daily deck-plate engagement with mariners. Proposed incremental expansion includes:

- a. an extended definition of advocacy beyond legal assistance to include broader seafarers' issues like health and wellness, mental health challenges at sea, and piracy.
- b. a renewed emphasis on collaboration across SCI—with the Center for Maritime Education and Chaplaincy—to address human-factor issues such as mariner impairment, suicide awareness and intervention, and workplace resilience.
- c. additional employee or consultant resources to create and assess emerging subject expertise (e.g., SCI's recent project on post-piracy mental health and current work on suicide intervention and health promotion).
- d. SCI's visibility and global reach strengthened using social media and advanced telecommunications capabilities.

CENTER FOR MARITIME EDUCATION

SCI's Center for Maritime Education (CME) empowers mariners with valuable training, providing professional advancement opportunities through SCI-developed and US Coast Guard (USCG) approved courses. Instructors train mariners using adult education principles and the latest computer simulation technology.

SCI maintains state-of-the-art centers in both Paducah and Houston, with both receiving recent infrastructure upgrades. CME recently achieved the industry-recognized ISO 9001 quality-assurance certification.³ Extensive business planning, increased resource utilization, and a diversified contract base form a solid platform from which to serve mariners, thereby enhancing the safety of the US inland and coastal waterways.

SCI will build on this foundation by:

- a. continuing to help customers meet their increased mariner training and documentation needs, particularly pertinent as river and coastal waterway towboat operators become more regulated (e.g., complying with USCG's recent Subchapter M requirements).⁴
- b. strengthening CME's position as a leading advocate for improved safety training by continuing to work closely with towboat operators, their shippers including Oil Majors, the American Waterways Operators (AWO), and the USCG.
- c. exploring opportunities for CME's continued development, including:
 - i. expansion of e-learning business model, platform, content creation, and client base
 - ii. possible installation of a Transas simulator in Paducah to replicate the Houston model
 - iii. marketing CME's capacity to conduct feasibility studies.

³ The ISO 9001 quality management system is recognized by the USCG as a Quality Systems Standard and significantly strengthens SCI's multi-faceted maritime education program.

⁴ Subchapter M describes the new regulatory guidelines for the inland waterway system, a set of federal rules developed by the USCG for the inspection of towing vessels, regulating for seaworthiness and safety management.

STRATEGIC STEWARDSHIP OF SCI RESOURCES

SCI's mission anchors (outlined previously) are underpinned by robust leadership and the responsible stewardship of human and financial resources. To further bolster our organizational cornerstones, SCI's Board commits to:

- a. strengthen its leadership by electing diverse and engaged members for the Board of Trustees, with focus on industry sectors, geographic location, and professional skill sets.
- b. design and implement succession plans and annual evaluations for the Board, including Board Chair, Executive Director, and senior staff.
- c. establish committee charters to detail expectations and processes:
 - i. the Nominating & Governance Committee will undertake points a. and b. above under its charter.
 - ii. the Finance & Investment Committee will continue its stewardship of SCI's fiscal resources. The Committee seeks to diversify and actively manage the investment portfolio for long-term appreciation by tracking appropriate benchmarks while emphasizing suitable downside protections to preserve the corpus and ensure SCI's ability to pursue its mission. Additionally, annual drawdown of funds may not exceed 5% of the corpus without the express consent of SCI's Board of Trustees.
 - iii. the Development Committee will focus on 1) major gifts, including strengthening the annual fund with higher level, non-event related gifts; 2) actively promoting and soliciting for planned and estate gifts; 3) pursuing endowment opportunities to fund positions or programs such as chaplains and CSR; 4) soliciting unrestricted gifts from the corporate sector for Sustaining and Supporting Sponsorships.⁵
- d. improve Board and committee meeting efficiency by rotating locations among New York City and SCI facilities in Port Newark, Houston, and Paducah. Except for one mid-summer conference call, meetings will span two days, with committee meetings the first day followed by Board Meetings the next, strengthening SCI's committee structure and increasing the quality of Board fellowship.
- e. institute a formal orientation process for trustees to enhance engagement and familiarity with SCI's history and mission.

⁵ Sustaining Sponsors give SCI an annual, unrestricted gift of \$100,000 or more; Supporting Sponsors contribute at least \$50,000 or more annually.



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