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**Sixteen Weeks that Will Change the Lives of Girls:
First Residential Science and Leadership School Ready for Students**

**Maine's Coastal Studies for Girls Recruiting First Class for Spring Semester,
2010 and Sponsoring Community Open House on Sunday, June 7**

FREEPORT, Maine, May 27, 2009—Coastal Studies for Girls, the nation's first residential science and leadership semester school for girls, has begun admitting students and will host a public open house this month to celebrate the scores of volunteers, donors, businesses, and educational organizations who have helped complete the school's first phase of construction with the renovation of a farmhouse into a living and learning center.

“We've finished building the heart of our campus, and now we're building what comes next—the group that will be our first class of students,” said Pam Erickson, Coastal Studies for Girls executive director and a long-time teacher and leader of environmental and experiential education.

“With the help of many dedicated, visionary people—our staff, board members, financial supporters, and local volunteers—we've turned a 160-year-old farmhouse on the Maine coast into an energy-efficient flagship building with classrooms, dormitory, kitchen, dining area, and administrative offices. Now we're ready to introduce 15 girls to 16 weeks that will change their lives.”

Located on 626-acre Wolfe's Neck Farm in Freeport, Coastal Studies for Girls is a nonprofit educational organization. This school on the exceptional Maine coast offers fall and spring semester programs to diverse groups of high-school sophomore girls and provides the chance to engage in scientific inquiry, leadership development, critical thinking, and environmental stewardship in a community defined by academic, experiential, and inspirational learning. The school features a rigorous marine-science-based and leadership curriculum as well as the courses necessary for students to keep pace with their home high school's requirements in English, history, foreign languages, and mathematics. Future plans also include summer programming serving both students and teachers.

A public open house from 1-4 p.m., Sunday, June 7 will offer refreshments, brief remarks at 2:30 p.m., and guided “Intention Tours” showing what Coastal Studies for Girls intends to do to serve and support its students and grow its campus sustainably, making it even more “green.”

Information about the open house is available from Margaret Martin, administrative assistant, at (207) 865-9700 or margaret@coastalstudiesforgirls.org. Directions to the school, located at 308 Wolfe's Neck Road in Freeport, are posted at www.coastalstudiesforgirls.org.

“It's time to introduce Coastal Studies for Girls to Maine, the nation, and the world,” Erickson said. “By this time next year, we expect to be celebrating our first students.”

Early applications for the spring semester show tremendous promise for an outstanding inaugural class. With diverse backgrounds, candidates range from a home-schooled girl from rural Maine to young women growing up in east coast inner-city metropolitan areas.

Coastal Studies for Girls is accepting and reviewing applications on a rolling basis for its Spring, 2010 semester through November 1, 2009. The school encourages applications from girls in the U.S. and other nations, including those currently attending independent, public or home schools. Students should apply as soon as possible, particularly those hoping to secure newly available scholarship funding from Coastal Studies for Girls.

“Helping teen girls focus on science and leadership is important and timely work for educators,” said Tara Treichel, Coastal Studies for Girls director of education. “We need more women in science in the United States, where women hold only 25 percent of science and engineering jobs.”

At a time when Maine is positioning itself to attract and expand economic opportunities on the cutting edge of science and technology—in part to provide jobs attractive to young people raised in Maine—only 10% of the state's engineers are women. Educators and economists agree it is critical to inspire and prepare Maine's young people for opportunities in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) fields.

In addition to the science focus, leadership development pervades every aspect of curriculum and community life. “Our ultimate goal is that students return to their schools and communities with a heightened sense of what it means to excel as an individual and a member of a community,” Treichel said. “Regardless of the careers they choose, girls will leave our program feeling stronger, more empowered, and better prepared to make a difference in the world.”

Coastal Studies for Girls collaborates extensively with educational partners ranging from the National Coalition of Girls' Schools to individual private and public schools across the nation. Its curriculum has been reviewed by leading educators, using the National Educational Standards as competency guidelines for each subject.

Locally, the school partners with Wolfe's Neck Farm, a nonprofit dedicated to sustainable agriculture and environmental education, which serves as a natural laboratory as well as campus site. To take advantage of the wealth of marine science, research, and conservation-oriented resources in Maine, Coastal Studies for Girls will partner with other Maine-based organizations to offer students hands-on field experience.

Treichel noted that research shows all-girls schools can be powerful and transformative learning environments, and that adolescent girls are engaged by experiences that encourage and support the discovery of self, both individually and within a community. Nationally, only 2 percent of girls in co-ed schools say they intend to pursue science or math majors in college and pursue science-related careers. But among girls in single-gender schools, that number jumps to 13 percent.

One indirect benefit of the school's progress already is the “inspirational and experiential” learning its board members and other volunteers already have experienced.

“My involvement with this project has been a gift,” said Edith Aronson, a long-time educator and Chair of the Coastal Studies for Girls Board of Directors. “It has made me and others live the vision of the school because, in moving it from dream to reality, we’ve had to explore, take risks, and evolve as leaders. It is the hardest thing I've ever done—and the most rewarding. Helping to make the school a reality has confirmed for me that if a girl can take charge of what she's passionate about, we really can change the world.”

In addition to gifts from private individuals, Coastal Studies for Girls has received grants from Maine-based education and family foundations including the Davis Family Foundation, Jana Fund, Maine Women's Fund, Quimby Family Foundation and many others across the country. Extensive in-kind services, donations, and guidance has been received from Maine-based businesses and organizations including the Corporate Library, Freeport Historical Society, Hancock Lumber, Integra Solutions, Mohr & Seredin Landscape Architects, Puella Designs, Ram Trust Services, She Changes, Shinberg Consulting LLC, Van Dam Architecture and Design, Wolfe’s Neck Farm, Wright-Ryan Construction and many others.

The school’s “Opening the Doors” Capital Campaign is on its final push to secure funding to equip the living and learning center with science lab equipment and technology, offer scholarship assistance, and literally open the doors. Future growth will include renovating an 1800’s barn and building a science lab to accommodate the program’s goal of 32 students.

“When I take a moment to stop and think about how far we’ve already come, and how many people have contributed funding and thousands of hours of service to Coastal Studies for Girls, I am filled with gratitude and pride,” Erickson said. “We’re truly on our way to introducing girls to a life-changing experience.”

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About Coastal Studies for Girls (CSG)—Coastal Studies for Girls is a residential academic program for 10th-grade/sophomore girls. CSG accepts applications from students in the U.S. and other nations, including those currently attending public, independent and home schools.

Our 16-week, semester-long program takes place along the exceptional Maine coast and provides students with an opportunity to earn a full semester of credit and excel in science and technology

in a community defined by academic, experiential, and inspirational learning. A rigorous marine-science-based curriculum guided by National Education Standards also includes courses in the core subjects of English, math, history and foreign language.

CSG students engage in scientific inquiry, leadership development, critical thinking, and environmental stewardship while developing their educational and career aspirations in the unique and supportive atmosphere of an all-girls learning environment.

CSG seeks girls who have a love for learning and discovery, an adventurous spirit, a desire for excellence, and a will to challenge themselves beyond the traditional school experience. We strive to create a diverse ethnic, geographical, and socioeconomic community for students and staff who celebrate success.

Coastal Studies for Girls is a nonprofit 501(c) (3) corporation, and gifts to the school are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

For more information, please e-mail info@coastalstudiesforgirls.org or call (207) 865-9700.

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www.coastalstudiesforgirls.org

Testimonials

"I wholeheartedly support Coastal Studies for Girls. The opportunities abound on the Maine coast, and engaging young women in exploration—of the natural world, of other people, and of themselves—holds much promise. Though I was fortunate to grow up in a Maine island community and be surrounded by the sea, I realize that is not the case for most. This school brings young women from Maine and blends them with girls from all over the nation—a one-of-a-kind experience! I'm looking forward to sharing my knowledge with CSG students."

Linda Greenlaw

Fisherman, Author, Honorary Chair of the CSG Campaign

"NCGS is pleased to be a partner to CSG's challenging, unique and timely program for girls. CSG is based on a medley of research findings and extensive personal experience. All this is to suggest that when women of any age pursue their passions they often discover new things about themselves. When such opportunities are extended to adolescent girls, the impact is tremendous, and in many cases, life-changing. For these and many other reasons, we celebrate the CSG mission and stand ready to help the launch of this venture."

Meg Milne Moulton & Whitney Ransome

Former Executive Directors of National Coalition of Girls' Schools

“I always want to do hands-on science things. At my school we have science class, but not enough of it. CSG would be extra cool because I know that when just girls work together in science without boys, they get to be leaders and learn more. I’d like that.”

Denysha J.

Grade 7, Boston Latin School

“Being a single-sex institution is not an afterthought, but a defining feature of a community and its educational philosophy. The sense of support and camaraderie such a community offers allows for students to be academically and personally challenged without feeling threatened, thus leading to both a more comfortable and more rigorous educational experience.”

Amanda Cass

Mount Holyoke, Fulbright Recipient,

Marine Biology Graduate Student, Cornell University

“What we know from research and our own experience is that during adolescence, many young women drop out of the science ‘pipeline’. Coastal Studies for Girls will help influence and encourage more young women at an earlier age to pursue science, math and engineering studies and careers.”

Kathy Scott Weaver

Assistant Director, Dartmouth Women in Science Program

“In a world where popular media beckons like a modern day Siren, Coastal Studies for Girls offers a true journey, one that takes a girl seriously and satisfies a quest for knowledge that’s real and lasting.”

Lyn Mikel Brown, Ed.D.

Professor of Education and Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Colby College