

INTERVIEW WITH CARMEN

What surprised or caught your attention the most about working as a sailing instructor in the U.S.?

What caught my attention was how people at my club, both children and adults, sailed all kinds of boats with the sole objective of enjoying themselves and having fun. They weren't preparing or training for any regatta or event; they sailed daily simply because they loved it.

How was your experience teaching sailing in a different environment from your home country?

At first, it was a challenge to learn not only the parts of the boat in English but also the expressions they used for certain sailing terms. However, after a couple of weeks, you get used to it, and it's fascinating to learn about the wind and tide conditions in such a different place, working with completely new people. I also learned many games and activities to teach sailing that I hadn't seen before, and that will help me continue training kids anywhere in the world.

What challenges did you face, and how did you overcome them?

One of the major challenges in Richmond was that it was very windy, around 20 knots almost every day, especially in the afternoons. Many of the children only sail in the summer and don't have the skill level to sail in such wind, or they're scared. We couldn't stop sailing because of that, so I had to learn how to de-rig boats in the water when they weren't able to sail back, and find different activities and games to make it fun instead of scary to sail in such strong winds.

How has this experience influenced your career or personal growth?

As I mentioned earlier, I learned a lot of new activities and games, but I also learned how to handle a group of children in all kinds of situations: in the water with strong winds and scared children, in the classroom explaining concepts or activities for the day, during games both on land and in the water, and more.

Would you recommend this experience to other instructors? What would you tell them?

I would recommend this experience to everyone because not only do you learn a lot about sailing and how to teach it, but you also have the opportunity to live in a completely different country, even if just for a few months, meet different cultures, and travel to various places.

How would you rate your experience with Work and Sail? What aspects of the program would you highlight?

For me, it has been an incredible experience. Work and Sail always helped me whenever I had a question, whether it was about the visa, the SIM card, or anything else. It's very reassuring to know that, even though you're far away, they're always looking out for you and will lend a hand with whatever you need.