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WINTER 2015

Seasons Greetings!

This holiday season we are pleased to share a quick update on the [Blue Halo Initiative](#), remarkable partnerships spearheaded by the Governments of Antigua and Barbuda, Montserrat, and Curaçao. Together, in partnership with the [Waitt Foundation](#), [global strategic partners](#), and our many friends and colleagues around the world, we strive together to restore the ocean to full productivity.

As we join with our family and friends this joyous time of year, it is only natural to reflect on why it is we do what we do, and the best paths forward. Earlier this year, addressing the 2015 [Our Ocean conference](#) in Valparaíso, Chile, Waitt Institute Founder and Chairman, Mr. Ted Waitt reflected on [why we all work together to constrain overfishing, restore the world's oceans, and improve livelihoods](#). We hope this message of inspiration and hope will uplift you as it has us entering 2016: "It's a problem we can fix."

Wishing you a wonderful and safe holiday season, and a very happy New Year!

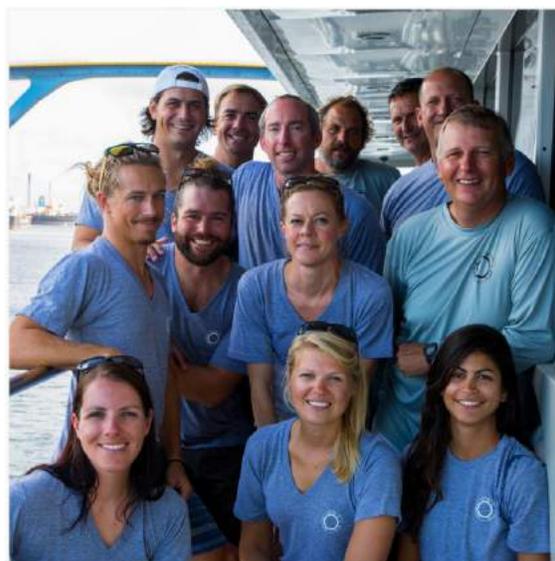
Sincerely,
The Board & Staff of the Waitt Institute

BLUE HALO MONTSERRAT & CURAÇAO

2015 Scientific Assessments: Complete!

We're thrilled to announce the [2015 scientific assessment expeditions](#) of nearshore waters around Montserrat and Curaçao are complete! On each island we surveyed over 150 sites to collect data on corals, fish, algae, invertebrates, and water quality. What we've learned: Montserrat has a wide variety of unique and resilient marine habitats which are under constant stress from volcanic eruptions as well as an incredibly diverse and abundant population of sponges. Curaçao has some of the healthiest and most impressive reefs in the Caribbean with thriving coral and fish populations.

Each expedition brought together coral reef scientists from the Caribbean and the US to [tally everything from parrotfish populations to reef density](#) from every angle. These efforts will go a long way in giving a scientific basis to new community-based, collaborative ocean policies that will help the government of Curaçao build sustainable fisheries in the coming decades.





BLUE HALO BARBUDA

Blue Halo Patrol Vessel

With the long-awaited launch of Barbuda's new [patrol vessel](#), Barbuda's plan to monitor and protect its coastline from overfishing has earned its sea legs! This milestone will help the local community enforce the [Fisheries and Coastal Zoning Regulations](#) that were established in August 2014. (Fun bonus: the patrol vessel brought together community members of two Blue Halo sites with its maiden voyage during the Montserrat Scientific Assessment!)



BLUE HALO MONTSERRAT

Fish 'N Fins Snorkel Camp

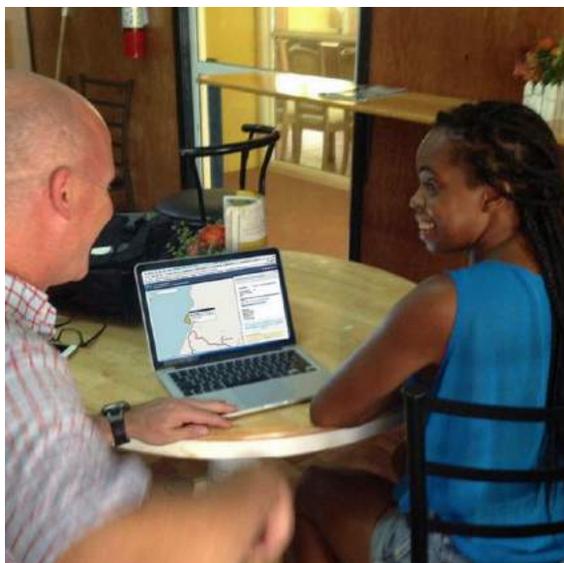
Over six weeks, 75 students participated in snorkeling, swimming, and conservation-themed activities at [Fish 'N Fins](#), Montserrat's first kids ocean club! Thanks to the program's huge success, [AQUA Montserrat](#) will continue to run Saturday Sessions throughout the year with activities, guest-speakers, and opportunities to engage and inspire the next generation of ocean leaders. In 2016 we're looking forward to partnering with more individuals and community organizations in order to develop innovative, sustainable ways to develop Montserrat's blue economy.



BLUE HALO MONTSERRAT & CURAÇAO

Listening Tours

Robin Ramdeen (Montserrat Site Manager) met with island residents across Montserrat to hear their hopes - and concerns - for the future of their island's fishing industry and coral reefs. Over the course of several months we've interviewed community members, recorded conversations, observed fishermen their working environments -- all to listen to what they want their ocean to look like. This work will inform the future of ocean policy on Montserrat and throughout the Caribbean, building an optimistic future for this essential habitat. Next up: a listening tour on Curaçao!



A special note from the Waitt Institute: In 2016 we are consolidating core operations from Washington, DC to San Diego, CA to reside with the Waitt Foundation. Our current Executive Director, Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson, has elected to resign from her position due to our decision to relocate. Ayana has kindly agreed to work with us through February 2016 so as to ensure a solid transfer of knowledge and relationships. Both the Waitt Institute & Waitt Foundation thank Ayana for co-founding the Blue Halo Initiative and turning it from just a dream to a reality. We wish her all the best in the future, and know we will always remain connected in our joint mission to restore the oceans to full productivity. Please do not hesitate to contact Program Director, Stephanie Roach (sroach@waittinstitute.org) or Acting Managing Director, Jacob James (jj@waittinstitute.org) with any questions or concerns.



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