

High School Students from Western Suffolk BOCES Complete 2011 Shellfish Mariculture Program at Cedar Beach

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Councilwoman Jane Bonner (back row, third from left) and Program Manager Tom Carrano (back row, fourth from left) join students and faculty from Western Suffolk BOCES at the completion of their 2011 Mariculture Program in Mt. Sinai.

Farmingville, NY - On October 26th, Councilwoman Jane Bonner and Tom Carrano, the Town's Assistant Waterways Management Supervisor, joined high school students participating with Western Suffolk BOCES who completed the 2011 Shellfish Mariculture Program at Cedar Beach. The program, which is sponsored by the Town of Brookhaven and managed by Mr. Carrano, is aimed at educating students about aquaculture techniques and how to raise seed clams for planting at public restoration sites.

As part of the new Shellfish Mariculture Program, the Town provides materials for the Mount Sinai School District and Western Suffolk BOCES to construct new shellfish rafts, mooring supplies to anchor the rafts in Mount Sinai Harbor and shellfish to stock the rafts. Students do the work required while being supervised by their teachers and Town of Brookhaven personnel. The Town also provides personnel and machinery to assist in the installation and removal of the rafts and periodic maintenance.

"I am happy to have the opportunity to work with these high school students and Western Suffolk BOCES on the 2011 Shellfish Mariculture Program", said Councilwoman Jane Bonner. "It's a great way for them to do their part to help preserve our marine life, protect the environment and have some impact on the North Shore economy since many of these clams may one day be harvested and brought to market by our local bay men."

Since 2007, the Town of Brookhaven has been running a community based hard clam nursery program, and on June 29 of this year, 500,000 soft clam seed, only 1-2 mm. in length, arrived at the Town of Brookhaven's Mariculture Facility at Cedar Beach in Mt. Sinai. Within a half hour, the rice sized clams were placed on culturing screens and provided with algae-rich water pumped from Mt. Sinai Harbor. This project, recommended by local bay men who are concerned with the decreasing soft clam harvests, is the first of its kind involving soft clams on Long Island. Over the past few months, as the soft clams increased in size, they were separated and given more room to grow. These

soft clams were then planted in areas of Mt. Sinai Harbor that will support their continued growth.

Division of Public Information * Office of the Supervisor

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