



## EXPEDITION PROFILE

### March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021 aboard DISCOVERY Yacht Julia

On March 7th, 2020, we partnered with Miami WaterKeeper's Junior Ambassadors advocacy program to allow high school students to partake in a research cruise aboard Fleet Miami's *Julia*. Students were able to learn about the Biscayne Bay aquatic environment and how our human activity affects it, and helped monitor water quality through various experimental mediums.

The Miami Waterkeeper Junior Ambassador program is a year-long program that develops a cohort of high school students into young environmental leaders. Through the Junior Ambassador program, South Florida students become community leaders by gaining an understanding of issues impacting Biscayne Bay and the surrounding watershed, receiving training in civic engagement and advocacy, sharing their acquired knowledge with diverse audiences, and helping to organize interactive volunteer events. This program helps students become versed in the complex relationship between social, environmental, governmental, and economic issues that are central to cultivating a culture of environmental awareness and advocacy in South Florida, which is relevant worldwide.

*Julia* took the Junior Ambassadors to the intersection of Biscayne Bay and the Little Mouth River, where runoff is introduced directly to the ocean and our anthropogenic effects on the environment are at their most visible. The Junior Ambassadors performed various water quality tests to analyze properties such as temperature, dissolved oxygen concentration, pH, and turbidity using Secchi discs. They used the EarthEcho water test kit and an advanced YSI probe to record data manually and electronically! Afterwards they turned their awareness into action by collecting trash on Pelican Island, and amassed 32.7 pounds of trash! We also learned why we found so many bottle caps without the bottle, and why they were so colorful. Birds think the colorful caps are food and carry them back to their homes – and in learning this the Junior Ambassadors were motivated to use reusable water bottles as often as possible!

Thank you Miami WaterKeeper for once again partnering with SeaKeepers to teach young people science and environmental awareness through the floating classroom program, and to Fleet Miami for providing *Julia* as the vessel with which to reach young minds. We look forward to continuing encouraging civic engagement and coastal advocacy with you again soon!

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