



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 6, 2026

## Cape Cod Blue Economy Foundation confirms speakers and programming for Annual Big Blue Conference

Centerville – The fourth annual Big Blue Conference, *Big Blue, Green Tomorrow: Connecting the Dots*, will be held on Tuesday, April 28<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, April 29<sup>th</sup> at Falmouth High School, 874 Gifford Street in Falmouth, MA.

This year, the Cape Cod Blue Economy Foundation is partnering with the Cape Cod Climate Change Collaborative to present programming illuminating stories highlighting both ‘blue’ (water-based) and ‘green’ (climate) stories and initiatives, curated to spark conversations and inspire actions relevant to the vitality of living and working on Cape Cod.

“Big Blue is where we *share* enthusiasm for great ideas, successes and opportunities. It’s where we *connect* with one another, amplifying our impact through collaboration. And it’s where we *inspire* hope and confidence, motivating others to act and find their place in supporting our collective future,” says Katy Acheson, Executive Director of the Blue Economy Foundation.

### **Conference Programming**

Day 1 of Big Blue 2026 casts a wide net to capture different perspectives on working in and drawing creativity from the blue economy. Be inspired by the growth of a blue economy curriculum by area educators, as well as poster presentations by high school and college

students; the positive impacts of recreational boating from Randall Lyons of the Massachusetts Marine Trades Association; the Science of Art by artist Mike Palmer; advancing the health of Bass River by Rick Bishop, executive Director of Friends of Bass River; and cross-functional collaboration in a panel discussion by representatives from the Wave Makers Employer Forum. Cap off Day 1 with a guest appearance from Doug the Quahog, and a keynote speech by John Pappalardo, who will make his Big Blue debut to share his perspective on how the Blue Economy and Green Economy are connected through what he calls the “Aqua Economy.”

Day 2, “Green Tomorrow”, will shine a light on businesses and institutions prioritizing waste reduction, local food harvesting, and building coalitions around issues impacting the land, the sea, and our neighborhoods across the region. After a breakfast and fireside chat hosted by the MassHire Cape & Islands Workforce Board, join Emcee Jeni Wheeler, Executive Director of the Family Table Collaborative, and hear compelling stories from Jess Kowal and Haley O’Neill about how Falmouth is a community that CARES; take a Fresh Look at Fresh Water with representatives from OLAUG, APCC, and the Cape Cod Commission, and join the movement to “Grow a Damn” moderated by Stephanie Viva and featuring students from area high schools.

Throughout both days, attendees are invited to engage one-on-one with featured exhibitors and unleash their creativity at the Big Blue Expo. Pick up a brush and join a community mural project with AFCC 2026 Artist of the Year, Jackie Reeves, and write letters to the environment with Boston-based artist Rajji Desai to accompany her postage-stamp-themed art series.

Visit the conference website to see a full list of confirmed speakers and the conference agenda at <https://bluecapecod.org/events/big-blue-conference>.

### **Get Your Big Blue Passes Today**

Big Blue two-day passes are \$85, and one-day passes are \$45 each. To purchase your pass visit <https://bluecapecod.org/events/big-blue-conference>. Passes include meals and refreshments.

## **Supporting Big Blue**

Thank you to:

Cape Light Compact – Leading Sponsor

Banner sponsors:

Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen’s Alliance

Cazeault Roofing

Heritage Museum and Gardens

Law Office of Eugene R. Curry

Massachusetts Marine Trades Association

Hospitality Sponsors:

A.R.C. Shellfish Hatchery

Cape Cod Native Shellfish

CARE for Cape & Islands

Chatham Harvesters Fishermen’s Cooperative

Iris Hotel Cape Cod

Kandy Korner

MassHire Cape & Islands Workforce Board

Conference sponsorships are still available. Reach out to [katy@capecodchamber.org](mailto:katy@capecodchamber.org) for more information, or [download the sponsorship opportunities document here](#).

###

### **About the Cape Cod Blue Economy Foundation, Inc.**

Established in 2017, the Cape Cod Blue Economy Foundation, Inc. supports the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce initiative to promote and sustain a maritime-focused economy of Cape Cod, Martha’s Vineyard, Nantucket, and southern Plymouth County. The Foundation organizes, hosts, and fundraises workforce and business development programs with a focus on water-based careers and industries. Learn more on [bluecapecod.org](http://bluecapecod.org).

### **About the Cape Cod Climate Change Collaborative**

In recognition that climate change, rising sea levels, ocean acidification, and intensified storms were already threatening Cape Cod's homes, health, habitats, the economy, and entire ways of life, the Climate Change Collaborative was founded by a coalition of business, environmental, public, and nonprofit organizations and committed citizens in 2016. The Collaborative's mission is to reduce ways in which the Cape & Islands region contributes to climate change and to protect our region from its potentially devastating impacts. Join the collective by visiting [capecodclimate.org](http://capecodclimate.org).

### **About the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce**

Founded in 1922, the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce, Inc. is a non-profit, membership-based organization that advocates on behalf of businesses to strengthen and promote regional economic vitality while addressing related cultural, environmental and community concerns. The Chamber serves as Cape Cod's Regional Tourism Council and supports economic and business development regionally. The Chamber is home to both the Cape Cod Blue Economy Foundation and Cape Cod Climate Change Collaborative. Visit [capecodchamber.org](http://capecodchamber.org) to learn more.

#### **Contact:**

Katy Acheson, VP of Community Impact

Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce

[Katy@capecodchamber.org](mailto:Katy@capecodchamber.org)

*"Water as our way of life"*

Cape Cod Blue Economy Foundation, Inc., 5 Patti Page Way, Centerville, MA 02632  
508-744-5568 [www.bluecapecod.org](http://www.bluecapecod.org) [blueeconomy@capecodchamber.org](mailto:blueeconomy@capecodchamber.org)