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Barnstable – The Cape Cod Blue Economy Project today announced the release of a seminal survey of Grade 6-9 students in the Cape Cod region to better understand their career perceptions and interests. The results of the survey were robust and provided insight into the opinions and perceptions of Grade 6-9 students, including what influences their choices and awareness of career options, and the students’ understanding of the water-based economy in the Cape Cod Region.

Some highlights from the results:

- Most students say they get ideas about future goals from parents/family members
- Across grade, gender, school, and region most cited they want “a job I enjoy” as the most important thing about a future career.
- In looking at the job characteristics most cited in the responses, 6 of the 7 top descriptors chosen were either lifestyle or socially-conscious based (vs. money).
- 41% of eight graders and 48% of ninth graders plan to leave the region when they graduate or go out of the Cape region to college.
- There are significant percentages of students who have not thought about or do not want to work in the Blue Economy, yet they also admit that they do not know much about it. However, in looking at the open response comments to the question “What word or phrase do you think of when you hear the term Blue Economy?” a number of students described the blue economy in fairly accurate terms.

“Since 2015, the Baker-Polito Administration has invested nearly \$9 million through the Seaport Economic Council to fund economic development and infrastructure projects on Cape Cod and the Islands, to ensure we leverage the full potential of our coastal assets,” said Deputy Secretary of Housing and Economic Development, and Vice Chair of the Seaport Economic Council, Carolyn Kirk. “Commercial fishing, tourism, recreation, and maritime businesses drive the regional economy, and we are pleased to see this report understands the importance of the blue economy. This report identifies the need for more robust workforce development to ensure the blue economy has access pipeline of skilled workers, and we look forward to finding opportunities for collaboration on this critical issue.”

“Engaging with our youth on the importance of healthy water resources to our economy and quality of life is a critical step to our future success as a region”, said Wendy Northcross, CEO of

the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce. “This survey is part of a multi-pronged strategy through the Blue Economy, to connect tomorrow’s workers with the many career opportunities that exist here.”

Principal G. Anthony Morrison of the Dennis-Yarmouth Regional High School, who’s students participated in the survey said, "I truly believe that education and awareness are the keys to sustaining our way of life here on Cape Cod. Awareness of our environment, our economy and the opportunity for meaningful Cape Cod careers is paramount. Although the Cape Region (Barnstable, Dukes, Nantucket and Southern Plymouth Counties) is made up of 23 towns, we are all just one beach of sand away and share a common shore. Working together we can sustain a truly inter-generational and fruitful Blue Economy existence."

A central theme of the Blue Economy Project is to prepare and educate for the future, the survey results provide us with many learning points and observations for economic and workforce development efforts. Through this study, we introduced students in to the possibilities of careers and jobs right here in our region.

For a full form of the report and associated appendices, please click [HERE](#).

This report is a product of the Cape Cod Blue Economy Project, an initiative of the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce and the Cape Cod Blue Economy Foundation, Inc. The survey was supported by funds from the Massachusetts Seaport Advisory Council through Barnstable County and the Cape Cod Commission, and developed and delivered with the support and guidance of the Public Policy Center at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. Advice was received from the Cape and Islands Workforce Investment Board.

The Cape Cod Blue Economy Foundation’s mission is to grow the region’s economy in a sustainable and balanced way, focusing on protecting and promoting our water and coastal resources.

The Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce is a membership organization that advocates on behalf of business to strengthen and promote regional economic vitality, while addressing related cultural, environmental and community concerns.

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