Hillsborough Family Foundation funds new eco-vessel for Tampa Bay Watch Discovery Center

*Tierra Verde, FL* - Tampa Bay Watch is thrilled to announce that a family foundation from Hillsborough County has funded the new eco-vessel for their Discovery Center at the new St. Petersburg Pier. Tampa Bay Watch will model the new boat after their very successful classroom vessel at the Tampa Bay Watch Marine Center in Tierra Verde. Once constructed, the new vessel will call the St. Pete Pier home and operate along the waterfront and Northshore Park. Tampa Bay Watch anticipates using the vessel for school field trips with students of all ages and adult eco-adventures with a goal to explore and discover Florida’s natural history and flora and fauna while learning valuable practices to preserve our environment. Eco-tours aboard this new US Coast Guard certified vessel will focus on Tampa Bay history and species population studies with activities such as fisheries trawls, bird species identification and behavior, and dolphin dorsal identification research.

Peter A. Clark, President of Tampa Bay Watch, Inc. states, “Tampa Bay Watch is honored that this foundation has chosen to invest in our educational efforts at the new pier. We are extremely grateful to have received this generous support which will greatly enhance our ability to involve our children in the discovery of our wonderful natural resources that surround us all.”

The Tampa Bay Watch Discovery Center will enhance the education and outreach mission of the environmental nonprofit organization. The 3,000 square-foot facility will open with a soaring exhibition hall that will bring our ecosystem up close and personal to visitors from around the corner—and around the world. The focal point of the exhibit hall is a centerpiece aquarium that showcases many of the species found in our local waters. Touch tanks, interactive displays, video presentations, and docent-led tours will combine for an unforgettable experience and a newfound respect for our local environment. The public exhibition hall will double as a venue for special events, corporate events, weddings, or other meetings.

Go to tampabaywatch.org/discovery-center.html to learn more about the new Discovery Center.

*Tampa Bay Watch* is a nonprofit 501 (c)(3) stewardship program dedicated exclusively to the charitable and scientific purpose of protecting and restoring the marine and wetland environments of the Tampa Bay estuary encompassing over 400 square miles of open water and 2,300 square miles of highly-developed watershed. Tampa Bay Watch involves more than 10,000 youth and adult volunteers each year in hands on habitat restoration projects. For more information, visit [www.tampabaywatch.org](http://www.tampabaywatch.org), or call 727-867-8166.
Tampa Bay Watch will model the new boat after their very successful classroom vessel which operates at their Marine Center in Tierra Verde.