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## American Sailing Names David Taylor Chief Executive Officer

*Thirty-year business builder and lifelong sailor takes the helm of American Sailing and its affiliated platforms: North U, American Sailing Vacations, and American Boating*

**LOS ANGELES, CA (June 4, 2026)** - American Sailing (ASA) has appointed David E. Taylor as Chief Executive Officer of American Sailing and its affiliated platforms — North U, American Sailing Vacations, and American Boating — bringing to the role a career executive with more than 30 years of experience scaling organizations, including education & training, certifications, and memberships, and who is, by his own account, a product of ASA's own instruction.

American Sailing is the world's most respected sailing education authority, having certified over 600,000 individuals through its 400+ affiliated schools and 15 curriculum levels spanning all skill levels from first-time sailors to offshore passagemakers. Over the past five years, the organization has expanded deliberately beyond its core: acquiring North U to bring racing education into the American Sailing portfolio, launching American Boating to serve the powerboating community with safe boating curriculum, and developing Vacations by American Sailing to offer hands-on cruising and learning experiences worldwide. Founded more than four decades ago by Lenny and Cindy Shabes and Peter Isler, American Sailing sets the global standard for recreational and performance sailing and boating instruction, safety, and education.

The search was conducted following the unexpected passing of Jonathan Payne in November 2025. Payne had led American Sailing since 2022, and his loss made selecting his successor a priority this year. The board engaged executive search firm Boyden. Led by former Olympic and America's Cup sailor Russ Silvestri, the search prioritized a candidate who combined demonstrated business-building experience with an authentic, personal connection to sailing and ASA's mission.

"Dave brings something rare to this role — the credibility of a lifelong sailor and boater who became certified through the ASA educational system, paired with the commercial experience to sustain and grow what we've built," said Peter Isler, two-time America's Cup winner and Board Chairman of American Sailing. "This is a stewardship assignment at a moment when continuity and long-term growth must go hand in hand, and we believe Dave is the right person to lead us forward."

Taylor arrives most recently from LoadSpring Solutions, where he served as Chief Commercial Officer. Prior to that, he served as President and Chief Revenue Officer of RightEye LLC, and as Chief Revenue Officer of Kajeet, Inc., where he led the organization through more than a 200 percent revenue growth. His career also includes senior executive roles at training and

certification companies and consulting with professional associations on membership growth, publication revenue, and event performance.

“I consider this opportunity the pinnacle of my career,” said Taylor. “American Sailing changed how I think about sailing — and about what structured education can do for someone who believes they already know enough. My mission is to protect what this organization has built, the foundation, the standards, and the educational system, extend it to the next generation of sailors, and make sure every affiliated sailing school has what it needs to grow.”

Cindy Shabes, Co-Founder and President of American Sailing, said Taylor’s combination of credentials stood apart in the search. “We needed someone who understood the business and understood the sailor. David is both. That alignment with our mission matters as much to us as his executive track record.”

Taylor holds five ASA certifications, an International Proficiency Certificate, and a U.S. Coast Guard Captain’s License. He began his journey with American Sailing in 2019 as a student — arriving, as he describes it, confident in what he knew and quickly discovering the gaps that formal instruction reveals. He has since logged thousands of miles and spends his time aboard his Beneteau 41, *Marley*, sailing in his home waters of the Chesapeake Bay and beyond.

Taylor’s appointment coincides with a significant moment for American Sailing’s publishing and educational catalog. American Sailing is releasing the new edition of *Sailing Made Easy*, its ASA 101 textbook, one of the world’s best-selling sailing instruction books. This second edition marks the next chapter for a publication that has introduced hundreds of thousands of sailors to structured education. American Boating, American Sailing’s dedicated powerboat and recreational boating platform, is simultaneously releasing a new NASBLA-approved Boating Safety course book, extending the organization’s mission into the broader recreational boating community. Rounding out the publishing news, a new edition of the ASA 105 Coastal Navigation textbook, authored by Board Chairman and two-time America’s Cup winner Peter Isler, is forthcoming.

## **About American Sailing**

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