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ANGARI FOUNDATION: PUTTING A YACHT TO WORK AS A PLATFORM FOR MARINE SCIENCE AND EDUCATION

Sisters Angela and Kari Rosenberg grew up in and on the water in South Florida and cruised The Bahamas every summer with their parents, Lee and Chris. They loved to snorkel and dive in the turquoise waters around the islands that were so abundant with life. As an adult, Angela became an accomplished scientist and researcher, and Kari forged a successful career as filmmaker and producer, but their passion for the sea and its creatures stayed with them.

The Rosenberg sisters realized they had a calling to study the marine environment, to help to preserve it, and to educate others about it. So, in 2016, the family formed the *ANGARI* Foundation with the mission of, “creating a global community that is interested, knowledgeable and invested in marine and environmental sciences by directly supporting research initiatives that foster a greater trust and dialogue between scientists and the public.”

Then they started looking for a vessel that could serve as a platform to support this mission.

“We knew that we wanted to find a luxury yacht that we could convert to a research vessel,” Angela Rosenberg said.

In the fall of 2016, the foundation purchased *ANGARI*, a 65-foot, 2001 Grand Alaskan motoryacht powered by twin 600hp Caterpillar 3176 diesels. A captain with a U.S.C.G. Merchant Mariner 100-ton license, Angela supervised a three-month refit of the yacht, partly undertaken at Bradford Marine in Fort Lauderdale. In addition to updating the vessel’s electronics suite, its interior and exterior decks were outfitted with research workstations, and large freezers were installed to preserve scientific samples. The boat was optimized for scuba diving, with a massive dive compressor up on the flybridge. A long hose system enables the crew to fill scuba tanks conveniently in the cockpit.

While focusing on functionality for scientific research, the refit retained the yacht-level furnishings and quality of the Grand Alaskan’s interior. *ANGARI* can berth up to eight researchers in comfort. “Everyone has said it’s the nicest scientific accommodations they’ve ever had,” Angela said.

The foundation offers *R/V ANGARI*, which is homeported in West Palm Beach, as a charter vessel for scientists, educators and filmmakers to use as at a minimum cost as a platform for scientific expeditions. Sharks, coral reefs, and the drift pattern of ocean debris are just a few of the many subjects *ANGARI* has helped researchers from institutions throughout Florida and the world to study over the years.

Angela serves as the vessel’s full-time captain and also helps to



facilitate the research. “I do everything, A to Z,” she said.

In addition to supporting scientific expeditions, the *ANGARI* Foundation also actively engages in using cutting-edge technology to create educational offerings. One example is the Ocean Expert Exchange, a live, 30-minute educational webinar series featuring experts in marine science and technology, many of whom have participated in expeditions on *R/V ANGARI* in the past. The series is co-hosted by the *ANGARI* Foundation and the University of Florida Thompson Earth System Institute’s Scientist in Every Florida School program. Recent topics include “Shark Toxicology”, “Underwater Archaeology”, and the “Lionfish Invasion.”



Capt. Angela Rosenberg on *ANGARI*

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Drawing on Kari Rosenberg’s skills in virtual-reality (VR) filmmaking, *ANGARI* Foundation also is producing an exciting 360 film series called “Generation Ocean”. These films utilize VR to fully immerse the viewer in scientific fieldwork as it takes place

in the marine environment. They can be viewed via virtual reality headset, smartphone, tablet or computer. The first film in the series, “Generation Ocean: Coral Reefs”, came out in 2018. “Generation Ocean: Sharks”, showing the migration of thousands of blacktip sharks along Florida’s Atlantic Coast, just premiered on January 27, 2021. Both films are available via the *ANGARI* Foundation YouTube channel.

For more information, please visit www.angari.org.