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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Art and Nature Come Together as Art League of Ocean City and Maryland Coastal Bays Program Team Up for Assateague Plein Air Experience**

**OCEAN CITY, MD — September 17, 2026** — What happens when artists, environmental experts, and one of Maryland’s most beautiful coastal landscapes come together? A day of painting, discovery, and a whole new way of seeing Assateague.

The **Art League of Ocean City (ALOC)** and the **Maryland Coastal Bays Program (MCBP)** are teaming up to bring the community “**Engage Your Salt Marsh: Plein Air Painting**,” an exciting, free daylong experience that combines the creative energy of plein air painting with the science and stories behind Assateague’s coastal ecosystem.

Taking place **Saturday, October 17, from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Marina at Assateague State Park**, the event allows artists and nature lovers to step outside, set up their easels, and paint the landscape while experiencing the salt marsh firsthand.

“This collaboration is such a wonderful way to bring together two things that are deeply connected to our coastal community — art and the environment,” said Dr. Mary Anne Cooper, Art League Education Director. “Registrants will not only have the opportunity to paint Assateague, but to learn more about the landscape they are looking at and the restoration work happening right here on our coast.”

Experienced plein air artist **Rebecca Morgan** will lead participants through the painting experience, sharing techniques for capturing the ever-changing **light, color, atmosphere, and character of the coastal landscape**.

Plein air painting is all about being there — observing the landscape in real time and translating that experience onto canvas. At Assateague, artists will have a particularly dynamic subject: expansive marshes, shifting light, coastal vegetation, water, sky, and the unique atmosphere of Maryland’s Eastern Shore.

Before picking up their brushes, participants will also get an inside look at the environmental story behind the landscape.

Environmental restoration experts from MCBP will lead a tour and discussion of the **living shoreline project at Assateague State Park**, sharing the project's history and explaining how salt marshes protect the coast and support the health of the coastal bays.

The result is a day designed to inspire artists to look more closely at their surroundings — and perhaps see the salt marsh in an entirely new way.

The program is free, and we will provide **all art materials, lunch, and refreshments**. Participants only need to bring their enthusiasm for art, nature, and trying something new.

In the event of inclement weather, the program will move indoors to the **Sarbanes Center at Assateague**.

The creative experience won't necessarily end when the paint dries.

Artwork created during the event **may be selected for a pop-up exhibition during the Art League of Ocean City's November First Friday celebration**, allowing participating artists to share their personal interpretations of Assateague's coastal environment with the community.

The event is part of MCBP's "**Engage Your Salt Marsh: A Community Program Series**," which connects Worcester County residents with local salt marsh ecosystems while increasing awareness of restoration efforts throughout the coastal bays.

For ALOC and MCBP, the collaboration offers a natural opportunity to connect environmental education with the arts — inviting people to experience the coast not just as a place to visit, but as a living landscape worth understanding, appreciating, and protecting.

More information: visit [canvas.artleagueofoceancity.org/classes/3255](https://canvas.artleagueofoceancity.org/classes/3255) or call the Art League of Ocean City at **410-524-9433**.

## **About Maryland Coastal Bays Program**

*The Maryland Coastal Bays Program works to protect and restore the coastal bays and watersheds of Maryland's lower Eastern Shore through science, education, restoration, and community engagement.*

## **About Art League of Ocean City**

*The Art League of Ocean City is a nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing the visual arts to the community through education, exhibits, scholarships, programs, and community art projects. Financial support comes primarily through membership dues from individuals and corporate sponsors.*

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