

OREGON COAST AQUARIUM VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Mail to: Volunteer Services, Oregon Coast Aquarium, 2820 SE Ferry Slip Road, Newport OR 97365

Phone: 541-867-3474 extension 5315

Email: carmen.morgan@aquarium.org

Check all that applies:

- I would like to attend the fall training class held on six Saturdays (**9:00am-5:00pm**) beginning March 20, **2010**.
- I want to be notified if an orientation is offered that would allow me to join the volunteer program before the fall training.
- I am interested in earning college credits.

PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION

Your Name: _____

1st mailing address: _____	Phone numbers:
City, State & Zip: _____	Home: _____
2nd mailing address: _____	Work: _____
City, State & Zip: _____	Cell: _____
E-mail address: _____	Message: _____

Select at least one and no more than three of the following that best defines your reasons for volunteering at the Aquarium.

- To gain knowledge about marine life.
- An opportunity to tell visitors about marine animals and habitats.
- Social interaction with other volunteers and the chance to make new friends.
- The opportunity to talk to children and young people.
- Develop skills for résumé development and possible future employment.
- Earn college credits and experience towards a degree.
- To give back to the community by supporting the Aquarium.
- Other _____

Can you commit to volunteer once a week for one year? Yes No

If no, can you commit to volunteer once every other week (bi-weekly) for one year? Yes No

If you are unable to volunteer for one full year, could you volunteer 100 hours with a set period of time?
Yes No

If no to all of the above, please explain: _____

What day of the week do you want to volunteer? _____

Have you ever had experience as a volunteer? Yes No

If yes, please describe. _____

Have you ever pled guilty or been convicted of a felony? Yes No

If yes, what was the charge and final court decision? _____

Additional comments? _____

By submitting this application, I understand that I am agreeing to ...

1. Meet with a volunteer services staff person who will explain the program and answer my questions.
2. Pay a \$35 nonrefundable fee at the time of that meeting (\$75 for credit students).
3. Complete all training required to become an active volunteer.
4. Volunteer for a minimum of one year or a for a total of 100 hours within a designated period.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

If this application is not returned, your name will be deleted from our records. You may contact us again at any time.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY: Data entered by _____ Date _____

OREGON COAST AQUARIUM VOLUNTEER SERVICES

How to Become a Volunteer

Joining Volunteer Services—You may join the adult volunteer program by submitting an application, interviewing with volunteer services staff, paying a fee for materials and completing the required training. Waivers are available if the fee is a hardship. New volunteers—with the exception of volunteer divers and community college students—are required to do a period of time as exhibit interpreters, talking to visitors about the Aquarium animals. (Fee is \$35 for non-credit, \$75 for three college credits. See **College Credits** on back of this page.)

Application—Review the enclosed application carefully. In the first section, indicate whether you wish to attend the next scheduled orientation, or attend a spring or fall scheduled series of training classes. Also indicate if you will take the volunteer training for college credit. The application must be completed fully and returned within a reasonable time prior to the orientation or training you select.

Interview—Whether attending an orientation or the full training, you must schedule an interview no later than two weeks prior to the orientation or training. The purpose of the interview is to evaluate your skill and interest levels, determine the best placement for you in the program and to help you become more knowledgeable of the functions of the volunteer program. You are encouraged to ask questions about the program, the Aquarium, or on any aspect that will provide you the information you need to make this commitment. *The required \$35 fee (\$75 for college credit) is due at the time of the interview and helps defray the cost of training materials, name badge and jacket. Waivers are available*

Training—A 48-hour classroom training is offered in the spring, beginning in March. Each Saturday for six weeks, trainees attend a 9-5 p.m. class held in the Aquarium's classroom or theater. Marine science educators, animal husbandry staff and experienced volunteers give talks about the animals, habitat and marine biology of the Oregon coast and the interpretation of animals exhibited at the Aquarium. An additional 12 hours of mentoring with experienced volunteers is required. *Please refer to the application for dates of the next training.*

A training of equal length—48 hours—is offered in the fall on Saturdays beginning in September. These sessions will be from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. with a one hour lunch period over a total of six Saturdays. The curricula and presenters remain the same as in the spring training. The six Saturdays, however, will not be consecutive, allowing mentoring with experienced volunteers between sessions for the required 12 hours. *Trainees are required to attend a minimum of 40 hours of the spring or fall 40 hour classroom training.*

Orientation—Orientation is offered a minimum of twice a year, as the first day of spring and fall trainings, but may be scheduled more often if there is a need. The orientations provide an overview of the Aquarium's history, staff structure and funding, mission of the Aquarium, and a review of policies and procedures. On completion of the orientation, new volunteers are eligible to accept positions as greeters, clerical aides, or assisting in Aquarium maintenance or grounds keeping, and other areas, as available.

Volunteer positions—A description of some volunteer positions is enclosed. Volunteers who enter the program by attending an orientation may choose to work in a variety of positions. These include grounds keeping, custodial support, facility maintenance, clerical tasks and greeting visitors in the lobby.

Trainees who complete the full training are then eligible to assume the position of exhibit interpreters, classroom and outreach volunteers and after a period of service, husbandry volunteer positions. This is a required position because it meets the Aquarium's mission to inform the public about the importance of Oregon's coastal ecology. Once the interpretive obligation is met volunteers can apply for positions in the classroom, or any of the positions listed above. Not all volunteer positions are available at all times.

Commitment—We are asking you to commit a minimum of one full year to the Aquarium. If you cannot make a year's commitment, then we ask that you commit a minimum of 100 hours within a specified period of time to be established. We realize that this is a major commitment, and we want you to consider it carefully. Do you have that much time? Is it that important to you? We're happy to answer your questions before you make that final decision.

Scheduling—For those volunteers with a one-year commitment, most positions require a 4–4½ hour shift one day per week. A schedule of volunteering once every other week is an option for those who work or attend school full time, travel an extended distance or have extenuating circumstances. Volunteers unable to volunteer year round are required to volunteer 100 hours in a pre-determined period. This may mean volunteering more than one day a week or double shifts to meet the required hours. The day(s) of the week you volunteer is determined by your availability and the Aquarium's needs, but once chosen, the schedule is maintained unless you have reason to request a change.

College Credits—You can receive three lower science college credits transferable to any university by completing the training series and volunteering as an exhibits interpreter (see *Volunteer Positions*) for a minimum total of 48 hours. Trainees wishing to receive credits must register through the Oregon Coast Community College in Newport *as well as* completing the enclosed application and registering and interviewing directly with the Aquarium. Tuition is \$75, and is payable to the Aquarium. Upon completion of the course, a lab requirement by the OCCC must also be completed. Contact Volunteer Services or OCCC for more information.

Dive Volunteers— The volunteer dive program has very specific requirements with specialized training. Contact volunteer services to request an information sheet about the volunteer dive program. Call 541-867-3474 ext. 5315 or email carmen.morgan@aquarium.org.

Youth Volunteers—Youths ages 13–17 who are interested in receiving information on joining the youth volunteer program should contact Tricia Ratliff, Youth Programs Coordinator, by calling 541-867-3474 ext. 5312 or emailing her at tricia.ratliff@aquarium.org.

Oregon Coast Aquarium Volunteer Benefits

ADMISSION TO THE AQUARIUM—Volunteers have free access to the Aquarium during public hours.

MEMBERSHIP—After 50 hours of volunteer time have been recorded, volunteers are eligible for a free membership. "One Plus One" membership allows the volunteer to bring one guest, adult or child at no additional cost. A "Member" membership includes membership cards for the volunteer, one specified adult and up to six children or grandchildren to age 21. The cards allow them free entrance to the Aquarium, even when they are not accompanied by a volunteer. At a cost of \$30 a volunteer may upgrade to a "Member Plus" This option provides the same benefits as "Member"—one additional adult and up to six children—but also allows the volunteer or the other named adult on the membership to bring up to two guests when visiting the Aquarium. "Member Plus" is free when two members of the same household volunteer together. Memberships will remain in effect as long as the volunteer remains active in the program.

PASSES—For every 100 hours of volunteer time, volunteers receive two passes to the Aquarium. Each pass is good for one, one-time free admission. Dive volunteers receive two passes after 50 hours.

GIFT SHOP DISCOUNT—Volunteers receive a 10% discount on CDs, videos and books, and a 20% discount on all other merchandise at the Aquarium gift shop. *Family or friends who are listed on the membership application and receive membership cards are eligible only for the members' 10% discount on any merchandise.*

ONGOING TRAINING—Volunteers may participate in volunteer enrichments—educational programs presented by staff, guest speakers or experienced volunteers—and will have access to information provided in a variety of formats. Enrichments are scheduled 8–10 times a year on varying days of the week and at various times to make them accessible to as many volunteers as possible. Opportunities for mini enrichments occur periodically. There is a volunteer library with books and video tapes on marine animals and habitats for your use.

NEWSLETTER—Volunteers receive a quarterly newsletter, Upwelling, that provides them with educational articles and current information on what's happening at the Aquarium. Articles are written by volunteers, staff or reprinted from marine science publications.

RECOGNITION—Recognition of volunteer service is given in a variety of ways throughout the year and culminates each fall with a large recognition event for all volunteers and a guest.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES—Numerous potlucks and coffees are held in conjunction with evening programs. A summer picnic and a holiday party shared with staff is hosted by the Aquarium who provides the main course, with volunteers and staff contributing salads, side dishes and desserts.

Oregon Coast Aquarium

VOLUNTEER JOB SUMMARIES

EXHIBITS INTERPRETER (REQUIRED): —As the primary contact for visitors to the Aquarium, interpreters provide information about animals and exhibits, answer questions and direct visitors through the facility. They are able to observe a variety of Aquarium aspects, meet many members of the staff and use the knowledge they gained during training. This position gives volunteers the chance to raise visitors' awareness of marine animals and their special needs. Forty eight hours of training is required, plus 12 hours being mentored by experienced volunteers. Volunteers must complete a designated period in this position before they are able to apply for most other volunteer positions throughout the facility.

GREETERS: —Volunteers are stationed in the lobby to greet arriving visitors and welcome them to the Aquarium. They help admissions staff by getting wheelchairs and strollers, distribute visitor guide maps, inform visitors of times for scheduled events, point out routes to exhibits or direct them to the nearest restroom. Departing visitors ask greeters about hotels, local restaurants, travel routes, and community attractions. This is a position for someone who enjoys initiating conversations and interacting with people.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY: —As support personnel for the animal husbandry department, animal care assistants help staff to maintain our high quality care of Aquarium animals through food preparation, cleaning of exhibits and holding areas, observation and record keeping. This work is physically requiring agility, strength (including lifting heavy items), endurance, and the ability to tolerate cool temperatures, wet feet and fishy odors. Volunteers have little or no contact with animals, depending upon the species.

CUSTODIAL VOLUNTEER: —Custodial volunteers spend time in the galleries where they have the opportunity to view exhibits and learn about the animals while they dust exhibits, clean acrylic and wash windows. Volunteers may sometimes empty trash baskets, launder and fold towels, replace paper products in restrooms or sweep public areas. Cleaning can be physically demanding but is adjusted to individual capabilities.

GROUNDSKEEPING VOLUNTEERS: —Volunteers help groundskeepers maintain the facility by pulling weeds, cutting back blackberry vines and picking up litter in the parking lot. Volunteers may help rake patterns on gravel paths, prune trees or assist with landscaping projects. Learn about native plants and how to grow plants with minimal use of chemicals. Volunteers must be able to work outdoors in all types of weather.

FACILITY MAINTENANCE: —Maintenance volunteers perform general handyman-like repairs or use specialized skills to help with projects that may include carpentry, painting, motor repair, electrical wiring, etc. These are jobs for people who are self-motivated, like to work with their hands or need greater flexibility in their schedule. Volunteers in maintenance may be asked to step in and help with needed projects that overlap into other areas—groundskeeping, custodial, exhibit building or breakdown, large cleaning projects, installation of tanks, stringing holiday lights, etc., etc.

CLERICAL AIDES: —Clerical volunteers can be assigned to one of several departments that need help with tasks that include photocopying, collating, preparing bulk mailing or filing. Volunteers with computer experience may input articles for Aquarium newsletters, enter data for record keeping, or create and generate reports. Volunteers who enjoy the office setting would like this position.

CLASSROOM AIDES: —During the school year, classroom volunteers work with education staff to prepare and present a variety of classroom and auditorium programs for grades kindergarten through high school. Tasks can vary from setting out invertebrate marine animals for children to view or helping children don marine animal costumes. Volunteers who like working with children and learning more about marine animals will have fun in this position. Volunteers must have marine knowledge gained through volunteer training or prior experience and have experience working with children before acceptance in this position.

MARKETING VOLUNTEER: —Volunteers that work with marketing staff read, categorize and store press clippings, copy materials and put together press packets for promotional events. Slides are viewed and sorted into appropriate notebooks. Volunteering in this area lets you see how an organization uses the media to gain greater exposure to the public, how they promote special events and how they create brochures, exhibit guides, newsletters, etc.

SCUBA DIVER: —Divers assist with multiple tasks. While in an exhibit—primarily the Passages of the Deep—divers will spend time cleaning acrylic, checking equipment, and suctioning debris from the exhibit floor. They may act as a tender, monitoring equipment during a dive and observing other divers as a safety back-up. Divers may assist animal husbandry staff with food prep or observe animals to evaluate health or behavior. A separate application process is required for this position and it is only open to experienced, certified divers. Divers must provide their own dive gear and pay the cost of taking an exhibit dive course at an approved shop or on site. This course is PADI approved and contains a component of natural marine science .

YOUTH VOLUNTEERS: —Youth grades 9-12 receive 48 hours of training to prepare them to staff one of eight stations where they talk to visitors about marine mammals, seabirds, invertebrates and sharks. Summer volunteer sessions begin with training in May and 8 hours of volunteering a week through the end of August. Fall training begins in October and youth volunteer 8 hours a month through April. Youths remaining in the program year round are trained to interpret in other exhibit areas and have options to apply for volunteer positions in other areas of the Aquarium. Youth also participate in group excursions, social events and educational activities.

OTHER: —Other positions are available from time to time. Sometimes they are short term; sometimes they are ongoing but need only a limited number of volunteers; and sometimes a position opens that is unique to a volunteer's skills. These positions are usually posted or advertised through the volunteer announcements.
