

Seattle Aquarium 2017 annual report

Inspiring Conservation of
Our Marine Environment



Dear Friend of the Seattle Aquarium,

Those of us who are “insiders” at the Seattle Aquarium develop all of our programs and activities from the starting point of our mission: *Inspiring Conservation of Our Marine Environment*. I was recently reminded of some questions I heard in my very first days at the Aquarium: What do community members say about the Aquarium? How do they describe our importance or impact? How does the Aquarium make our city a better place?

And so in this annual report we highlight the people who participate in our programs, along with our partners and supporters. Seeing the Aquarium through their eyes was powerful for me, and I hope it's meaningful to you.

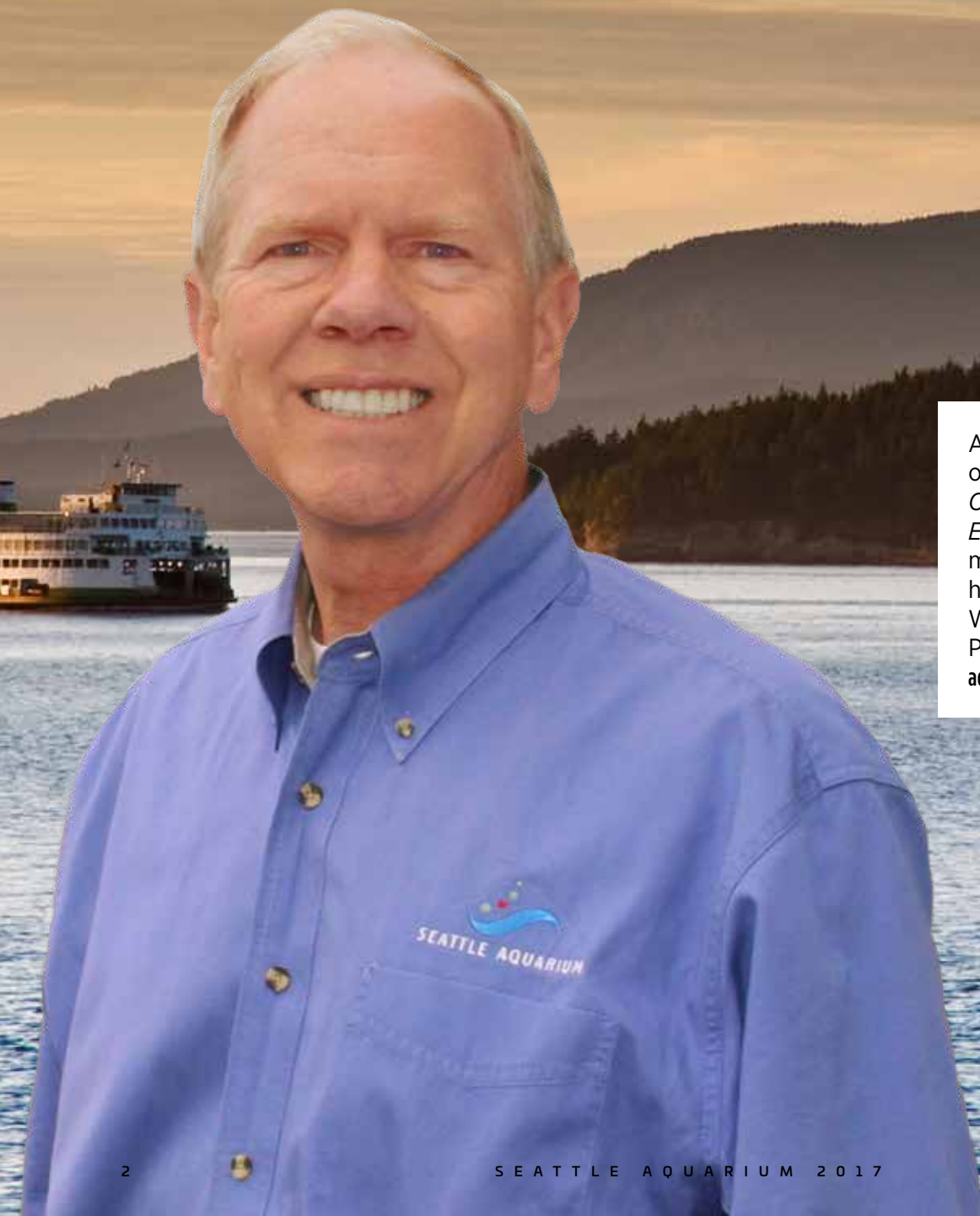
Your partnership has long-lasting impact on the people we serve. Thanks for your support!

Sincerely,



Bob Davidson

President and CEO



As we move forward into our next chapter of *Inspiring Conservation of Our Marine Environment*, what's on your mind? How has the Aquarium had an impact in your life? We'd love to hear from you. Please email us at aquariumimpact@seattleaquarium.org.

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Ginger Atwood Ackerley



Kids love high fives from our divers.

The Seattle Aquarium gratefully acknowledges the service of Board Chair **Bob C. Donegan**. Originally elected to the board in 2007, Bob served in a variety of leadership positions before assuming his current role as chair in 2016.



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As of December 31, 2017

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The Seattle Aquarium is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Your donations make a difference! You can contribute by calling (206) 693-6284 or visiting SeattleAquarium.org/donate. Contributions are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

One Ocean, One Future: The Seattle Aquarium's new Ocean Pavilion

The Seattle Aquarium is taking a bold step to advance our conservation mission within and beyond our walls through the creation of the Ocean Pavilion. This exciting project represents a reinvention of the Aquarium experience and will create a defining civic gem within Seattle's future waterfront park.



The Ocean Pavilion will help connect Pike Place Market to Seattle's waterfront.

Today, we're witnessing the most profound change in our planet's ocean in the past 64 million years, and it's happening within one human lifetime. This generation will define what it looks like to live on our planet for all others to come—and we have the opportunity to lead the way.

From Seattle to the Indo-Pacific coral reefs, the Ocean Pavilion represents our shared future—and our shared responsibility to understand, celebrate and take action to preserve our one ocean.

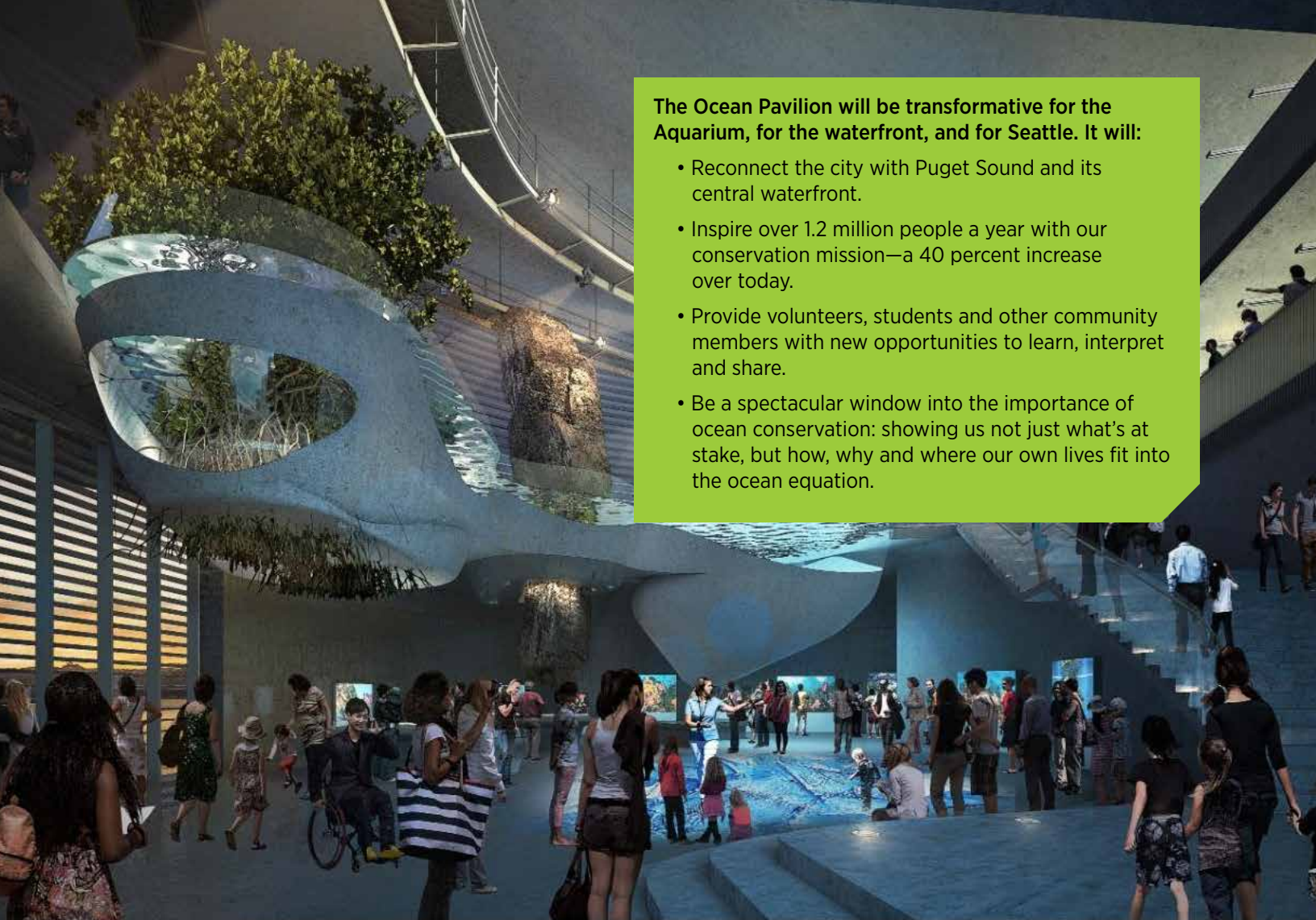
This is our best chance to shed light on the urgent threats facing our ocean, mobilize a new generation of marine conservationists and create something remarkable for our city in the process.

Seattle will be reconnected to the ocean through its new, 20-acre waterfront park and the Ocean Pavilion—a tremendous investment in public and private dollars that will connect downtown, Pike Place Market and the waterfront as an iconic gathering place for all. Our relationship to the water starts with the Coast Salish people and is at the heart of our values as a city today: of sustainability, innovation and respect for the natural world.

The ocean makes life on Earth possible. It's the source of every other breath we take. Yet, human activity has pushed our ocean and coastal city of Seattle to a critical tipping point. **We have an unprecedented opportunity to share—and shape—the importance**

of ocean health with millions of visitors, community-based partners, volunteers and school groups who come learn about the ocean we share.

Together we can shape a new ocean story with the power to drive lasting change—in a place where people discover their own meaningful relationships to the ocean and are inspired to take action.



The Ocean Pavilion will be transformative for the Aquarium, for the waterfront, and for Seattle. It will:

- Reconnect the city with Puget Sound and its central waterfront.
- Inspire over 1.2 million people a year with our conservation mission—a 40 percent increase over today.
- Provide volunteers, students and other community members with new opportunities to learn, interpret and share.
- Be a spectacular window into the importance of ocean conservation: showing us not just what's at stake, but how, why and where our own lives fit into the ocean equation.

"The Hub" will serve as the starting place for the Ocean Pavilion experience.



Martha Kongsgaard, co-chair, Seattle Aquarium One Ocean, One Future campaign.

"Seattle's history starts with the Coast Salish people and continues with the immigrants who settled here—the abundance that came from the water pulled people to this place. Today, not everyone has the same opportunity to connect with this defining feature of our region. The Ocean Pavilion will help us better appreciate the interconnection between Puget Sound and the Pacific. It will help animate an understanding, a relationship and a connection to this one ocean that life on Earth depends on so singularly.

The expanded Aquarium will become one of the region's most inspiring conservation tools as we host over a million curious visitors seeking awe, connection and hope. I'm thrilled to continue to learn about the marine environment and what's at stake, and to be in a place where we can make a difference."

—Martha Kongsgaard, co-chair, Seattle Aquarium One Ocean, One Future campaign

“It’s a happening



g place.”



That's President & CEO Robert W. Davidson's signature description of the Seattle Aquarium—and the 850,000+ people who come through our doors each year bear it out.

But the Aquarium is much more than the daily bustle in our exhibit halls. It's also the starting point for connections, education, inspiration, action and wonder within our own community and well beyond.

This remarkable ripple effect brings the Aquarium and its mission to people who may never visit our facility itself.

And it's all thanks to you. Please enjoy these highlights of the many ways you made a difference—beginning in our building and radiating outward from there—in 2017.

Welcoming our many communities

"On our first visit to the Aquarium, we were just two weeks into being foster parents of two very young children. Now our preschooler loves that her curious questions are answered, and our 1-year-old has a place that allows him to practice his lagging communication skills. Sometimes fostering feels really hard; the Aquarium's Connections program is supportive and validating to foster parents and relative caregivers, and we truly appreciate the ability to visit."

—Foster parent



The **Seattle Aquarium Connections program**, supported through your generous contributions, distributes complimentary tickets (over 69,000 in 2017 alone!) to more than 300 partner agencies serving low-income families,

communities of color, immigrant and refugee communities, people with disabilities, families and individuals experiencing homelessness, and others. More details can be found on our website at SeattleAquarium.org/connections.

"Foster parents, relative caregivers and the children placed in their care benefit from the Connections program in many ways. Complimentary tickets allow these families to bring children of all ages into a setting where they can explore at each child's developmental level. Children with anxieties about new experiences can relax and discover the wonders of the sea. Siblings placed in separate homes can spend quality time together. And caregivers with children of various ages know each child will enjoy the experience."

—Meri Waterhouse, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services





Children and families learning together at the Ballard Locks.

“This partnership leverages the resources and expertise of the Aquarium and brings it to our youth where they are.”

The **Refugee Women’s Alliance (ReWA)**, one of the 300+ partners in the Aquarium’s Connections program, is a nonprofit, multi-ethnic organization that provides refugee and immigrant women and their families with culturally and linguistically appropriate services while promoting inclusion, independence, personal leadership and strong communities.

In 2017, the Aquarium collaborated with ReWA to bring children, teens and parents to the beach at Lincoln Park and the Ballard Locks—with educational, pre-trip classes offered at the ReWA offices as well. It was a

partnership that furthered the missions of both organizations.

“The youth had the opportunity to get out of their comfort zones and experience nature in a meaningful and guided way,” says ReWA Youth Program Manager Emily Tomita. “It aligned well with the goals of our youth program and got participants excited to learn about science and the environment.”

“The Aquarium has been instrumental in opening many doors, opportunities and aspirations for the families at ReWA. The nature of the partnership is really unique—the Aquarium really gets our mission and what we’re trying to do.”

—Susan Lee, ReWA



Making discoveries with an Aquarium beach naturalist.



Exploring the beach at low tide.

“We like the proactive role of the Aquarium, going out to the community and doing the work.”

Through an array of programs, **the Chinese Information and Service Center (CISC)** helps immigrants make the transition to a new life while keeping later generations in touch with their rich heritage. Like ReWA, described in the story at left, CISC is a member of the Aquarium’s Connections program—and also collaborated with us for outreach programming along local waterways in 2017.

“The children we work with are new immigrants from mainland China or Hong Kong,” says Wendy Wu, CISC after-school program coordinator. “Their families are low income with low English proficiency, and their Aquarium experiences gave them opportunities to increase their exposure to English, learn new words and gain new knowledge. The programming supported our goals as well as those of the Aquarium.”



Cedar River
Salmon Journey

“Our focus is on STEM learning, but our resources are very limited. Partnerships like this help enrich our programming in a way that is culturally sensitive to the needs of the Chinese community.”

—Peggy Kwok, CISC



An up-close look at the life stages of juvenile salmon.

Opening our doors for nights of discovery and wonder

With your support, the Aquarium is able to host two very special evening events—DreamNight and Open House—that welcome families who might otherwise encounter barriers to experiencing our exhibits.

DreamNight

Held on two nights each year, DreamNight offers children and adults with disabilities or serious medical conditions and their families a chance to explore the Aquarium at their own pace, with activities and environments developed specifically for them. In 2017, nearly 800 people attended—children, families, grandparents and caregivers.



A family enjoying DreamNight together.



DreamNight features a variety of hands-on activities throughout the Aquarium.

"DreamNight is a wonderful opportunity for our participants to enjoy everything the Seattle Aquarium has to offer. Making a special night for people with disabilities really makes a difference! Our participants often cannot afford to go into the community with their families and caregivers, as many live below the poverty level. This night offers them the chance not only to attend, but to feel and be included in what so many others take for granted."

**—Maureen Browning,
Friendship Adventures**



Open House talks draw captivated crowds.

Open House

At the annual Open House, families served by organizations that work with immigrant and refugee populations and others in low-income communities throughout the Puget Sound region learn about the marine environment, with translators interpreting the activities in over 15 languages. In 2017, more than 700 youth and families attended Open House.

"Watching children from all over the world learn about the science that animates nature, especially marine biology, makes all the effort that goes into the Open House event critically worthwhile. No video game can compete with the experience you provided these kids. I know that more than one career in environmental science began at the Aquarium last night."

**—Larry Reymann,
Environmental Science Center**



Activities are interpreted in 15 languages at Open House.



Squid dissection, a popular (and squishy) activity.






Sharing information about salmon migration as it's taking place at the Ballard Locks.

“Understanding more about the outdoors enriches our appreciation of it.”

With a mission of enriching the quality of life for children and adults with disabilities through outdoor recreation, Connections partner **Outdoors for All** is a natural fit for the Aquarium's outreach programming. In addition to beach explorations and interpretation at Ballard Locks, the Aquarium provided youth programs at the Outdoors for All camp location in 2017. Says Program Manager Elliot Howard, “We appreciate the programming because it creates an environment where everyone can participate at their own ability, level and pace—with space to decompress when needed.” He adds, “It's flexible...it promotes communication and positive interaction for kids who are more social, and it's also engaging for those who prefer to hang back and observe.”



Instructional tools increase understanding of the salmon life cycle.



“The Seattle Aquarium’s commitment to marine conservation extends beyond the Aquarium, and its relationship with ESC is a great example of that.”

For 18 years, the nonprofit **Environmental Science Center (ESC)** has offered quality, experiential environmental education programs at beaches, streams, forests and classrooms in south King County. One of its main priorities is connecting families with limited resources to hands-on environmental science experiences.

In addition to our longtime collaboration with ESC for our Open House event, the Seattle Aquarium partners with them in many ways. Writes ESC Executive Director Tara Luckie, “Seattle Aquarium affiliates helped ESC establish its first beach and salmon classroom field study programs back in 2000, which now serve over 5,000 children each year. Today, Seattle Aquarium staffers serve on our board, as naturalists, and on our advisory committee. ESC could not have such an effective impact in south King County without the resources and knowledge the Seattle Aquarium has provided over the years.”



A fun, five-fingered way to learn about salmon species.



When we protect salmon, we protect the overall marine environment.

Delivering on-site educational programming for students of all ages

Thanks to you, the Aquarium is able to use our exhibits as an inspiring backdrop for a wide variety of educational offerings—from a drop-in program designed just for preschoolers, to school group visits and marine summer camps for kids and teens, to specialized classes for high school and college students.

Toddler Time

Approaching its 13th year and proudly supported by T. Rowe Price, this free-with-admission, drop-in program provides fun and engaging conservation activities for caregivers and children under the ages of 5. It runs on 36 dates from October to February of each year and 2017 saw record attendance, with 2,225 preschoolers and 2,325 adults participating.



Hands-on activities are a Toddler Time highlight.



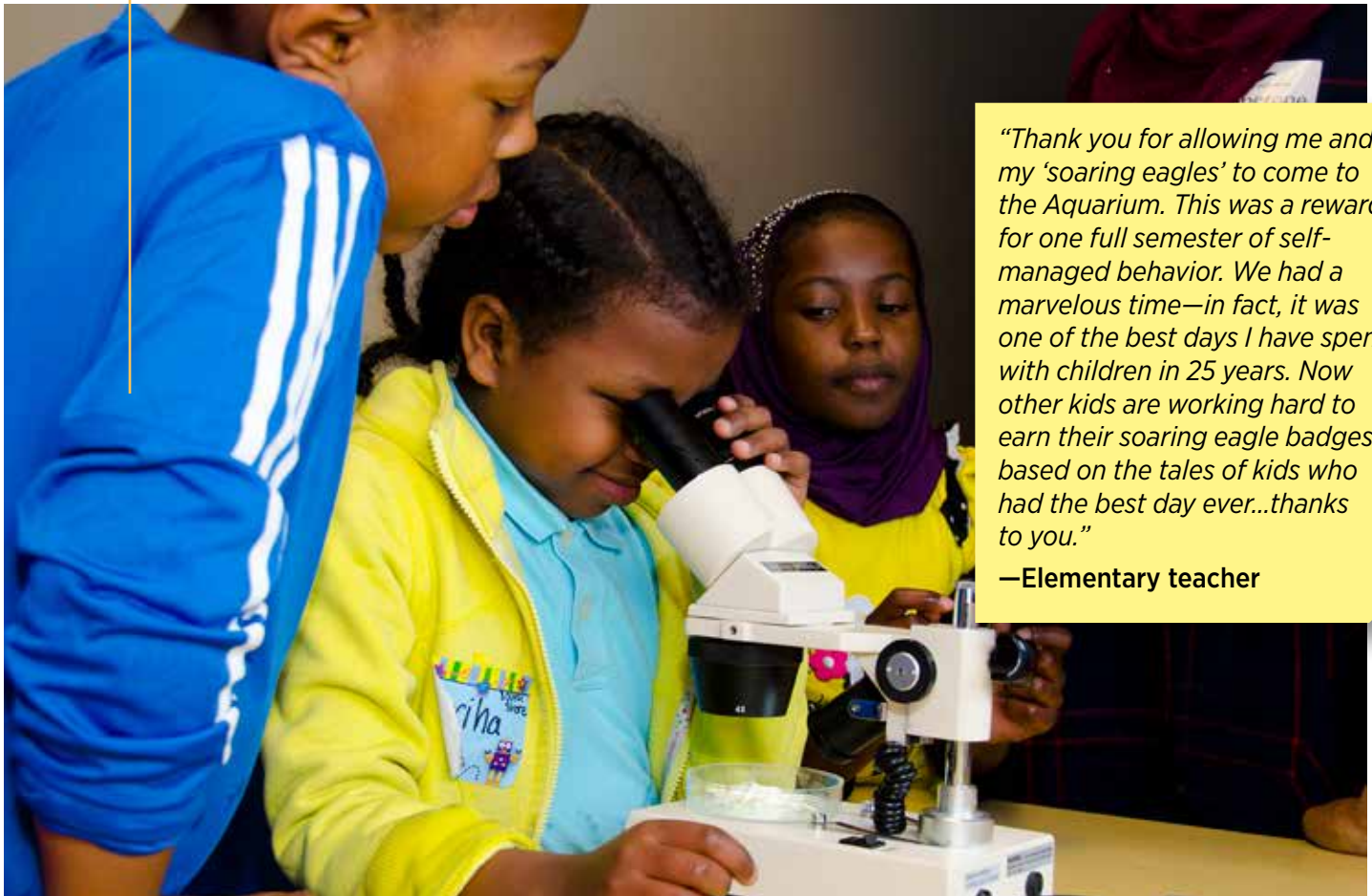
Getting familiar with the tools of science at Toddler Time.



Parents and children learning together.



It's never too early to begin conservation education.



"Thank you for allowing me and my 'soaring eagles' to come to the Aquarium. This was a reward for one full semester of self-managed behavior. We had a marvelous time—in fact, it was one of the best days I have spent with children in 25 years. Now other kids are working hard to earn their soaring eagle badges based on the tales of kids who had the best day ever...thanks to you."

—Elementary teacher

New worlds are revealed under a microscope during a class visit.

School group visits, classes and camps

The Aquarium's education programs introduce students, Pre-K through college, to the marine world through interactive, hands-on classes—all designed to support the Washington state science standards—and camps. In 2017, our on-site classroom programs and self-guided visits served 27,903 students, 65 percent of whom attended on scholarships, and 40 percent of whom came from under-resourced schools. Marine summer camps ran for their 17th season with 10 consecutive weeks of programming and scholarships that were 113 percent full.



"Thank you for teaching us Orca Discovery! You helped me get an idea of what orcas are about, and you gave me tips on how to save orcas. I will definitely do that!"

—Elementary student

Students conduct a plankton tow.





High school students conducting research on the beach.

“It gave me my first experience with real-world research and increased my interest in pursuing a career in science because I liked how we got to go outside to ‘work.’”

Teenagers conduct authentic research on local beaches through **Citizen Science**, a hands-on, inquiry-based marine science education program targeting historically underrepresented high school students in the Puget Sound area. The program trains student-scientists to collect and analyze data while educating them about marine science concepts, plant and animal identification, and field-based research techniques. As participants monitor the health of local beaches to submit to an Aquarium database, they also have the opportunity to develop strong connections to the marine environment; recognize actions that positively impact the ocean

environment; and see science as a possible career path.

As one teacher commented, “Citizen Science provides valuable real-world experience with science—there’s no substitute for it that would be possible in the classroom.” And, in the words of a student participant, “The program greatly impacted my sense of curiosity, interest in marine science, concern about the environment, and willingness to ‘stick with it’ in a long-term project.”

In 2017, Citizen Science worked with 15 local high school classes across 10 schools to monitor 11 local beaches.



Students collecting data on a local beach.

“Having the Aquarium visit their own school helps them feel like important and valued members of the greater community.”

As is abundantly clear on just about any weekday, the Aquarium is a popular destination for preschool groups. But if these groups can’t make it to the Aquarium, our **classroom or field-based programs** will go to them. Comments Sally Straight, the owner, teacher and director of Nanny’s Annex Preschool, “All of my students learn a tremendous amount from the Aquarium classes—about

Puget Sound and animals that live there, how to distinguish between different types of seals and whales and fish, about the importance of the Sound and how it relates to the larger oceans...the class stimulates further discussions for days afterward.”

In 2017, the Aquarium delivered 161 outreach programs to audiences beyond our doors, reaching 3,319 participants.



Rapt preschoolers learning about the marine environment.



Bringing the Aquarium to a preschool class.



Specialized activities promote learning.

“The Satterberg Foundation envisions a sustainable environment where humanity and the natural world are in balance, with each supporting the other. We support the Seattle Aquarium’s mission to engage everyone in our community in understanding marine science and ocean health so they will be inspired to become stewards and life-long advocates of our magnificent marine environment. The Seattle Aquarium helps the Satterberg Foundation achieve our mission, to promote a just society and sustainable environment by reducing the barriers that prevent all citizens from accessing marine science education and engaging personally with ocean health. We are inspired by the Seattle Aquarium, who also use their voice to promote policy initiatives that create long-term impact on ocean health locally and globally.”

—Statement from the Satterberg Foundation



A moment of discovery in a preschool classroom.

Charting a new path for conservation at the Seattle Aquarium

With generous help from longtime Aquarium supporters Brad and Lesley Canfield, the Aquarium completed its conservation prospectus in 2017. This strategic vision outlines the future of our conservation work and charts a new path that refines our focus, expands our scope and deepens our investment in our mission of *Inspiring Conservation of Our Marine Environment*. It's led us to a renewed focus on the Salish Sea, an expanded scope that includes the Coral Triangle, and an overarching, "North Star" concept: the ocean ethic.

"This will connect people to the ocean to care. If any place can develop an ocean ethic, it's on the West Coast. It's very exciting and the Aquarium is doing all the right work."

—Jackie Ogden, Ph.D.,
Association of Zoos
and Aquariums

A strong ocean ethic is everything from choosing what you eat, to whether you use a plastic or paper straw, to how you travel. However you choose to live it, it's about making a personal and communal commitment to the ocean for our shared future.

This new vision grew from a series of workshops and conversations with staff, the community, and more than 50 conservation influencers from all over the region and the country—all of whom overwhelmingly supported the ocean ethic as a guiding "North Star" in connection with the Aquarium's conservation work.



Events such as Sound Conversations increase community awareness of important marine conservation issues.

"If anyone can do this, it's the Seattle Aquarium! Action is important, as well as broadening and welcoming people into the conversation."

—Mary Ford, National
Geographic



Ocean-friendly paper straws at the Seattle Aquarium.



Many single-use plastic straws end up in the ocean.

“Plastic packaging makes up 26% of the volume of all plastic produced. It is near-exclusively single-use.”

As an element of our participation in the Aquarium Conservation Partnership (ACP)—and to continue our work to model green practices for our visitors—the Seattle Aquarium committed to a significant, facility-wide reduction of single-use plastics in 2017.

And, as Seattle prepared to enforce a city-wide ban on plastic straws and utensils, the Aquarium participated in two campaigns, “In Our Hands” and “Strawless in Seattle,” designed to create awareness and spur positive action

around the issues of straws and single-use plastics. The “Strawless” campaign, developed by Lonely Whale, was billed as the first such effort of its kind, and plans are underway to extend it to 15 additional cities next year.



Dr. Sylvia Earle

“The ocean is giving us a message. It’s taken us a while to hear it. But we’re listening now, and there is hope.”

Marine conservation icon Sylvia Earle, Ph.D., is recognized worldwide for her pioneering research, writing and exploration that has helped increase understanding of the ocean and make its protection an international priority. And, in this time of grave concern for ocean health, she struck many notes of optimism as she accepted the Seattle Aquarium’s inaugural Lifetime Achievement Award in January 2018. The award has now been renamed in her honor and will henceforth be known as the Seattle Aquarium Sylvia Earle Medal.

Providing the best possible care for our animals

Your support helps ensure that the animals in our care are fed diets of restaurant-grade, sustainable seafood—and receive regular check-ups from our senior veterinarian.

But caring for our animals doesn't stop at their physical needs. It extends to their psychological needs, which encompasses ensuring that animals' social needs are met. It also includes attending to their environmental needs by providing appropriate habitats for optimum well-being and life support systems for optimum health.

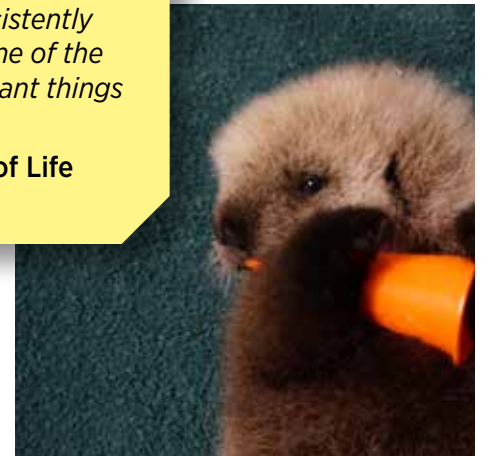
This, and so much more, is all part of being the best possible stewards of the animals under our care, so that they, in turn, can continue to captivate Aquarium visitors—creating connections and inspiring action to protect Puget Sound and the ocean.



Feeding a rescued sea otter pup.

"Ensuring that each of our animals receives consistently outstanding care is one of the most critically important things we do."

—Aquarium Director of Life Sciences C.J. Casson



Rescued pups require constant, expert care.

"Just as it does for a child, it takes a village to raise a rescued sea otter pup."

The Seattle Aquarium has deep experience with sea otters: we were the first institution in the world to breed them under human care; our curator of birds and mammals manages the AZA sea otter studbook; several of our research efforts involve sea otters; and, every two years, we host the world's largest meeting of sea otter biologists.

We're fortunate to be able to share that expertise with other institutions as needed and, in 2017, Aquarium staff members helped with rehabilitations of stranded sea otter pups at both the Vancouver Aquarium and Alaska SeaLife Center.

Writes Kristi Heffron, senior marine mammal trainer at Vancouver Aquarium, "In the last two years, we've have the pleasure of

collaborating with the Seattle Aquarium on the rescue and rehabilitation of two stranded sea otter pups. Working together, both Seattle Aquarium and Vancouver Aquarium teams were able to provide the seamless around-the-clock care needed to ensure these otters regained their health and grew big and strong. They're both thriving and are incredible ambassadors for their species."

“This journey has been one of great teamwork and collaboration between local and national agencies to ensure a successful rehab.”

The Seattle Aquarium provided critical care in the rehabilitation of two stranded olive ridley sea turtles in 2017. After being stabilized behind the scenes at the Aquarium, both were transferred to SeaWorld San Diego to continue their recovery. “Tucker,” who arrived in late 2016, has been returned to the wild. “Coral,” who was brought to the Aquarium in October 2017

and was transferred to SeaWorld in early 2018, continues to improve.

“The Seattle Aquarium and SeaWorld worked together, along with the Coast Guard and Navy, with permission from NOAA and USFW, to plan and execute a successful transport,” says Eric Otjen, SeaWorld’s assistant curator of mammals. “Collaborations like these are invaluable to the success

of a national stranding network comprised of rescue and rehab facilities along both coasts, in the Gulf of Mexico and in Hawaii.” He adds, “Without institutions working together toward a common goal, animals such as Coral wouldn’t get the second chance at life that the Seattle Aquarium, SeaWorld and many others work so hard to facilitate.”



Stranded sea turtles are often critically ill.



A second chance at life.

“It was then that I realized the extent of the Seattle Aquarium’s commitment to its animals.”

Aquarium donor **M. Spring** has a longtime interest in the conservation of all animals—“marine and terrestrial,” she says. “I’ve always had a general sense that animals, and the environments they live in, need our protection.”

So it’s no surprise that an animal encounter spurred Spring’s decision to deepen her commitment to the Aquarium by becoming a donor after several years of membership. At the Window on Washington Waters exhibit, she noticed two rockfish with missing eyes. She asked an interpreter and learned that, after contracting diseases that couldn’t be successfully treated, the fish’s eyes had been removed to save their lives. They quickly adapted and returned to full health.

“We share the world with animals and we need to remember our responsibility to them,” she says. “I appreciate that the Aquarium takes that commitment seriously.”



Vermillion rockfish.

Conducting research to make a difference for animals and the ocean

The intent of the Seattle Aquarium's mission of *Inspiring Conservation of Our Marine Environment* goes beyond inspiring others to act—it includes taking action ourselves: to increase our understanding of marine animals and their homes below the surface, inform ocean management and policy decisions, and share what we've learned.

With your help, the Aquarium continued work on 22 separate lab and field research projects in 2017. Many of these projects were done in collaboration with agencies, Native Nations and other NGOs.

Research was but one component of advancing science for our ocean in 2017. Through an array of events and conferences, we also convened conservation experts to gain knowledge, understand threats and advance solutions.

To learn more about the Aquarium's research efforts, visit SeattleAquarium.org/research.





The Aquarium's Dr. Shawn Larson conducting field research.

“The value in the cross-pollination that occurs with the exchange of scientific staff and ideas among organizations is immense.”

Dr. Shawn Larson, the Aquarium's curator of conservation research, contributed expertise on a research trip for the Southwest Alaska Network's nearshore vital signs monitoring program in Alaska's Katmai National Park in 2017. The 10 other participating researchers were affiliated with the United States Geological Survey (USGS), National Park Service (NPS) and University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Writes James Bodkin, scientist emeritus for the U.S. Geological Survey, “Our program benefited from the exchange with the Seattle Aquarium through Dr. Larson's expertise as one of the leading scientists on sea otter

conservation, ecology and genetics.” He adds, “Shawn also leads Seattle-Aquarium-based efforts to monitor sea otter populations and foraging behavior in Washington. The collaboration of scientists across organizations will contribute to the assurance that data and analyses are comparable across large spatial scales. As a consequence, both organizations and collaborating scientists achieve elevated value through such scientific exchanges.”

To learn more about the research trip, visit blog.SeattleAquarium.org and search “Katmai.”



“Collaborative partners like the Seattle Aquarium make it possible for state and federal agencies to collect as much data on rockfish as possible.”

Understanding **long-term population stability and recruitment events for rockfish**, several of which are listed as species of concern in Washington state, is important to effective resource management. The Aquarium contributes to this body of knowledge through an annual survey of wild rockfish populations at 14 sites in Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca—2017 marked their 13th year. Says Dr. Dayv Lowry, senior marine fish research scientist at the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife, “Conducting Sound-wide surveys simply wouldn’t be possible without our coalition of government and private sector conservation entities, including the Seattle Aquarium.”

The Aquarium also collaborated with NOAA in 2017 to produce a survey guide for recreational divers to collect data and contribute knowledge about long-term trends in juvenile rockfish. Comments Jamey Selleck, marine ecologist for NOAA’s protected resources division, “The citizen science rockfish flyer has been an essential guide for NOAA to reach volunteers, and provides an excellent educational tool for people of all ages.”

“Monitoring the distribution and abundance of rockfish, including young-of-year, is a research priority of NOAA’s recovery plan for rockfish listed under the Endangered Species Act in Puget Sound. This task is too large for any one organization in Puget Sound under current funding levels. The Seattle Aquarium has taken a lead role among state and federal agencies, nonprofit groups and citizen-science efforts to collect data on rockfish species using scuba-based scientific surveys. These data will be used to determine the status and trends of these species and to assess our progress toward recovery goals. These actions wouldn’t be possible without the efforts of the Seattle Aquarium.”

—Statement from NOAA Northwest Fisheries Science Center



Several species of rockfish are listed as species of concern in Washington state.



HAZWOPER training allows Aquarium staff to safely assist in the event of an oil spill.

“Aquarium staff are being armed with the expertise to be on the front lines.”

It's well known that crude oil and its products present significant hazards to animals and humans. Animal rescue operations after the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010 were hampered by the lack of **HAZWOPER- (“hazardous waste operations and emergency response”-)** trained animal care personnel. To protect the health of rescuers, and increase their success in assisting oiled animals, 24 hours of official HAZWOPER training are now required for all personnel working within the hot zone of an oil spill or in initial response to oiled wildlife. Certifications must be renewed annually.

Collaborating with the AZA and Alaska SeaLife Center on a joint effort to build a large bank of trained personnel, a number of Seattle Aquarium staff members are now certified to safely assist in the event of an oil spill—which will allow them to apply their animal care expertise on the front lines as first responders. Says Director of Life Sciences C.J. Casson, “The Seattle Aquarium is committed to making sure we have people who can safely go in and responsibly care for animals that need our help.”



“I came to the Seattle Aquarium in 1996. That’s where I fell in love with sea otters.”

Diane Tomecek has embarked on what many might describe as a bold venture: she runs a foundation dedicated to the survival and recovery of sea otters—headquartered in the heart of landlocked Colorado. The idea was hatched at the Aquarium’s annual sea otter conference, which Diane attended for the first time in 2011. “The keynote speaker, Dr. Mike Murray of Monterey Bay Aquarium, talked about the need for a dedicated sea otter fund, and it sparked something in me,” she says. Just four years later, Diane returned to the conference to announce the launch of the **Sea Otter Foundation & Trust (SOFT)**. She’s attended every conference since.

Although she lives well over 1,000 miles from Washington’s outer coast, Diane clearly feels a deep and infectious connection to the sea otters that live there. It’s one that she shares when visiting Colorado schools, aiming to inspire future marine biologists. And when she funds grants related to sea otter research, conservation and education—including one to the Seattle Aquarium.

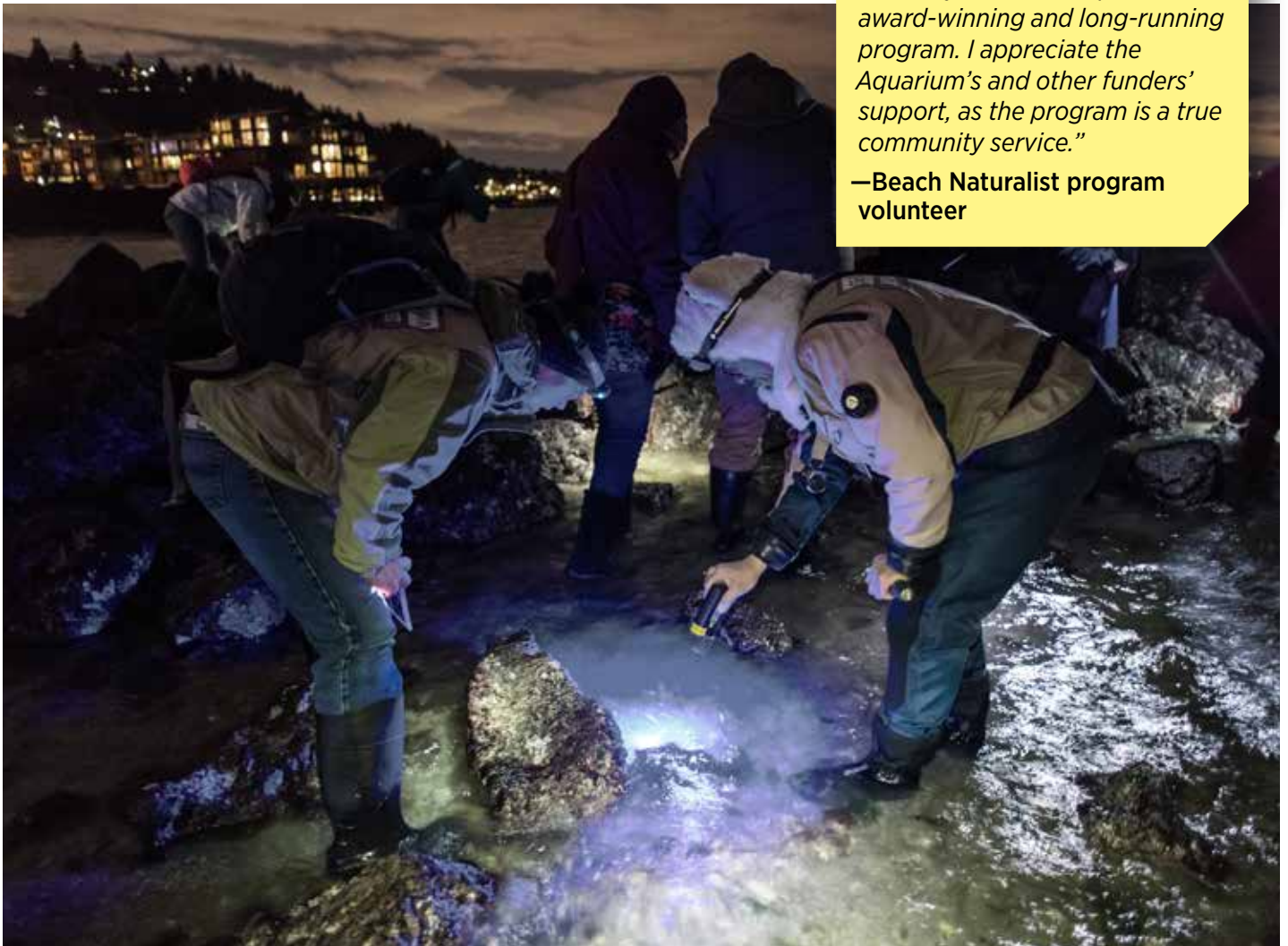
Appreciating the many volunteers who define the Aquarium experience

It's not possible to overstate the value of volunteers at the Seattle Aquarium—or our gratitude for them. From educating and inspiring hundreds of thousands of people each year, to meticulously preparing and tracking meals for our animals, to cleaning and maintaining our exhibits, this passionate team of volunteers does it all, and then some. We offer this amazingly dedicated group our deepest thanks.

In 2017, 1,288 volunteers provided 103,346 hours of service to the Aquarium, representing a donated value of \$2.4 million. To see a complete list of Seattle Aquarium volunteers in 2017, visit SeattleAquarium.org/volunteer.

"It's really nice to be a part of an award-winning and long-running program. I appreciate the Aquarium's and other funders' support, as the program is a true community service."

—Beach Naturalist program volunteer



Volunteers guiding exploration on a low-tide winter night.



A volunteer diver.



Volunteer beach naturalists marshal their facts.

"The most rewarding thing at the end of the day is when you know you have changed somebody's view about the ocean and how important it is to all of us."

—Seattle Aquarium youth volunteer



Teen volunteers gain confidence while leading activities.



Coaching the gentle, one-finger touch.

"I'm able to practice public speaking in an environment that really encourages me to keep improving. I have Asperger's Syndrome and volunteering at the Aquarium helps me continue to grow. I am much more confident and have been told by others that my communication skills improved. I really like hearing that."

—Seattle Aquarium volunteer





Youth Ocean Advocates display the results of a beach cleanup.

“I feel proud to have made a little difference in this world, and I feel hopeful that things are going to get better with little actions like beach cleanups.”

Seattle Aquarium Youth Ocean Advocates are a common sight at the Seattle Aquarium, where they serve as interpreters, staff the face-painting station, and perform a variety of other tasks. They also make a difference in the community by participating in field conservation efforts.

Youth volunteer Grace Zheng has been part of the crew for a number of beach cleanups and, she writes, “They help us realize that there is

actually a large amount of debris and trash out there, even just on a single beach. Seeing that really encourages us to first, dispose of waste responsibly; and second, share these experiences with our family, friends or people we are interpreting to at the Aquarium. It can also inspire people to do something about this problem on a larger scale—for example, doing conservation events has inspired me to pursue an education in

environmental studies. I think, in this regard, the Aquarium’s mission of *Inspiring Conservation of Our Marine Environment* has totally succeeded.”

In 2017, Youth Ocean Advocates participated in 20 field conservation events, spending 656 hours cleaning beaches, planting trees and restoring habitat.



Everett on the job.



Volunteering at the Aquarium prepared Everett for the responsibilities of employment.

“The routine of volunteering at the Aquarium was a huge part of Everett being hired for his first job.”

Were you greeted by a volunteer at a table near the entrance to the Ackerley Foundation Puget Sound Hall the last time you visited the Aquarium? If so, you experienced an important element of the Aquarium’s volunteer program: partnering with local agencies that supply job coaching and placement services for people with disabilities. Volunteering at the Aquarium provides an opportunity to develop and sharpen the skills needed for employment.

Everett Peterson is a recent success story: after nearly a year as an Aquarium volunteer, assisted by his coach Amanda Leslie of the

nonprofit PROVAIL, he landed his first job, in the office of a local preschool. “Volunteering at the Aquarium helped Everett create a work routine,” says PROVAIL Employment Consultant Kaki Pipes. “Not only getting up, dressed and ready on time, but also learning how it feels to be part of a community and interacting with co-workers. It really increased his confidence.”

Everett enjoys the Aquarium so much that he returned to volunteer this summer—say hello if you see him at the entrance to Puget Sound Hall!



Everett volunteers as a greeter at the entrance to Puget Sound Hall.

2017 summary financial information

(\$ in 000s)

Assets

Cash and investments	\$ 4,561
Receivables & prepaid expenses	2,667
Facility expansion project costs	2,677
Property, plant and equipment	2,419

Total assets **\$ 12,324**

Liabilities and net assets

Payables and other liabilities	\$ 2,947
--------------------------------	----------

Unrestricted net assets 5,309

Temporarily restricted net assets 4,068

Total net assets **9,377**

Total liabilities and net assets **\$ 12,324**

Revenues and expenses

Unrestricted revenue

Admissions and memberships	\$ 14,224
Concessions and other income	1,614
Contributions, grants, special events (net)	1,379
Net assets released from restrictions	1,135

Total unrestricted revenues **\$ 18,352**

Expenses

Program expenses	\$ 13,361
Management and general	2,397
Fundraising	1,435

Total expenses **\$ 17,193**

Change in unrestricted net assets **\$ 1,159**

Restricted activity

Temporarily restricted revenue	\$ 2,260
Net assets released from restrictions	(1,135)

Change in restricted net assets **\$ 1,125**

Total change in net assets **\$ 2,284**

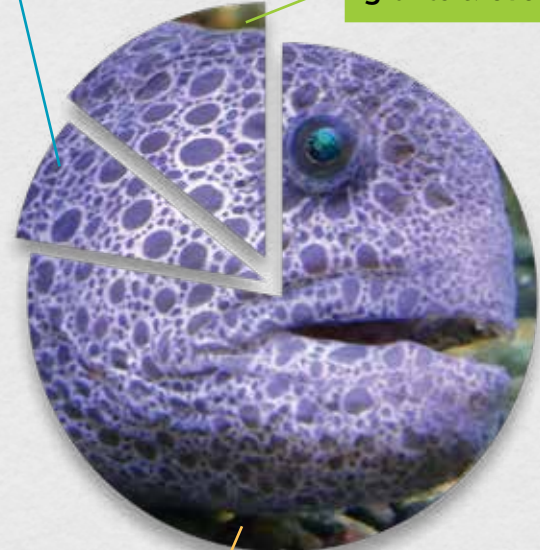
Net assets, beginning of year **\$ 7,093**

Net assets, end of year **\$ 9,377**

Revenues

9% Concessions and other income

14% Releases, contributions, grants & events



77% Admissions and memberships

Expenses

8% Fundraising

14% Management and general



78% Program expenses

The statements shown above are condensed versions of our audited financial statements and do not include footnote disclosures. Complete audited financial statements are available on the Seattle Aquarium website. The annual report is submitted to the City Council Parks Committee as specified by the Aquarium Operations and Management Agreement between the City of Seattle and the Seattle Aquarium Society. Under that agreement, the Aquarium is operated by the Society and the buildings are owned by the City.

2017 fundraising events

Thank you for supporting your Seattle Aquarium!

Splash!

Aquarium supporters and community leaders joined us on June 2 for our annual *Splash!* gala. More than 500 people attended, contributing over \$900,000. Youth Ocean Advocate (YOA) alumna Anja Malawi Brandon returned to the stage to share how the Seattle Aquarium's YOA program helped set the course of her life's work. Alex and Erika Washburn energized the room with a \$10,000 challenge gift to fund-a-need. Special thanks to Honorary Chairs Jim and Leslie Kerr; Co-Chairs Cary Clark and Alex Washburn; *Splash!* committee members Craig Davison, Dave Magee, Melissa Mager, Lisa McCabe, Nathan Rauschenberg, Michael Trzupsek and Carla Wigen; the Aquarium and auxiliary boards; staff; and more than 130 volunteers who contributed over 1,000 hours of their time.

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SeaChange

Many thanks to those of you who were among the nearly 400 people who joined event chair Eric Steinwinder at the SeaChange fundraising breakfast in October. Award-winning National Geographic photojournalist Brian Skerry shared compelling photos and stories from his 40 years of covering ocean life and issues. The Aquarium's Director of Conservation Engagement and Learning Jim Wharton spoke about the Aquarium's next bold chapter in ocean conservation and education. Inspired by their messages, and the testimonial of two of our youngest donors, 5-year-old Nora and 3-year-old Elsa, together you helped raise over \$134,000 in support of the Seattle Aquarium's conservation and research efforts.

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Supporting sponsor

Muckleshoot Indian Tribe

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Adult Swim

Under the direction of the auxiliary board, Adult Swim continues to grow as a way to introduce Seattle's young professionals to the Aquarium and our mission. In its third year and chaired by Tiernan Madorno and Billy Sanchez, this exciting night of cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, dancing and special animal encounters raised \$50,000 while engaging a new and important audience.

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 Holly Haley
 Margaret Hanzlick-Burton
 Katie Hart
 Caroline Hempstead
 April Henderson
 Alia Hidayat
 Lindsay Holladay
 Joel Hollander
 Katie Holmes
 Nancy Hopkins
 Charles Hopper
 Phil Huebschen
 Megan Hughes
 Patrick Hutchins
 Carol Jackson
 Rick Johnson
 Kathryn Kegel
 Dani Kendall
 Kathayoon Khalil
 Bob Kiel
 Nicole Killebrew
 Rob Kirkelie
 Stevie Knapp
 Danika Kraft
 Tim Kuniholm
 Jeff Lambier
 Pam Lamon
 Jennifer Lang
 Amelia Langi
 Darcie Larson
 Shawn Larson
 Kelli Lee
 Alyssa Lind
 Steve Lock
 Khanh-Hoa Luong
 Judah Maddry
 Kate Malinowski
 Za Martin
 Megan Martzall
 Janice Mathisen
 Anna McAllister
 Dom McDougald
 Olivia McGrath
 Rich McJimpson
 Karyn McKelvey
 Michaela McMullen
 Bryan McNeil
 Jannine Merkt
 Trevor Miftahittin
 Joy Mills

Mikaela Montanari
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 Mike Munro
 Dan Newburn
 Tom Nguyen
 Amy Olsen
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 Jim Wharton
 Jen Whitsett
 Jasmine Williams
 Megan Williams
 Dana Wu
 Kaela Wuesthoff
 Amy Zolton

Ginger Atwood Ackerley

1939-2018



Ginger Atwood Ackerley

looked out her window at the waterfront and Seattle Aquarium daily in the last years of her life and felt a special sense of pride and accomplishment when her grandchildren joined the crowds of students and families visiting the Ackerley Foundation Puget Sound Hall, named for her family's lead gift to rebuild Pier 59 in 2007.

That project, prompted by the need to replace hundreds of

failing pilings holding up historic Pier 59, was the first time the Aquarium had reached out to the community to seek support for major capital improvements. Ginger took a personal interest in the campaign, offering her perspective and connections from many civic projects through her son, Ted, who co-chaired the campaign as an Aquarium board member. The campaign not only restored the structural integrity of Pier 59, but added

wonderful new educational exhibits highlighting Puget Sound habitats and creatures, and a major gathering place for all kinds of events.

Ginger and her husband, Barry, made civic engagement and philanthropy a key value for their children and grandchildren, and helped move the Aquarium forward as a leading conservation organization and treasure for our community.

Inspiring Conservation of Our Marine Environment



SEATTLE AQUARIUM

1483 Alaskan Way, Pier 59, Seattle, WA, 98101
(206) 386-4300
SeattleAquarium.org



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