



2016 ANNUAL REPORT

SOUTH CAROLINA AQUARIUM



In the end, we will
conserve only what
we love. We will
love only what we
understand. We will
understand only what
we are taught.

Baba Dioum

The South Carolina Aquarium is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to inspire conservation of the natural world by exhibiting and caring for animals, by excelling in education and research, and by providing an exceptional visitor experience.



Dear Friends,

Rising to the occasion. Delivering on our promises. Leading the way.

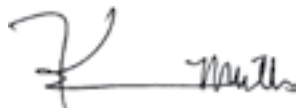
Those are the challenges the South Carolina Aquarium embraced in fulfilling its mission this past year. With so much at stake – risk from rising seas and changing climate, endangered species facing extinction, children in need of information and inspiration – how could we not?

Thanks to the generous support of our Watershed investors, we launched a formal conservation department and hired our very first Director of Conservation. We opened a stunning new exhibit on the harbor, Shark Shallows, to demystify sharks and draw attention to their alarming devastation in the wild. We opened our doors even wider to the community, creating greater access to communities in need and to children from around the state.

We even challenged our own assumptions about the inherent role of an aquarium in this century in the stirring Holland Lifelong Learning series finale, which asked the question, “Why do zoos and aquariums matter?” The resounding chorus of acclaim – and direct challenge – reminded us of how high the stakes are and how greatly we are needed at this watershed moment in our history.

Thanks to you, our community of supporters, we will continue to answer the call. And our best work is yet to come.

Sincerely,



Kevin Mills
President and CEO, *South Carolina Aquarium*



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Dear Friends,

Reflecting on the past year, it is challenging to overstate the remarkable transformations that have occurred at the South Carolina Aquarium.

The 2015-2016 season witnessed the opening of Shark Shallows, a thrilling interactive experience spotlighting the global plight of sharks. This season also witnessed the launch of the Aquarium's first dedicated conservation department, which has delivered a series of groundbreaking programs addressing our region's most pressing concerns, from rising sea levels to the crisis of plastic pollution.

Our world-renowned Sea Turtle Care Center™ admitted a record number of patients, and we completed a \$5 million capital campaign to expand our Sea Turtle Hospital into a state-of-the-art living exhibit, Zucker Family Sea Turtle Recovery™, which is slated to open in May 2017. We launched our first adult learning series, the inaugural season of Holland Lifelong Learning, which culminated in an exceptional panel presentation featuring conservation luminary Dr. Sylvia Earle.

Equally as important, we have continued to inspire and excite every guest who crosses our threshold. We have bonded families, schools and communities through the power of learning. We have connected students of all ages with natural science in life-changing ways – building curiosity and wonder, and a fresh dedication to protecting the natural world.

As this report reveals, the Aquarium is stronger than ever and boldly realizing our institutional vision of connecting people with water, wildlife and wild places.

We look forward to seeing you and yours, early and often, in the year ahead.

Sincerely,



Jonathan M. Zucker
Board Chairman, South Carolina Aquarium



AN AQUARIUM FOR ALL

In 2015, the South Carolina Aquarium touched the lives of more than 200 people during Dreamnight, an after-hours event that welcomed young patients with serious health concerns and their families. We were pleased to partner with MUSC Children's Hospital to create a special and enduring experience and an enriching opportunity.

We are dedicated to our local community, and we believe that all people should have access to the wonder of our natural world. The Angelfish Fund enables us to welcome children and their families to the Aquarium, regardless of limitations that may otherwise affect their ability to visit us.



COMMUNITY IMPACT

6,382

people were provided with
complimentary open access opportunities

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Created open access opportunities
in cooperation with the following
community partners:

- Charleston Promise Neighborhood
- Chucktown Squash
- Engaging Creative Minds
- First Day Festival
- MUSC Children's Hospital
- Windwood Farm Home for Children



“This partnership allows our educators, students and families access to the Aquarium that is vitally important to our efforts to strengthen families, build community and connect field experiences to curriculum standards, ... three key elements toward increasing student success!”

Sherrie Snipes-Williams

Chief Executive Officer,
Charleston Promise Neighborhood



EMPOWERING A GENERATION

When a former student showed his classmates a video of sea turtle hatchlings, Laura Duncan saw an opportunity to teach her first graders about environmental impact. That year, Laura's students set out on a mission to educate their school and to raise money for the Aquarium's Sea Turtle Care Center™. Her students spent their time researching sea turtles, talking with experts, and making public service announcements and posters.

This year, she wanted to do more than just raise awareness – she wanted to sell a product that directly impacts the sea turtles her students have come to love. For someone who hasn't used plastic bags in seven years, the decision to create reusable bags was easy. "It isn't just about the product, but it's also about awareness of sea turtle hazards. We wanted to be proactive with our efforts," Laura says.

This class fundraising project that started years ago has grown into a school-wide effort to save sea turtles and make a positive impact on the environment. "Whether it is by researching books and videos, by creating the morning school commercials, or by designing the logos and products we sell, so many people at school are helping these students make a difference," Laura says. "We can't undo what we've already done, but we can

make a difference going forward, and we know it needs to start with the next generation."

DISTANCE EDUCATION

5,705

people served through our traveling
Aquarium Rovers program

495

students served through our new
distance learning program using
videoconferencing technology

TOP FUNDRAISING

by Community Ambassadors

- Island Turtle Team
Jammin' for Jammer
- Fripp Island Turtle Patrol
Turtle Crawl 5K run
- Garden City SCUTE
ongoing fundraising
- Charleston Day School
Read-a-thon
- Belton Elementary School
Read-a-thon
- Ballentine Elementary School
reusable shopping bags
- Jennifer Oliverio
Triathlon
- Sea Turtle Getaways
percent of reservations





TRANSPORTING PRECIOUS CARGO

In 2015, on the heels of Mercedes-Benz Vans' announcement that it was expanding its Charleston County facility, the company also invested in the Aquarium's upcoming exhibit, Zucker Family Sea Turtle Recovery™.

"Just as sustainability is part of our vehicle design and production process, it is a part of our involvement in the Charleston community as well," said Mercedes-Benz Vans CEO Michael Balke.

From now on, you will see the Aquarium's sea turtle patients returning home in a custom, upfitted 4x4 Mercedes-Benz Sprinter Van, designed to transport some of our largest loggerhead patients back to their natural habitat.

"Charleston is where commerce and conservation meet," says Balke. The new Sprinter Van will comply with federal regulations in place to protect endangered species during transport.



SEA TURTLE CARE CENTER™

Between April 1, 2015 - March 31, 2016:

35

patients admitted, including three species of sea turtles – loggerhead, Kemp's ridley and green

28

released sea turtles

200

total sea turtles rehabilitated and released as of August 26, 2016

Opening in May 2017, Zucker Family Sea Turtle Recovery™ will double the capacity of our current Sea Turtle Hospital and will provide an interactive learning landscape that will boldly tell this critical conservation story, focusing on the inspirational process of care and rehabilitation.



A YEAR IN REVIEW



It Starts in the Classroom

Thanks to the support of the PNC Foundation, Aquarium Rovers launched its early learning initiative and reached more than 2,783 preschoolers in its inaugural year.



A Gathering of Thought Leaders

Young, passionate local conservationist Suzette Head meets her hero, oceanographer and explorer Sylvia Earle, at a Holland Lifelong Learning event.

The Holland Lifelong Learning Finale panelists addressed the question, "Why do zoos and aquariums matter?"

From left to right:
 Kevin Mills, *South Carolina Aquarium*
 Julie Packard, *Monterey Bay Aquarium*
 Jeanne Gang, *Studio Gang*
 Dr. Sylvia Earle
 Scott Corwon, *IMPACTS*
 Dr. Jeffrey Bonner, *Saint Louis Zoo*
 Dr. Alejandro Grajal, *Chicago Zoological Society*





A Hands-On Experience

With the opening of Shark Shallows, guests explore the world of the ocean's apex predator by coming fingers to fins with sharks and rays.



Shaping Future Leaders

The STEM College and Career Conference, sponsored by Boeing South Carolina, inspired 158 young people to explore career opportunities in science, technology, engineering and math fields.



A YEAR IN REVIEW

Against All Odds

Once deemed non-releasable due to neurological blindness, loggerhead turtle Boyles was returned to the wild after volunteer Barb Gobien spent four months providing him with daily therapy.





Saving a Species

Aquarium staff worked toward the conservation of endangered species like the robust redhorse, a freshwater fish that was nearing extinction a few years ago. Conservation efforts have set this species on the path to recovery.



We would like to thank the following donors who contributed philanthropic gifts to the Aquarium from April 1, 2015 – March 31, 2016

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Jonathan and Laura Zucker

NAUTILUS SOCIETY

Members of the Nautilus Society have pledged their support to the James L. Ferguson Permanent Endowment ensuring the South Carolina Aquarium will be a source of magic and wonder for generations. We are thankful to these individuals who have included the Aquarium in their estate plans.

Jim and Esther Ferguson
Dr. and Mrs. Dennis Gettelfinger
Richard and Karen Sherwood

GIFTS IN KIND

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Bluestone Entertainment
Buford High School
CaribSea, Inc.
Charleston Magazine
Cocktail Club
Diamonds Direct
EventHaus
Fleet Landing Restaurant
Glaser + Company CPAs, LLC
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Hamby Catering
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Cassandra Abood
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Lola Barden
Dinah Barthelmess
Kristen Beach
Belton Elementary School
Betty Berginski
Bill's Birthday
Jenatha Boose
G & G Bowman
Ashley Bradt for a great personalized tour
Claudia Brown
Jeffrey Brown's Birthday
Pamela Brown
Kathleen Burkett, turtle lover
Kate Byrd
JuJu Causey
All children who have never seen the beauty of the ocean
Melissa Clifford
Whitney Daniel
Janis Dempsey
Zack Demur
Barbara and Stephen Demusz of Little River, SC
Donny & Dylan
Mrs. Duncan
Edith and Leland
Kylie Fackrell
Meghan Galipeau, Charmiane Wozniak and Kelly Thorvalson
Dr. Justin Gass
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Virginia Goldsmith
My Grandchildren
Ronda & Robert Greaves
Dr. and Mrs. Alan E. Green
Jordan Grosh's 7th Birthday
Mr. & Mrs. Jeff Hagedorn
Ethan Hall's Birthday
"Happy Birthday!"
Elisabeth Harden - Merry Christmas
Sequoia Harper
The Harris Family
Helping others
The Hunting Island Sea Turtle Conservation Project
Christ Jesus
Sunnies Jones
Jordan's Birthday
Rachel Kalisperis
Susanna Keller
Kate Kipp's Birthday
Mary Alice Kruezi
Lazarus the sea turtle
Violet Audrey Mae



Doris Jean Martin
 Mattie Grace and Olivia
 Lyn Mattox
 Eliza Gayle Maynard's 3rd birthday
 Hendrix Marley Mazyck
 Jeff McClary
 Ryan & Liam McCrae
 Beth McDonald
 Tami McGee
 Dan McNamee
 Timothy and Melinda Michael
 Henrietta Milling's 7th Birthday
 Hailey Renee Mitchum
 Mom/Nana's 75th Birthday
 Mary Alice Monroe
 Evan Wynn Moses's 4th birthday
 Daphne Q Nadley
 John H. Neely
 John Neely's milestone birthday
 My friend Kathey O'Connor who introduced me to the cause
 Barbara O'Donald
 Olive O'Leary
 Jennifer Oliverio
 The Pampu Kids
 Emily Marshall Parrick's 8th birthday!
 Joe Pezzullo
 Carly Plesha
 Luke Pollard's Birthday
 The Potter Family
 Quinn, Kathryn & Brew
 Reece's 5th birthday
 Glenn Rhodes
 Grace M. Rhodes
 Glen and Grace Rhodes's Anniversary
 Allen and Paula Ruis and Sea Turtles
 Addison Runge
 Jay, Willis, Sanders, and Davis Rutherford
 Buddy Satterfield
 Gail and Daniel Schiffer
 Mr. and Mrs. Charles Seignious Way, Jr. and Families
 Eli Sherman for Hanukkah
 Hilton and Catherine Smith
 Lucy Snow
 Lily Snyder's 7th birthday
 Peter Stonefield on his birthday
 The Talmage Family!
 Jackie Taylor's 70th Birthday
 Kelly Thorvalson
 Tristan on his birthday!
 Jordan Valente's 7th Birthday
 Rose Vear
 Jasmyne R. Watson
 Their wedding on 8/8/2015
 The Wednesday Morning Volunteers
 Leah and Ethan Weiss
 William's 3rd birthday
 Patricia H. Williams
 Jim Wise
 Alden & Lydia Wisemand and Honor Alfrey
 Laura Woods
 Kelby Anne Woolf
 Youjin and Julia's birthday

MEMORIAL GIFTS

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 Shelby Clifton
 Jack V Friedman
 Jack and Vivian Friedman

Anne Dezell Henlay
 JoAnn Humphreys
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 Paul W. Ingram, beloved grandfather of Lauren and Blake Ellis
 Christ Jesus
 Our Katie
 Heidel Lentz
 Mary MacKinnon
 Marley
 Chris Marlowe
 Christy McCue
 Beth A. MacDonald
 Sandra B Moore
 Glenn Rhodes
 Grace Rhodes
 Catherine Rutolo
 Buddy Satterfield
 Dan Schiffer
 Daniel Schiffer
 Mr. Charles Seignious Way The Third, my brother in law,
 Mr. and Mrs. JC Long and my parents and in laws, Mr. and
 Mrs. Roy Garrett, Jr. and Mr. and Mrs. James Wimberly.
 May God Keep Them Always.
 Arthur Siegel
 Mildred & Irvin Sigafos
 Thomas Slade Dozier, Jr.
 Roy Stacey
 Catherine Stuhr
 Jennifer Mary Falk Warner
 W.C. Warren
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VOLUNTEERS

5,000+ HOURS

Sherry Fox
 James Hubbell
 Diane Lauritsen

2,500 - 4,999 HOURS

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 Pamela Bateman
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Donors in italics signify a matching gift company.

The South Carolina Aquarium is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and relies on the generosity of individuals, foundations and corporations.

DONOR PROFILE:

Scott and Jordana Snider

Scott and Jordana Snider met after college while pursuing careers in wildlife documentary filmmaking. They first worked together on the series "Tales from Belize" for National Geographic. They had an adventurous year exploring the jungle, coral reefs, and Mayan ruins of Belize, during which she served as associate producer and he as a cinematographer. After they were married, Scott and Jordana relocated to Charleston. They both had a passion for the natural world, so when a friend invited them to join the South Carolina Aquarium Alliance in 2003, they accepted.



Jordana was volunteering with the Folly Beach Turtle Team in 2009 when she discovered that the Aquarium was seeking funds for a new radiograph in the medical lab. She and Scott felt inspired to get more involved and graciously provided the final funds to acquire the equipment. It was during that time that Jordana met Sea Turtle Care Center™ manager Kelly Thorvalson and learned more about the Sea Turtle Hospital. Having previously served as a volunteer at the National Aquarium, Jordana decided to dedicate her time to volunteering in the hospital and now serves as the official videographer for the Sea Turtle Hospital.


Jordana is still a member of the Ocean Alliance, and Scott now serves on the Aquarium board of directors. The Sniders have been wonderful supporters of the Aquarium's mission and programming and made an inspiring leadership gift of support to Zucker Family Sea Turtle Recovery™.

Scott and Jordana are the proud parents of three beautiful girls, who have also become involved with the Aquarium through their schools. We are grateful for the support of the Sniders and honored to count them a part of our Aquarium family.

OPERATING HIGHLIGHTS

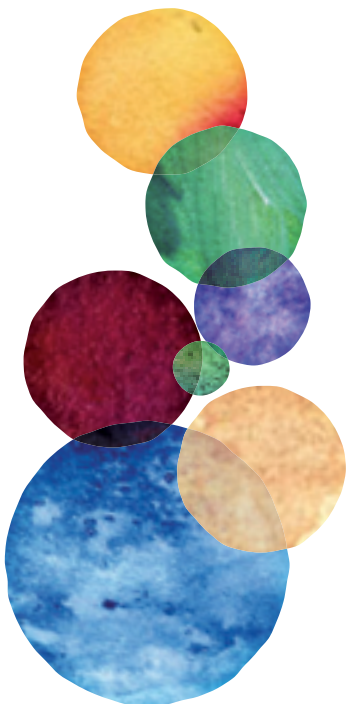
April 1, 2015 – March 31, 2016

REVENUE



Admissions	\$5,643,331
Contributions and Grants	3,615,390
Membership	1,176,491
Concessions	622,187
Facility Rentals	375,780
Fundraising Events	251,428
Program Revenue	192,800
Investment Income	2,627
Other Income	148,234
Total Revenue	\$12,028,268

EXPENSES



Husbandry	\$1,286,621
Facilities	1,259,163
Education	895,117
Conservation	392,138
External Affairs	1,937,357
Guest & Member Programs	1,721,679
Total Program Services	7,492,075
Supporting Services	
Exec., Finance and Admin.	1,720,433
Fundraising	1,102,020
Membership	45,566
Total Expenses	\$10,360,094



OUR FUTURE

More than ever, communities from coast to coast are seeking something more from aquariums.

In a time of increased distraction and isolation, they are seeking a community. In a time of environmental decline, they are seeking a voice for preservation. As cuts in education spending rise, they are seeking a temple for transformational learning, and they are yearning for a guide to the natural world.

The South Carolina Aquarium is rising to these challenges – every one of them. We are becoming much more than a static exhibition environment. We are a classroom. A convener. A hospital. A space to gather and to connect.

We are becoming the aquarium of the future. This is what is needed, and we are responding.

INVEST IN THIS WATERSHED MOMENT.

To find out how to make an individual, planned, corporate or foundation gift, call our Advancement office at (843) 579-8595 or visit scaquarium.org/give.



100 Aquarium Wharf
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CONSERVATION MATTERS

This publication is printed on environmentally friendly Rolland Enviro™ Satin paper and manufactured using biogas. Biogas is produced from the decomposition of landfill waste.

As a result, we have saved:

15
trees covering the size of about
1 tennis court

14,825
gallons of water

1,517
pounds of waste

4,975
pounds of CO₂ or 9,434 miles driven

6
pounds of NOx or emissions of one truck
during 9 days

62,365
60W lightbulbs burning
for one hour