

# AQUARIUM OF THE BAY CELEBRATES 25 YEARS OF OCEAN CONSERVATION 40 YEARS OF ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- On Earth Day 2021, the Smithsonian Affiliated Aquarium of the Bay marks its 25th Anniversary this week. What started at PIER 39 as Underwater World on April 19, 1996, is today a non-profit hub of ocean conservation, climate change awareness, earth justice, and environmental advocacy with an international outreach.



Committed to the protection and conservation of the San Francisco Bay and its ecosystems from Sierra to the Sea, the Aquarium brings joy and environmental healing to children and adults alike"

*Ben Bleiman, Chair of the Board*

What a year 2020 has been! After almost one full year of shutdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, furloughed staff and millions lost in revenues, Smithsonian Affiliated Aquarium of the Bay reopened its doors to the public on March 5th, 2021, at 25% capacity, in conjunction with the city of San Francisco entering the red tier. Just in time for Spring-break, the Aquarium now at 50% cap is seeing steady rise in guest attendance numbers as San Francisco takes progressive strides in welcoming people back to normalcy safely.

Aquarium of the Bay is the largest of 7 environmental conservation non-profit entities under the parent organization BayEcotarium with a unified mission to enable climate resilience and ocean conservation globally, while inspiring actionable environmental stewardship locally. Accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums, it is the only Smithsonian affiliated Aquarium in California and one of the first institutions to be a Certified San Francisco Green Business in April 2005. Home to 24,000 animals and over 200 species in its 750,000 gallon classic clear acrylic saltwater tunnels, it is visited each year by hundreds of thousands from far and near, offering free education programs to 70,000 children each year and engaging hundreds of volunteers in shore-line clean-ups. While the Aquarium offers a living lens into the beautiful marine biodiversity in the San Francisco Bay, it also brings to the fore the challenges and threats posed by marine debris, plastics, micro-plastics, PCB and other pollutants that impact marine life. "Committed to the protection and conservation of the San Francisco Bay and its ecosystems from Sierra to the Sea, the Aquarium brings joy and much needed environmental healing to children and adults alike", says Ben Bleiman, Chair of the Board who also serves on the

Entertainment Commission of San Francisco.

Over the decades, the Aquarium has developed partnerships and collaborations with educational institutions in Japan, Canada, United States, Jamaica, Norway, Mexico, South Africa and continues to serve underserved communities in the Bay Area. Comprehensive e-learning modules, research publications, informative books to stunning retail merchandize and ocean conservation events, augment its research and outreach initiatives in conjunction with Remote Operated drones, Diver Certifications, Under-water photography and eco-expeditions to Hawaii, Costa Rica, Mexico and the Caribbean.



“We are thrilled to mark this significant milestone and are humbled by the overwhelming response from the Bay Area communities during 11 months of shut-down in the peak of the pandemic”, says George Jacob, President & CEO of the Bay Ecotarium- the umbrella 501c3 non-profit that oversees all seven branches of the organization, including Aquarium of the Bay. The Bay Institute remains the foremost voice of environmental advocacy for the last four decades and continues to shape and strengthen environmental policies and shoreline restoration from the Sierra to the Sea.

The Aquarium is open at PIER39 on all days from 10 AM to 6 PM. Tickets are available at [aquariumofthebay.org](http://aquariumofthebay.org)

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