

## OREGON COAST AQUARIUM VOLUNTEER DIVE PROGRAM

### Becoming a Volunteer Diver

**Joining the Volunteer Dive Team** –Qualified divers may join our volunteer dive team by attending an aquarium diver recruit training course conducted at the Aquarium, plus attending an orientation course. Though not required, all volunteer divers are also encouraged to attend a 30 hour training program conducted by the aquarium (see optional training below) to achieve the maximum experience.

#### **Required Training:**

##### **1. Diver Recruit Training – The Habitat Diver Certification Course**

An Oregon Coast Aquarium “Habitat Diver” course has been developed specifically to meet the needs of the dive program here at the Aquarium, and is required of all prospective volunteer divers. This is a specialty certification course through PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors). The curriculum includes watermanship/scuba skills evaluation, full face-mask and underwater communications equipment diving, underwater naturalist, plus habitat diving and tending techniques. The course includes classroom sessions, pool sessions, and Aquarium habitat dives over three days. The recruiting course is conducted here at the Aquarium every other month. Upon completion of the Habitat Diver Training course we will sit down with recruits and discuss volunteering opportunities and scheduling, invite suitably qualified divers to attend an Orientation Course to join the program, or offer options for remedial training to those that still might need more experience or skill development. The cost for the course is \$225. Prerequisites are listed below.

**2. Orientation Course**– The orientation course will typically be scheduled immediately following the Habitat Diver Certification course and is a one day program. This course includes an induction session on the history, structure and mission of the Aquarium; volunteer program benefits, policies and procedures; a tour of the Aquarium behind the scenes; incident and emergency management procedures; role of the surface tender and shift captain; a session on animal husbandry techniques and water quality; scientific diving; shark diving policies/techniques; a shark behavior observation session; and a tour of diving exhibits in the main building galleries, aviary and mammals. Upon successful completion of the Orientation Course divers will become members of the volunteer diver program and assigned to a shift schedule that suits the diver’s and the aquarium’s needs. There is no cost for this course.

**Optional Training:** The Aquarium also offers a 30-hour course of training which is optional for volunteer divers and required for all other volunteers. Beginning in March, every Tuesday evening for ten weeks, trainees attend a 6-9 p.m. class held in the Aquarium’s theatre. The fall training begins in September and are conducted on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Staff and experienced volunteers give talks about the animals, habitat, and marine biology of the Oregon coast as well as the animals exhibited in the Aquarium. There are also components dedicated to the development of interpretive skills. Divers who wish to attend this optional training are asked to contact the coordinator of volunteer services, Sam Cangemi [sam.cangemi@aquarium.org](mailto:sam.cangemi@aquarium.org) or call 541-867-3474 extension 5315.

**Prerequisites** –Volunteer recruits must hold Advanced Open Water certification (or equivalent), current First Aid and CPR, Oxygen Provider, have a minimum of 50 logged dives (25 in cold water), and be cleared medically fit to dive by a physician. As a minimum, divers are expected to possess an Advanced Open Water Diver level of diving knowledge and have good to excellent diving and watermanship skills. Divers must also have and maintain Divers Alert Network membership (this provides emergency evacuation insurance coverage) but are strongly encouraged to hold D.A.N. medical insurance at minimally the first level of coverage (which provides medical coverage for the treatment of diving accidents). Currently level one insurance (which includes

D.A.N. membership) is \$54 per year. You can get more information on membership, insurance, benefits and training opportunities at [www.diversalertnetwork.com](http://www.diversalertnetwork.com)

**Equipment Needs-** Volunteer divers provide the following equipment: mask, fins, thermal protection, buoyancy compensator, regulator and weight belt. Thermal protection includes drysuit (with appropriate undergarments) or wetsuit, plus gloves, hood, and boots as needed. The aquarium provides steel cylinders for the divers.

**Scheduling** – Volunteer diver positions require a commitment of at least one 6–7 hr shift every three weeks. Each team has a shift captain assigned by the Dive Safety Officer. The day of the week you volunteer is determined by your availability and the Aquarium’s needs. We are committed to providing a quality volunteer diving experience and believe we can do this best within the structure of teams. Committing to a fixed schedule and becoming a part of that team will be of most benefit to all involved.

**Commitment** – We are asking you to commit a minimum of one full year to the Aquarium. We realize that this is a major commitment, and we want you to consider it carefully. Do you have that much time? Is it important to you? We are happy to answer your questions before you make that final decision. Most of our divers stay well beyond the requested one year, but that is the minimum commitment we ask of you.

**Contacts**– For more information on the volunteer dive program you can contact our Dive Safety Officer, Vallorie Hodges, 541-867-3474 ext 5302, [val.hodges@aquarium.org](mailto:val.hodges@aquarium.org) or Bob Carskadon, Dive Program Assistant, 541 867-3474 ext 5302, [bob.carskadon@aquarium.org](mailto:bob.carskadon@aquarium.org)

If you would like more information on the Aquarium’s interpretive volunteer program or the optional 12 week training, contact our Coordinator of Volunteer Services, Sam Cangemi, 541-867-3474 ext 5315, [sam.cangemi@aquarium.org](mailto:sam.cangemi@aquarium.org)

Updated 12/2005

# OREGON COAST AQUARIUM DIVE VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

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: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of emergency contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City, State & Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Physician's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list all diving credentials and summarize your dive experience.

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You are asked to volunteer on a regular schedule for one full year. What schedule would you prefer? (Select one.) One full day every week?  One full day every other week?  One full day every third week?

If none of the above, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mark the box next to the days of the week you would be available as a dive volunteer:

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

Have you ever been convicted of a felony? Yes  No

If yes, what was the charge and court decision? \_\_\_\_\_

**The following information is requested to develop demographic reports.**

Birthdate: month \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_ year \_\_\_\_\_

Gender:  Male  Female

Employed?  Yes  No If yes, full time  or part time ? If no, retired?  Yes  No

Occupation (current or past): \_\_\_\_\_

Currently a student?  Yes  No If yes, full time  or part time ?

Highest education level completed:  Grade \_\_\_\_  High School  Some college

Associate degree  Bachelor's degree  Master's degree  Doctorate

Major: \_\_\_\_\_

**By completing this application, I understand that I am agreeing. . .**

1. . . . that I have completed (or will complete) and have assumed all responsibility to pay all costs of a training on exhibit diving at a designated training facility.
2. . . . to attend and complete all requirements of an orientation weekend held at the Aquarium.
3. . . . and understand that my acceptance into the dive volunteer program is dependent upon the completion of all training and orientation requirements *to the satisfaction of the Aquarium dive officer.*
4. . . . to maintain a pre-determined volunteer schedule for a minimum of one year.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_