JOB POSTING

Job Title: Curator of Marine Mammals & Birds
Status: Full-Time, Hourly (40 hours)
Number of Positions: 1

Classification: Exempt
Reports to: Director of Zoological Operations

Description

Under the direction of the Director of Zoological Operations, the Curator of Marine Mammals and Birds leads the care and management of the Aquarium's penguin and pinniped collections. This role oversees animal care, training, enrichment, and wellbeing; guides collection planning and program improvement; and leads staff performance management and professional development.

Essential Responsibilities

- Provide overall leadership and management of the Marine Mammals and Birds Department, supporting the long-term welfare and sustainability of the Aquarium's pinniped and penguin collections;
- Lead staff recruitment, onboarding, performance management, professional development, and career progression in partnership with Human Resources and the Director of Zoological Operations;
- Establish departmental expectations, provide coaching and corrective action, and ensure effective staffing, training, cross-training, and succession planning;
- Oversee husbandry, behavioral training, and enrichment programs, establishing standards and evaluating progress to support animal welfare, medical care, and educational objectives;
- Monitor animal health, behavior, and wellbeing in collaboration with veterinary staff, supporting preventive care, treatment plans, and ongoing animal management;
- Lead collection planning with the Director of Zoological Operations, including acquisitions, breeding, transfers, population management, and participation in AZA animal programs;
- Coordinate animal transports and maintain relationships with zoos, aquariums, professional organizations, and collection management partners;
- Ensure departmental operations and records meet applicable USDA requirements, AZA, AMMPA, and IMATA standards and guidelines, and institutional policies; support inspections and accreditation reviews;
- Oversee educational animal presentations, interactive programs, and other guest experiences to ensure alignment with animal welfare, safety, and the Aquarium's mission;
- Lead departmental projects and improvements to animal care, exhibits, training programs, procedures, and operations; represent the department in institutional planning and initiatives;
- Oversee the condition and operational needs of departmental exhibits, equipment, and animal areas, coordinating maintenance and improvements with Facilities, Life Support, and other teams;
- Participate in budget planning, monitor departmental expenses, and align staffing and resources with animal care and operational needs;
- Maintain departmental safety procedures, ensure staff emergency preparedness, and provide leadership during animal, staff, facility, or operational emergencies;
- Foster teamwork and effective communication across Aquarium departments and provide appropriate supervision and learning opportunities for volunteers and student interns.

Requested Requirements

- Bachelor's degree in biological or aquatic behavioral sciences or other related field; significant experience may be considered in lieu of a degree;
- SCUBA certification through an accredited diving agency and documented 3 hours of recreational and/or facility maintenance diving;
- Extensive experience in operant conditioning and developing and delivering animal presentations;
- Robust knowledge of marine mammal and bird transport, quarantine, wellbeing, and health;
- Knowledge of animal wellbeing standards and wildlife laws related to marine mammals and birds, specifically Humboldt Penguins, California Sea Lions, and Harbor Seals;
- Knowledge of collection management and AZA animal management programs;
- Must have a valid NY State Drivers' license (or ability to obtain one) and valid U.S. passport;
- At least 10 years of experience related to marine mammal and bird husbandry experience;
- At least 5 years of experience in a supervisory position; preferably an AZA accredited facility.

Working Conditions

- Potential exposures encountered, such as hazardous materials, loud noise, & weather exposure;
- Physical effort/lifting: occasionally lift and/or move up to 50 pounds;
- May require working weekends, nights, or be on-call as a regular part of the job;
- Essential physical requirements, such as climbing, standing, stooping, or typing.

Salary Range

$62,400 – $67,080

To Apply

Please send resume and cover letter to kdaloise@aquariumofniagara.org. Be sure to include Curator of Marine Mammals and Birds in the subject line of any correspondence.

The Aquarium of Niagara is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will be afforded equal employment opportunities without discrimination because of race, color, creed, religion, sex, age, national origin, citizenship, sexual orientation, marital status, or any other classification protected by federal, state, or local law.