



Georgia Aquarium Staff Bios

Bernard Marcus

Benefactor, Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer

Bernard Marcus is co-founder of The Home Depot, Inc., the world's largest home improvement retailer. His company revolutionized the home improvement business with its warehouse concept. He served as chairman of the board until his retirement in 2002. He remains director emeritus and Home Depot's largest single stockholder.

From 1972 to 1978, Marcus was Chairman of the Board and President of Handy Dan Improvement Centers, Inc., a home center retail chain. Prior to Handy Dan, Marcus was President of O'Dell's, a manufacturing conglomerate, and Vice President of Hard Goods Merchandising for Vornado, Inc., a retail chain.

Marcus's personal civic involvement has been translated into the creation of The Marcus Foundation where he serves as chairman of the board. His areas of focus include Jewish causes, children, medical research, free enterprise and the community.

A centerpiece of his desire to give back to the community is Georgia Aquarium in Atlanta, Georgia. This \$290 million dollar attraction is dedicated to the people of Georgia and the associates, customers and shareholders of The Home Depot. With a total of 550,000 square feet and eight million gallons of water, it is the largest aquarium in the world and houses more than 100,000 animals from 500 species.

In 1991, he and his wife Billi established The Marcus Institute, which provides programs for children and adolescents with disorders of the brain and their families. An additional commitment in 1998 led to a national expansion when The Marcus Institute joined forces with the Kennedy Krieger Institute in Baltimore.

Among his important philanthropies is the founding of the Israel Democracy Institute located in Jerusalem. This non-partisan and non-political think tank serves as an important resource and change agent, dealing with the complex issues facing Israeli democratic society. Former U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz serves as Honorary Chairman.

Marcus serves in numerous leadership roles including The Shepherd Spinal Center, The City of Hope, The Marcus Jewish Community Center, and Business Executives for National Security.

A native of Newark, New Jersey, Marcus received his B.S. degree in Pharmacy from Rutgers University.

David Kimmel

President and Chief Operating Officer

As President and Chief Operating Officer of the world's largest aquarium, David Kimmel is responsible for overseeing all operations within the building. Kimmel has played an integral role in the Aquarium's history having joined benefactor Bernie Marcus' team three years before the facility opened in 2005, leading the corporation that designed, created, built and staffed it.

With more than 34 years of significant experience in providing comprehensive program management, Kimmel has worked with both public and private sectors providing services for many diverse institutions. His seasoned work with varied organizations and departments provides him with a broad-based understanding of large-scale public facilities. His past experience ranges from pre-design project management through engineering problem resolution, to full-range program management responsibilities.

Kimmel, 55, most recently served as VP, Director of Program Management for Heery International, a full-service architecture, interior design, engineering, construction management and program management firm. Under Kimmel's leadership, Heery was the Aquarium project management company retained to develop the specifications and contracts for all firms associated with the project and to oversee all phases of construction. During this time, Kimmel also oversaw Heery's Sales and Marketing team with gross revenue of more than \$8.5 million. Kimmel and Heery were engaged again in 2007 to be the Program Manager/Owner's Representative for Georgia Aquarium's new dolphin expansion, scheduled to open November 2010.

Kimmel holds a Bachelor of Science Civil Engineering degree from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute with graduate course work in Civil Engineering from the University of South Carolina. He and his wife, Lorraine, have one daughter.

Dr. Greg Bossart, V.M.D., Ph.D.

Chief Veterinary Officer

Senior Vice President, Veterinary Services

As Georgia Aquarium Chief Veterinary Officer and Senior Vice President of Veterinary Services, Dr. Greg Bossart, V.M.D., Ph.D., leads all veterinary operations and conservation and research programs at Georgia Aquarium.

Bossart graduated from the University of Pittsburgh in 1973 with an undergraduate degree in biology and physical geography. He received his doctorate in veterinary medicine from the University of Pennsylvania in 1978. From 1981-1985, he was a resident and NIH fellow in the Department of Pathology at the University of Miami School of Medicine. In 1995, he completed his Ph.D. in manatee and dolphin immunology at Florida International University.

Bossart has spent the last 29 years working in clinical domestic, marine mammal, fish and avian medicine and wildlife pathology on a national and international basis. He has written more than 100 publications focused primarily on the pathological basis of disease in wild animals.

He joins Georgia Aquarium from Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution, Inc. where he served as the Research Professor, Chief Marine Mammal Veterinarian and Head of Pathology. He has been a clinical veterinary consultant for Georgia Aquarium, Miami Seaquarium, Atlantis, as well as aquariums in Asia and Latin America. He also conducts manatee conservation outreach programs in Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, Belize and Guyana. Since 1981, he has been the Medical Director at the Falcon Batchelor Bird of Prey Center at the Miami Museum of Science.

Bossart is an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Pathology at the University of Miami, School of Medicine and is on the graduate faculty at the Medical University of South Carolina. His research has been published in dozens of leading journals and his work recognized by prestigious awards.

Matthew P. Hodgdon

Senior Vice President, Chief Financial Officer

Matthew Hodgdon, Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, is responsible for all financial and fiscal management aspects of Georgia Aquarium operations. His areas of concentration include accounting and treasury operations, budget, information technology and security.

After graduating from the University of Virginia, Hodgdon obtained an MBA at Indiana University. He began his career with Price Waterhouse in Washington, D.C. where he worked on the audit staff and obtained his CPA. Hodgdon then ventured to New York City where he worked for the Penn Central Corporation as Senior Accountant-Management Information and Manager of Corporate Reporting. Following his stint with Penn Central, he took a position with the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation as Controller. He spent 12 years with Colonial Williamsburg as Controller of the Foundation and Colonial Williamsburg Hotel Properties, Inc.

Hodgdon joined the Sea Island Company in 1996 as Vice President-Chief Financial Officer, Treasurer and Secretary. In 1997, he was promoted to Senior Vice President, responsible for accounting and treasury operations, budget and planning, retail operations, information technology, risk management, purchasing, membership and publishing. He was a member of the Management, Finance, Compensation, and Planning and Development Committees of the Sea Island Company Board of Directors, Director and Officer of Sea Island Services, Inc., Director of the Sea Island Credit Union and a Trustee of Sea Island Foundation, Inc.

Hodgdon joined Georgia Aquarium in 2009.

Currently, Hodgdon is a member of Financial Executives International and the AICPA. He has also served as Chairman of Coastal Community Retirement Corporation (Marsh's Edge), a member of the Board of Directors of the Brunswick and Glynn County Development Authority and a member of the Joint Finance Committee of St. Simons Presbyterian Church.

Billy Hurley
Chief Animal Officer
Senior Vice President, Zoological Operations

As Chief Animal Officer and Senior Vice President of Zoological Operations, Billy Hurley leads all Zoological Operations at Georgia Aquarium and is responsible for the entire animal training sector of the Dolphin Expansion project at the Aquarium.

Hurley holds a bachelors degree in Marine Environmental Biology from Auburn University. He went on to become the General Manager of Dolphin Quest, located in Hawaii, before being promoted to Director of Husbandry and Training.

Billy Hurley joined Georgia Aquarium from Marineland's Dolphin Conservation Center, where he served as General Manager and Vice President of Animal Management. Hurley has acted as a consultant for several months on Georgia Aquarium's Dolphin Expansion.

Hurley is heavily involved with the International Marine Animal Trainer's Association (IMATA) as the former President. Hurley is the current Director at Large and Accreditation Commission Chair for the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquarium (AMMPA). Hurley has released several posters, papers and presentations, which focus primarily on mammal care and training.

Carey Rountree
Senior Vice President, Sales and Marketing

Carey Rountree, Senior Vice President of Sales and Marketing, is responsible for the development, implementation and management of all sales, marketing, communications, advertising, membership and development strategies and programs for Georgia Aquarium. He also serves as head of the IDEA TEAM for Aquarium sales and marketing and is responsible for the coordination of all promotional events, retail partnerships and the development and implementation of the Group Sales Program. In addition, Rountree manages the marketing and sales of and serves as key liaison to the Wolfgang Puck Catering and Restaurant Associates teams. He carries out these responsibilities with more than 30 years of experience in the hospitality industry.

Rountree's start in the hospitality industry began in 1974 as a sales manager with the Marriott Corporation where his innovative thinking and desire to improve quickly moved him through the ranks. In 1983, he became Regional Director of Sales and Marketing and increased southeastern revenue from \$80 million to \$285 million. In 1988, he became the Resident Manager at the Atlanta Marriott Northwest and improved guest satisfaction scores 15 percent in only one year.

In 1989, he joined the Stormont-Trice Corporation, an Atlanta-based hotel development and management company, as Vice President of Sales and Marketing. Using his experience from the

Marriott Corporation, Rountree tripled the number of hotels in the company's portfolio and increased the sales and marketing department from six to 45 employees.

In 1992, Rountree went to work with the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau (ACVB) as Executive Vice President of Sales and Marketing until 2002 and Executive Vice President until 2005. While at the ACVB, Rountree created new and innovative ways to increase tourism and convention traffic in the metro Atlanta area. Rountree helped business development by the ACVB grow from \$2 million in 2002 to \$6 million in 2004.

In 2005, Rountree joined Hi-Tech Rental and Staging as Vice President of Business Development. He helped the 18-year-old company move from a third-party supplier of audio and visual equipment to a customer-direct rental service. Before moving to the Georgia Aquarium in 2007, he hired a Director of Sales and a Vice President of Sales to implement the initiatives he set in motion.

Taking his commitment to the profession beyond the workplace, Rountree has served on the board of directors for many professional and international marketing and exhibition associations and currently serves on the Board of Directors for the International Association of Exhibitions and Events. He is an active member of the Professional Convention Management Association, the American Society of Association Executives, Meeting Professionals International and the Georgia State University Marketing Roundtable.

He is involved in many community organizations including the Atlanta Community Food Bank, the Helping Hands division of Hands-On-Atlanta and the Atlanta Kiwanis Club. He has been a guest lecturer on the subjects of marketing, hospitality and exhibition management at schools such as Georgia State University, Emory University and the University of Georgia.

Rountree graduated from Georgia Southern University with a degree in political science in 1974. He and his wife, Janet, have four children and five grandchildren.

Beach M. Clark, Jr.

Vice President, Information Technology

As the Vice President of Information Technology, Beach M. Clark, Jr. oversees multiple aspects of Georgia Aquarium's technological operations. His position encompasses point of sale, ticketing, telecommunications and overall management of the Aquarium's web site.

Clark is an Atlanta native, having graduated from North Springs High School before earning his bachelor's degree in philosophy at Washington & Lee University in Lexington, Va.

After working for several years in the hospitality industry as a manager of hotel and restaurant properties, Clark returned to Georgia State University to earn his Masters degree in accounting. Upon completing his degree, Clark took a position with Andersen Consulting where he began his career in information technology.

Clark worked with clients in a number of industries including healthcare, telecommunications, technology, finance and manufacturing. He has also specialized in the implementation of advanced technology solutions.

The Home Depot recruited Clark in 1991 to design and implement their network architecture. Over the next 12 years at The Home Depot, Clark managed a number of functions in networking, application development and technical support.

Since joining the team at Georgia Aquarium in July of 2004, Clark has enjoyed the opportunity to work with multiple organizations and his extended responsibility over several areas within information technology, including Georgia Aquarium's web site and databases.

Clark has three sons, Beach III (Trip), Tyler and Hagen, and lives in East Cobb, a suburb of Atlanta.

Kristie Cobb Hacke

Vice President, Development and Membership

As Vice President of Development and Membership, Kristie Cobb Hacke is responsible for fundraising through sponsors, donors and Annual Pass sales, as well as the development, implementation and supervision of all fundraising activities. In addition, she is responsible for maintaining existing donor relationships, managing the stewardship and communication program, activating sponsorships and developing a formal long-range fundraising strategy.

Hacke received a bachelor's degree in history and art history from Agnes Scott College in 1998 and an MBA from the University of Phoenix in 2005. Prior to joining the Aquarium, Hacke worked for The High Museum of Art as the Patron Services Coordinator, overseeing the coordination of benefits programs for all donor-level members. Her responsibilities also included the planning and coordination of major donor events with attendance ranging from 30 to 2,500, the management for annual telemarketing campaigns and the maintenance of intimate knowledge of more than 700 individual giving profiles for donor giving.

Hacke served as Database Manager for Zoo Atlanta, where she supervised data entry and all user training and collateral user material for The Raiser's Edge, a database used for tracking fundraising. She managed a database of 160,000 constituent records and 32 users in The Raiser's Edge.

As Membership Manager and Database Administrator for the Florida Aquarium, Hacke was responsible for all aspects of the membership program. This included member communications such as donor newsletters, annual reports and collateral materials. At the Florida Aquarium, Cobb increased total household membership by 70 percent in less than three years and achieved \$910,000 in membership revenue for fiscal year 2004.

Hacke joined the Georgia Aquarium as Director of Membership and Annual Reports. In this role, Hacke created and implemented a fundraising strategy for the Aquarium including the creation and presentation of three annual events, budget development, committee and volunteer management, solicitation of sponsors and auction donors. As an integral part in the development of the Aquarium's website at opening in 2005, Hacke sold nearly 300,000 Annual Passes almost entirely through website sales in her first year.

Joe Handy

Vice President, Guest Experience

As Vice President of Guest Experience at Georgia Aquarium, Joe Handy is responsible for the interaction and interpretation of the guest experience while visiting the Aquarium. As part of visitor services and guest programs, Handy oversees the call center, ticketing, sales stations, plaza and gallery staff and Aquarium programs such as behind-the-scenes tours. Handy also acts as a liaison for all third party vendors.

Handy was born and raised in New York. He graduated with honors from The College of New Rochelle in New York with a Liberal Arts Degree concentrated in Political Science. While in New York, Handy worked at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City for nine years and assisted in opening the Rose Center for Earth and Space.

In 2005, Handy moved to Atlanta to serve as Georgia Aquarium's Director of Visitor Services. In late 2006, Handy was promoted to Vice President, Visitor Services and Guest Programs.

Handy is also an active member in his community. In New York, he served as an appointed representative to a Community Board in Manhattan. In 2004, he was elected to serve as a Delegate in the Presidential Election. Handy currently serves on the Baker Street Advisory Board where he and other representatives from the Centennial Olympic Park area help make critical decisions about the area's development. He is a member of the Central Atlanta Transportation Study Downtown Transportation Committee, as well as an active member in the Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

Scott Higley

Vice President, Marketing and Communications

As the Vice President of Marketing and Communications for Georgia Aquarium, Scott Higley is responsible for driving attendance for the Aquarium and building its reputation as the largest and most engaging aquarium experience in the world. Higley will also serve as a spokesperson for Georgia Aquarium.

Higley graduated from Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas where he earned a bachelor's degree in journalism, mass communications and marketing. Throughout his early career, Higley specialized in retail marketing, sponsorship sales and public relations while working for global corporations such as Simon Property Group and Jones Lang LaSalle. During this time, he successfully created marketing programs for the opening one of the nation's largest retail and entertainment

properties, the Mall of Georgia and later served as Director of Marketing for Atlanta's Lenox Square, managing such beloved events as the mall's annual Fourth of July Fireworks, which draws 300,000 guests each year. He was also responsible for leading the marketing team for the grand opening of Atlantic Station in the heart of Atlanta. Prior to joining the Aquarium, he served as the Vice President of Marketing and Public Relations for Ben Carter Properties.

At Georgia Aquarium, Higley oversees the integration of promotions, marketing initiatives, the official web site, e-communications, social media and public relations. He is responsible for the marketing and communications behind the largest expansion to-date, a \$110 dolphin exhibit.

Higley has served as an executive board member for the Buckhead Alliance and was a founding member of the marketing advisory council for the Georgia chapter of The March of Dimes. He has also served as a member of the Luxury Marketing Council of Georgia and the Georgia Hospitality and Lodging Association.

Heather McKeen

Vice President, Facilities and Operations

As Vice President of Facilities and Operations, Heather McKeen is responsible for the buildings and property of the Georgia Aquarium. McKeen leads the Plant Engineering, Environmental Operations, Security Department and oversees all capital improvement projects. In addition, McKeen is also the primary liaison to Parking Deck operator.

An Atlanta-area native, McKeen earned a bachelor's degree in management from Georgia Tech in 1995 before going on to complete a master's degree in construction management at Southern Polytechnic State University in 1998. She brings with her over 13 years of experience in program and construction management.

After receiving her degrees, McKeen accepted a position at Beers Construction Company, where she worked for two years as an office engineer. During her time at Beers, she was involved with the challenging and innovative design and construction of the Georgia Public Television Communications headquarters in Atlanta, which was specially built to hold the nation's first entirely digital TV station, as well as the construction of several state prisons throughout Georgia.

Prior to joining Georgia Aquarium's team, McKeen served as a senior project manager at Heery International, where she oversaw several projects throughout the southeast, including the \$111 million dolphin expansion exhibit and \$5.5 million coldwater renovation at the Aquarium. Under her direction, the dolphin expansion project, which occurred simultaneously with the coldwater renovation, was accelerated by four months to accommodate the arrival of the dolphins. In addition, she was also the project manager of the team that originally designed and built the Aquarium before it opened in 2005.

McKeen is a LEED AP, which is a professional credential awarded by the Green Building Certification Institute that demonstrates her knowledge of and certifies her in sustainable building technologies.

Timothy Mullican, DVM

Vice President, Veterinary Services and Zoological Operations

As the Director of Veterinary Services and Zoological Operations, Timothy Mullican, DVM, oversees laboratory and clinical support, nutrition services and develops training to maintain the highest quality staff and exhibits at Georgia Aquarium. He also plays a major role in managing the Aquarium's aquatic animal pathology program in cooperation with the University of Georgia College of Veterinary Medicine.

Mullican graduated from the University of Dayton with a bachelor's degree in biology and continued his education at Purdue University, where he received his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree. During his time in school, he also studied at the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, to receive his AQUAVET certification.

Mullican has more than 20 years of experience in the veterinary field. Mullican worked with the Newport Aquarium in Newport, Kentucky. He started as a Consulting Veterinarian and later became Executive Director, a position he held until 2005. After working for nine years in a clinical veterinary practice, Mullican became President of the Medical Division at Observatory Group, Inc. While at this company, Mullican also became President of Digital Education Publishing. In this position he published custom medical textbooks and created CD-ROMs for medical and scientific audiences.

Mullican not only has experience in the medical field, but also has consulting experience with different companies. Recently, Mullican was the principal consultant for TJM Associates in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he worked with various companies on a variety of medical and veterinary projects.

Will Ramsey

Vice President, Sales

As the Vice President of Sales for Georgia Aquarium, Will Ramsey is responsible for developing and implementing the Group Sales Program within the Aquarium Marketing Plan. In addition, he oversees the sales of the catered event program for the Aquarium, including all event services staff and the Wolfgang Puck Catering team.

Ramsey brings a vast knowledge of guest relations and group sales to Georgia Aquarium. As Guest Relations Supervisor at Busch Garden in Tampa, Florida, Ramsey led and motivated a staff of 15 guest relations representatives. He was responsible for revenue taken and tickets sold; he supervised the season pass operation as well as the sale of group tickets.

At the Florida Aquarium, Ramsey served as the Events Coordinator, Group Sales Representative, and Group Sales Manager. In his nine years with the Florida Aquarium, his responsibilities ranged from the coordination of all aquarium special events to directing a group sales staff that was responsible for generating special event revenue.

At the Georgia Aquarium, Ramsey works closely with the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau on in-market site inspections and out-of-market sales calls to maximize convention group revenue potential. Directing a group sales and services staff of eight, he also oversees the catering sales operation of Wolfgang Puck Catering to ensure successful events.

Dr. Bruce A. Carlson
Science Officer

As Science Officer at Georgia Aquarium, Bruce Carlson is responsible for the Aquarium's conservation and research initiatives.

In 1971, Carlson received his bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. After graduating, he traveled to Guyana, South America, where he worked as a research assistant studying the reproductive biology of freshwater fishes.

In 1972, he joined the Peace Corps and was assigned to the University of the South Pacific in Suva, Fiji. His task was to conduct a biological survey of the marine life of the Fiji Islands and help establish a permanent collection for the university. Nearly 30 years later, the university has created a new museum to house this collection, which has become very important for marine studies in Fiji.

In 1975, Carlson moved to Hawaii where he earned a doctorate at the University of Hawaii. He started work at the Waikiki Aquarium in 1976 as a student aquarist. As an aquarist, he initiated a series of new exhibits which were "firsts" in the United States, including chambered nautilus in 1976, cuttlefish in 1977 and living corals and giant clams in 1978. His research on nautilus eventually led to a successful breeding program for these "living fossils," and in 1991 the Association of Zoos and Aquariums awarded the prestigious "Bean Award" to the Waikiki Aquarium in recognition of this work.

Carlson was appointed Director of the Waikiki Aquarium in 1990. In 1992, he began work on a \$3 million renovation of the old Aquarium. Under his direction, the Aquarium operated on a budget of about \$2.5 million annually and employed 38 full-time staff assisted by more than 200 trained volunteers from the community.

After 27 years working at the Waikiki Aquarium, Carlson joined Georgia Aquarium and was part of the original team that designed the Aquarium. Carlson is an avid SCUBA diver, underwater photographer and videographer. He has published several scientific articles on numerous topics including descriptions of new species of reef fishes, telemetry work on chambered nautilus and culture methods for corals in aquariums. Carlson is also co-author of "Bringing the Ocean to Atlanta: The Creation of the Georgia Aquarium," which contains hundreds of beautiful photographs and details the incredible journey from Bernie Marcus' vision to the reality of the world's largest aquarium.

Tonya M. Clauss
Chief Veterinarian

As Chief Veterinarian for Georgia Aquarium, Dr. Tonya Clauss serves as the head clinical veterinarian, managing all clinical cases, including the treatment room and surgery suite.

Clauss received her first bachelor's in Animal Biology from the University of Florida in 1996 and her second bachelor's in wildlife ecology and chemistry in 1997. In 2003, Clauss received her doctorate in veterinary medicine from the University of Florida. Clauss completed one more year to graduate with a master's from the University of Florida's Environmental Engineering department.

In 1994, Clauss began her career as a veterinary assistant for the Williston Veterinary Clinic in Florida. During this time, she also worked as a veterinary and research assistant at the Department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences at the University of Florida. In 2001, Clauss became a workshop and wetlab assistant at the North American Veterinary Conference, located in Orlando, Florida. In 2003, Clauss accepted a position as staff veterinarian at the Mote Marine Laboratory and Aquarium in Sarasota, Florida. Clauss was hired as director of veterinary services for Pelican Man's Bird Sanctuary in Sarasota in 2004. While at this position, Clauss became a research affiliate for the Florida Aquarium in Tampa, a position she held until December 2007. In February 2005, Clauss accepted a position as chief veterinarian for Georgia Aquarium.

Clauss has received specialized training in numerous areas, ranging from reptile critical care medicine, to immunology for aquatic animal clinicians, to aquatic invertebrate medicine. Clauss has taught veterinary courses at various institutions, including the University of Georgia and the University of Florida. Along with several speaking engagements, Clauss is also a published author. She has participated in many research studies and professional presentations. Clauss has won various awards, including the 2003 Learner Family Wildlife Conservation Award for excellence in wildlife and zoological medicine.

Clauss is a member of many professional affiliations, including the American Veterinary Medical Association, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and the Association of Exotic Mammal Veterinarians. She currently serves as a student liaison committee member for the International Association for Aquatic Animal Medicine and is a research committee member at the Georgia Aquarium.

Alan Davis

Director, Safety and Security

As Director of Safety and Security at Georgia Aquarium, Alan Davis is responsible for the development and implementation of operational policies and procedures. He is responsible for the security of the premises, event requirements, investigations, technical training, development and implementation of safety programs.

Davis received his bachelor's degree in criminal justice from the University of Georgia in 1981. Prior to joining the Aquarium, Davis worked for the University of Georgia Police Department. He managed the detection division in the investigation of criminal activity, oversaw the patrol division, served as training sergeant and a patrolman.

In 1985, Davis served as Director of Public Safety for the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta. As director, his responsibilities included serving as chief of police for the authority and as the liaison with state and local law enforcement agencies, fire bureau and event staff.

Davis joined the Aquarium as Director of Safety and Security in 2005. He is involved in personnel management, crisis communications, security operations, crowd management and special event operations.

Alex Desiderio

Director, Staff and Volunteer Operations

As Director for Training & Volunteer Operations at Georgia Aquarium, Alex Desiderio oversees the training and preparation of volunteers and staff including orientation, safety, guest interactions and education about the Aquarium's exhibits and animals. He also develops and facilitates staff development training. Desiderio was born in Rochester, NY, but later moved with his family to Ohio. He attended Ohio State University, and later transferred to the University of South Florida where he graduated with a degree in communications.

Desiderio began his career in the zoo and aquarium industry in 1989 as an educational narrator at Sea World of Ohio. He was with Sea World of Ohio for six years until moving to Florida and joining the Florida Aquarium as the Education and Programs Coordinator. In this position, Desiderio was responsible for the educational department as well as school group sales. Desiderio later moved to the Denver Zoo to serve as Membership Associate. He held this position for six months before being promoted to Sales and Marketing Coordinator. Desiderio was responsible for overseeing special events including corporate events, special events, group sales, birthday parties and group sponsored admission.

In 2004, Desiderio and his wife, Kerry, a senior biologist, moved to Atlanta to join the Aquarium team. He originally joined the team as a volunteer and contract associate before quickly moving to Training Manager for the Aquarium. Desiderio was later promoted to Manager of Training and Volunteer Operations and now serves as Director. This department oversees approximately 1800 volunteers and all the training for staff, volunteers and partners.

Dr. Alistair Dove

Senior Scientist

As senior scientist, Dr. Dove is responsible for carrying out research activities for Georgia Aquarium and administering collaborative research with our partner institutions; he is the current chair of the Research Committee. Dr. Dove also serves as the manager of the Veterinary Services Laboratory, where staff and volunteers carry out veterinary diagnostic testing and water quality analyses for the collection.

Dr. Dove obtained a 1st class Honors degree in Zoology and Parasitology in 1994 from the University of Queensland, Australia, studying parasites of jacks (a predatory fish group) on coral reefs. His PhD studies

focused on the ecology of parasites infecting invasive fish species in Australian lakes and rivers, for which he was awarded a Deans List commendation and a University Medal.

After moving to the USA in 2000, Dr. Dove served as Curator of Aquatic Animal Health at the New York Aquarium in Coney Island, Brooklyn. He then spent five years as a marine science professor for both Cornell University and Stony Brook University and established the first NY State marine diagnostic laboratory in Stony Brook, NY. From that base, he worked with many scientists and students in New England, researching the impacts of climate change on the health of coastal marine life, especially lobsters, striped bass, bluefish and clams. From 2001-2004 he also served as an adjunct faculty member at Columbia University, teaching classes in symbiosis and coral reef ecology.

Dr. Dove joined the Aquarium team in 2006. His research interests continue on the theme of “health in aquatic animals”, with a current focus on parasites of marine life (a collaboration with UGA) and the biology of whale sharks (a collaboration with GA Tech). Since 1994, he has been awarded 8 research grants and has published 28 scientific articles on topics ranging from parasite ecology, invertebrate diseases, taxonomy and the biological impacts of climate change.

In addition, he is an active participant in the scientific community of aquatic animal health professionals and is a member of several societies, holding committee positions for the American Fisheries Society and the American Society of Parasitologists. He continues to teach aquatic animal health through the AQUAVET program taught annually at Woods Hole MA, and is an adjunct faculty member at UGA, Cornell College of Veterinary Medicine, Stony Brook University and Savannah State College.

Meghann Gibbons

Director, Public Relations

In her role as Director of Public Relations, Meghann Gibbons is responsible for managing the internal and external media relations of Georgia Aquarium, including developing and maintaining a marketing strategy that will keep the media and public informed of Aquarium products, events and resources.

After completing two Bachelor of Science degrees in marketing and multinational business operations in 2000 at Florida State University, Gibbons joined the Tampa Bay Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) as Marketing Coordinator. Her planning and coordinating experience helped her create and manage more than \$1.7 million in promotions annually and to consistently exceed goals by 150-200 percent. She was also responsible for the development of the CVB's new Web site, which included implementation of promotional programs and advisement to senior management. Gibbons is credited with helping create and manage an integrated sales and marketing campaign between the Tampa Bay CVB and AAA Auto Club South valued at more than \$11 million.

In 2005, Gibbons joined Georgia Aquarium as Public Relations Manager, playing a key part in the strategy and execution of media surrounding the grand opening of the Georgia Aquarium. Along with the Director, she successfully managed an extensive list of grand opening media events including a

sneak peek with more than 400 media outlets. The relationships she developed during the grand opening continue today and keep national and international media outlets such as NBC, CBS, ABC and CNN in constant communication with Georgia Aquarium.

Jerry Harris

Director, Exhibits and Graphics and Audio Visual Services

Jerry Harris currently serves as the Director of Exhibits and Graphics and Audio Visual Services for Georgia Aquarium. He is responsible for managing teams of audio visual technicians, overseeing daily operations including new audio/visual installations, exhibit updates and quarterly maintenance schedules. He is also responsible for the audio/visual needs of vet services, husbandry, plant engineering, life support, education and guest services. Harris is the chief liaison between the Aquarium and all third party audio/visual vendors.

Harris received an electronics engineering degree from the DeVry Institute of Technology in 1992. Prior to joining the Aquarium, Jerry worked as a plant engineer for Georgia-Pacific, where he was responsible for the daily building startup of HVAC systems, Pneumatic mail carrier lift system and Building Automation Control Center (BACC).

As a managing partner for C-Graphix Digital Studios, Harris established the opening of the Atlanta office in 1992. He also provided multimedia services for an array of business entities and managed a team of animators, designers and content developers.

Evan Kellner

Director, Sales Promotion and Sponsor Activation

Evan Kellner joined Georgia Aquarium as the Director, Sales Promotions and Sponsor Activation, in 2008. He is responsible for managing current partnerships as well as creating, implementing and executing new promotional opportunities that drive Aquarium attendance, and working with potential and current sponsors to create long-lasting, mutually beneficial relationships.

Kellner comes to the Aquarium after a long career in the sports industry, including five years with the Atlanta Spirit (Atlanta Hawks, Atlanta Thrashers and Philips Arena) as a member of their ticket sales staff. From 1999-2004, he was a group sales manager for the Thrashers, working with local companies and individuals to create memorable experiences at Philips Arena. Kellner spent the next three years as one of the group sales managers for the Hawks, Thrashers and Philips Arena, and then became the Director of Ticket Sales & Service for the Georgia Force Arena Football Team.

Most recently, he was the Marketing Manager for EarthLink, Inc., where he was responsible for developing, implementing and executing partner specific marketing plans to increase growth across all product lines.

Kellner graduated from the University of Georgia with a bachelor's degree in business administration in 1998.

Amit Dongerdive

Chief Architect Information Technology

As the Chief Architect Information Technology, Amit Dongerdive oversees multiple aspects of Georgia Aquarium's technological operations. His position encompasses point of sale, ticketing, telecommunications, server and network infrastructure, Aquarium's internal and external websites and overall management of Aquarium's IT department.

Amit is a Pune India native, having graduated from St. Patrick's High School before earning his Bachelor's degree in computer information systems at Mercer University in Macon, Georgia. Cooperative Baptist Fellowship recruited Amit in 2001 to manage their desktops. Over the next five years at Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Amit managed a number of functions in networking, application development and technical support.

Since joining the team at Georgia Aquarium in February 2005, Amit has enjoyed the opportunity to work with multiple organizations and his extended responsibility over several areas within information technology, including the Georgia Aquarium's website and databases.