

## Oceanic Occupations 9-12

### **Program Description:**

Students will explore a variety of career pathways one can follow here at Georgia Aquarium. Dive deep beneath the waves and explore how animal care specialists, chemists, engineers and nutritionists keep the Aquarium afloat!

### **At the end of program, students can...**

- Identify a number of STEM careers at Georgia Aquarium.
- Summarize the experience and qualifications for job positions at Georgia Aquarium.
- Describe daily operation tasks for several departments at Georgia Aquarium.



### **Background:**

The Georgia Aquarium staff is made up of around 600 full-time and part-time employees. These employees are supported by about 1,300 volunteers who have collectively donated over 2 million volunteer hours over the last ten years. Keeping our aquarium afloat is definitely a team effort, put together of many different experience, backgrounds and skill sets.

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**Instructions:** Read the article listed below and answer the questions below.

“Career Planning for High Schoolers” Elka Torpey, Jan. 2015

Link: <https://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/2015/article/career-planning-for-high-schoolers.htm>

- What are three skills that you have that might present a possible career pathway?

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- What are some of the career paths you’d like to explore further? \_\_\_\_\_

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- Name two other education pathways listed in the article that are not collegiate.

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- List a few ways to get job experience besides being hired for a job.

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## What I Learned



EDUCATION

GEORGIA AQUARIUM

### Oceanic Occupations 9-12

**Instructions:** Read the short career interviews below and identify which career they are describing (Refer to the careers mentioned from the program).

#### Career #1

1. **Can you briefly describe the roles and responsibilities of your job?** Primarily, we manage the health of all the animals in the collection. The largest part of this component is preventative health. We perform physical exams and routine diagnostics to make sure all the animals are healthy. We are always on call after hours in case of an emergency.
2. **What academic and/or experiential pathway did you take in order to obtain your position?** I majored in bio-psychology with a minor in biology. I continued school for 4 years specialized for my career and did several internships during and after school.
3. **What is one of your favorite parts of your job?** My favorite part of the job is that no two days are alike. Every day is a new challenge where I get to learn something new and work with amazing creatures and coworkers. It is a great feeling to know the skills I practice here at GAI not only help the animals in our collection, but also help care for and protect animals in their natural habitats.
4. **What is one of the most challenging aspects of your job?** A lot of times there is not a reference book to refer to that will tell you how to manage your case. For tricky cases, we do a lot of reading in books and journal articles, often on similar species, but sometimes different species, to come up with a diagnostic and treatment plan because what we want to do has never been done before,

**Which career is this?** \_\_\_\_\_

#### Career #2

1. **Can you briefly describe the roles and responsibilities of your job?** I support a team of laboratory technicians and volunteers while managing the workflow of incoming water samples on a daily basis. This includes operating the ion chromatograph, running pH/salinity/alkalinity, NH<sub>3</sub>/NO<sub>2</sub> (ammonia/nitrites) tests, phosphates water quality tests and making decisions about what chemicals to add to a particular habitat.
2. **What academic and/or experiential pathway did you take in order to obtain your position?** I have a bachelor's degree in biology with a pre-medicine concentration and a minor in chemistry (CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

## What I Learned cont.



EDUCATION

GEORGIA AQUARIUM

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**Instructions:** Read the short career interviews below and identify which career they are describing (Refer to the careers on the previous activity page).

#### **Career #2 (CONTINUED)**

3. **What is one of your favorite parts of your job?** One of my favorite parts of the job is getting to meet all kinds of people. I work with a great group of people, and it is definitely worth it to work with people you can get along with! Also, occasionally working with the animals

4. **What is one of the most challenging aspects of your job?** A challenging aspect of my job is dealing with different types of personalities and moods. Everyone has good days and bad days, but sometimes the job can get stressful, and some people may forget to act in a professional manner. Professional communication is something that is very important in this type of situation.

**Which career is this?** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Career #3**

1. **Can you briefly describe your job roles and responsibilities?** I supervise the animal care personnel and actively manage and monitor day-to-day operations of the department. I am also involved in our animal encounter programs, such as designing programs, training the staff who lead the program and managing the animal experience with our guests.

2. **What academic and/or experiential pathway did you take in order to obtain your position?** I have a bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's degree in animal behavior and conservation. I am currently pursuing a doctorate degree in psychology.

3. **What is one of your favorite parts of your job?** My favorite parts of my job are interacting with guests, my team and the animals. I also enjoy teaching visitors about the animals and the training methods we use to better take care of them.

4. **What is one of the most challenging aspects of your job?** This job requires long hours including working holidays. I have even missed out on family events. If an animal is sick, we have to be here to help care for the animals, no matter what time of day it is.

**Which career is this?** \_\_\_\_\_

## What I Learned **KEY**



**EDUCATION**

GEORGIA AQUARIUM

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**Instructions:** Read the short career interviews below and identify which career they are describing (Refer to the careers on the previous activity page).

#### Career #1

**Veterinary Services**

#### Career #2

**Water Quality**

#### Career #3

**Zoological Operations**