

NEWS RELEASE

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September 7, 2017

Virginia Aquarium Announces New Director of Husbandry

(VIRGINIA BEACH, VA) – The Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center is proud to announce Chip Harshaw as the new Director of Husbandry.

Harshaw was previously the Interim Director of Husbandry for the Aquarium. Prior to that, Harshaw has served as an Exhibits Specialist, Curator of Mammals, Birds, Herpetology, and Behavioral Training, Senior Curator of Mammals, Herpetology, and Behavioral Training, and Senior Curator of Fishes & Herpetology, all at the Virginia Aquarium. In addition to his credits at the Aquarium, Harshaw has served on national and international committees ranging from accreditation inspector for the International Marine Animal Trainers Association (IMATA), steering member for the Crocodylian Advisory Group within the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA), and an appointment to the accreditation commission for the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums (AMMPA).

“I have the best job in the world,” said Harshaw. “I have worked with the Aquarium for almost 24 years and it has become part of my family. I take tremendous pride in my work and being a part of a world class facility and the finest city in the country. I am so privileged to work with such a diverse group of animals and committed animal care staff that care for our collections every day. One would be hard pressed to find a more dedicated group of professionals that give 100% every day for our animals and the hundreds of thousands of guests that visit the aquarium each year.”

“I have the utmost faith in Chip’s ability to lead our animal care team and direct the future of our live exhibits,” said Cynthia Whitbred-Spanoulis, interim executive director for the Virginia Aquarium. “Chip has experience working with or overseeing almost every single animal in our care, and this progression will allow us to truly utilize his knowledge to the fullest degree. Compound that with the respect that Chip has from like-minded professionals throughout our industry, and it was a truly easy decision.”

Harshaw has been with the City of Virginia Beach since October 1995, and previously worked with the Dolphin Research Center in the Florida Keys, at the Marine Mammal Stranding Center in Brigantine, New Jersey, and at the John G. Shedd Aquarium in Chicago.

The Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center is an accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, and the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums. The Aquarium is also a member of World Association of Zoos and Aquariums. The Virginia Aquarium’s mission is to inspire conservation of the marine environment through education, research and sustainable practices. It is located at 717 General Booth Boulevard, just south of Rudee Inlet in Virginia Beach.

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