

NEWS RELEASE

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Caryl Thompson Named Chief Operating Officer for Virginia Aquarium

(VIRGINIA BEACH, VA) – The City of Virginia Beach Department of the Virginia Aquarium is pleased to announce that Caryl Thompson has been named the Chief Operating Officer. Thompson began the position on November 6.

Thompson was previously the Vice President of Marketing and Public Relations for the Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center. She joined the Virginia Aquarium team in February 2016, but has been with the City of Virginia Beach since 1992. Thompson previously worked in the Parks and Recreation Department in several capacities through her years of service.

“Caryl is a proven leader,” said Cynthia Spanoulis, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Virginia Aquarium. “She has strong technical skills and great business insights, with the ability to understand and further our mission. I have worked closely with Caryl over the past few years, and I have seen her skills in action. Our senior leadership team has never been stronger.”

Thompson has a distinguished background, including serving on several key City of Virginia Beach cross-functional teams, leading key training opportunities for departmental leadership, and leading Aquarium team initiatives. Thompson was a 2016 recipient of the City of Virginia Beach Employee Hall of Fame Award, and the City Manager’s Creativity, Innovation & Public Service Award in 1997, 1999, and 2001.

Thompson is a graduate of the George Washington University with a Master of Arts in Human Resource Development- Organizational Development, and a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education from Old Dominion University.

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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