

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **ONLINE AUCTION FUNDRAISER FOR VIRGINIA AQUARIUM NIGHT AT THE AQUARIUM – SPONSORED BY CAPITAL GROUP GOES VIRTUAL, SEPT. 21, 2020**

(VIRGINIA BEACH, VA) – The Virginia Aquarium’s annual Night at the Aquarium fundraising event is going virtual this year for the safety of our guests and staff. Join the Aquarium September 21 through October 3 for an online auction featuring exciting Aquarium and local attraction experiences, summer camps, artwork, wine tours, one-of-a-kind items and even a 2020 Toyota Yaris! We extend a special thank you to all our sponsors, including our title sponsor Capital Group.

All event proceeds will be used to help care for thousands of animals, provide educational offerings to visitors, offer outreach programs to schools, conduct research and conservation activities, and operate our nationally-recognized Stranding Response Program. “Thank you for supporting us during our annual, premier fundraiser. Your gifts and bids will help the Virginia Aquarium animals, our marine life research, and the Virginia Beach community”, stated Aquarium Executive Director Cynthia Spanoulis.

Even during global pandemic hardships, local businesses, organizations, guests and Virginia Beach residents have rallied together to provide gifts and experiences to support the Virginia Aquarium with this fundraiser. Chairman of the Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center Foundation Board of Trustees, Sal DaBiero added, “We need your help now more than ever. Being closed for three months and now operating only at 50% capacity has had a devastating impact on our ability to further our mission to inspire conservation of the marine environment. We appreciate all of the generous gifts to this special virtual event and encourage guests to continue to visit and contribute to our online auction. These packages and experiences truly are one of a kind.”

An exciting high-value item this year includes a 2020 Toyota Yaris-Hatchback LE, generously provided by Checkered Flag and valued at over \$18,000. “The Virginia Aquarium is a wonderful asset to our community for the residents that live here and visitors to our area, and our Checkered Flag family greatly values all that the Aquarium offers. We are pleased to support the auction fundraiser with the donation of a sporty new Toyota Yaris that we hope will bring high bids,” said Steve Snyder, President of Checkered Flag Automotive Dealerships.

Anyone with a computer, tablet or smartphone can participate in this year’s virtual auction, from the comfort of home. Simply [click here](#) to support the Aquarium and bid on these incredible auction items. Bidders can choose from over 100 different items. Bidding will open September 21 at 12 p.m. and will close October 3 at 11:59 p.m.

For more information on this Virtual Auction – Night at the Aquarium sponsored by Capital Group, and how to make a gift, visit [virginiaaquarium.com](http://virginiaaquarium.com). Those wishing to help via traditional mail can send a donation of any amount to Virginia Aquarium Foundation, 717 General Booth Blvd., Suite 10, Virginia Beach, VA 23451.

Link to Virtual Auction video - <https://youtu.be/9LNpjQCOLpk>

*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.*

*The Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, supports the work of the Virginia Aquarium. The Foundation procures and maintains the Aquarium's exhibits, including the animals and habitats. It is also responsible for annual and capital fundraising, administration and funding for the Virginia Aquarium Stranding Response Program, conservation and scientific research efforts, and the Aquarium's mission-related education programs. You can be a part of our mission: make a tax-deductible donation to support our incredible programming.*

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