

# NEWS RELEASE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **SNYDER MILITARY APPRECIATION PROGRAM PROVIDES ADMISSION TICKETS TO THE VIRGINIA AQUARIUM FOR ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY AND FAMILIES**

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA – For a limited time, active duty military members and their families are eligible for free admission to the Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center through the Snyder Military Appreciation Program, sponsored by Checkered Flag Auto Group, the USO of Hampton Roads and Central Virginia, and the Virginia Aquarium.

The Snyder Military Appreciation Program was conceived and underwritten by Ed Snyder, the late founder of Checkered Flag Auto Group. The USO of Hampton Roads and Central Virginia will provide active duty military details on how to secure one of 2,666 tickets for free entry to the Virginia Aquarium to visit between February 1, 2021 and March 31, 2021. Once the 2,666 tickets have been issued, this year's offer will end.

Snyder was a founding member of the Virginia Aquarium. He donated \$2 million to the Hampton Roads Community Foundation (HRCF) to create an endowment to provide this free admission to the Virginia Aquarium for military families. "Dad served in the Air Force and understood how this would enrich the lives of military families on tight budgets," said Steve Snyder. "Checkered Flag has funded the free admission over the last few years and letters of thanks from the military community leave no doubt that it is very much appreciated."

Karen Licari, Center Operations and Programs Manager of the USO of Hampton Roads and Central Virginia stated, "Local supporters like Ed Snyder and the Virginia Aquarium are essential to the USO mission. Over the years, local military families appreciated the chance to spend time together at the Aquarium through the Snyder Military Appreciation Program. For many of those families, it was their last outing together before their active duty family member deployed."

"Passionate leaders like Ed Snyder are essential to both our community and the Virginia Aquarium," expressed Cynthia Spanoulis, President and CEO of the Virginia Aquarium. "We are so very thankful that Steve Snyder, like his father, continues to honor our military members by providing them a way to enjoy quality time with their families at the Virginia Aquarium. The Snyder Military Appreciation Program is a wonderful partnership for our community."

### **About Checkered Flag Auto Group**

Checkered Flag Auto Group has been providing drivers in Virginia Beach, Norfolk, Chesapeake, Portsmouth, Newport News and Hampton with first-rate vehicles and services since 1964. More than fifty years later, they've expanded to 11 dealerships in the area offering some of the nation's top automotive brands, including Toyota, Honda, Hyundai, Genesis, Volkswagen, Audi, MINI, BMW, Porsche, Land Rover and Jaguar. [www.CheckeredFlag.com](http://www.CheckeredFlag.com)

### **About the USO of Hampton Roads and Central Virginia**

The USO strengthens America's military service members by keeping them connected to family, home, and country, throughout their service to the nation. At hundreds of locations worldwide, we are united in our commitment to connect our

service members and their families through countless acts of caring, comfort, and support. The USOHRVC is a private, non-profit organization, not a government agency. Our programs, services and entertainment are made possible by local Virginians, support of our corporate partners, local organizations, local board members, and the dedication of our volunteers and staff. To join our mission, or for more information, visit [www.hrcv.uso.org](http://www.hrcv.uso.org)

### **About the Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center**

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. For more information on exhibits, boat rides and special events, call (757) 385-FISH (3474), (TDD 385-4305) or visit [www.VirginiaAquarium.com](http://www.VirginiaAquarium.com).

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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