

Organization: Aquarium of the Pacific (AZA Member)

Location: Long Beach, CA, United States

Job or Internship: Internship

Long Beach Aquarium of the Pacific

Mammalogist Intern Description

Position Purpose

The purpose of the Mammalogist intern position is to give students practical experience in the care and maintenance of marine mammals and their environments. Mammalogist interns will learn the importance of proper husbandry techniques and the responsibilities associated with keeping marine mammals in captive environments. They will utilize basic aquarium principles.

The person in this position is responsible for participation in the development and implementation of the marine mammal programs that promote the Long Beach Aquarium of the Pacific and its mission. Primary responsibilities of the position include but are not limited to food preparation, animal husbandry and maintenance, working marine mammals, enrichment sessions, exhibit and gallery cleaning and organization, record keeping, and occasional special projects. This person will also be responsible for the effective communication between various departments at the Aquarium of the Pacific and with other marine mammal facilities to insure successful programming.

The successful candidate can expect to receive many things from their internship, including training and experience in the following:

- Exhibit maintenance, both inside and outside of the water of the exhibit
- Food preparation
- Feeding and training techniques for marine mammals
- Enrichment activities designed for marine mammals
- Observation of animal behavior with an emphasis on normal versus problem-indicative behavior

- Recognition and treatment of marine mammal diseases
- Aquarium-specific materials and equipment choices and uses
- Life-support systems design, monitoring and maintenance
- An intuitive feel for the relative priorities of various tasks in a public aquarium environment
- Monthly evaluations by the lead contact person at the Aquarium of the Pacific
- The pride and reputation of having made a contribution to a world-class aquarium institution
- References and connections to future job possibilities at other institutions if their performance warrants it.

What the Aquarium of the Pacific expects from interns:

- The drive and ability to learn tasks quickly and well
- To perform all of their assigned duties promptly and reliably
- To be prompt and on time
- To exercise care and judgment when working with exhibits and animals
- To abide by all Aquarium of the Pacific employee guidelines and policies
- To work hard, not mind getting dirty, and be a team player
- The ability to meet the minimum or greater time commitments of the position

Qualifications

Experience: Prior experience with marine mammals is preferred but not required.

Skills, Knowledge and Abilities:

1. Ability to develop research protocols and conduct experiments

2. Broad knowledge of ecological and biological principles
3. Must be able to lift and carry 50 lbs on stairs, platforms, catwalks, etc.
4. Some background knowledge of marine mammals
5. Desire to work in close proximity to marine mammals
6. Willingness to work hard and get dirty
7. Strong communication skills to transmit information to staff, visitors and program participants in a clear and thorough manner
8. Ability to manage multiple tasks
9. Desire to instill a sense of wonder, respect and stewardship for the Pacific Ocean and its inhabitants

Requirements:

1. Minimum 16 hours per week distributed over at least 15 weeks
2. Must complete general orientation session
3. Must attend continuing education sessions when applicable
4. Junior, Senior or graduate standing at accredited university or college
5. Interest in pursuing a career in marine mammal science
6. Written research paper or a project completed during internship period (to be determined by student in collaboration with Mammalogist)

At present we have opportunities for 4 interns. Interns will be under the supervision of a mammalogist or curator and will have the opportunities for interaction with many members of the Husbandry and Facilities Department including departmental head. Successful candidates

will be required to schedule their time in such a manner as to function as a team to share responsibilities for these systems and animals.

Candidates will be competitively chosen on the basis of knowledge, abilities, experience, attitude, reliability, punctuality and recommendations.

Projects for Interns

Possible research projects:

Goal: Develop the basics of operant conditioning training with our captive population

Training skills

- Learn training techniques and methods
- Participate in training behaviors with the full time staff

Goal: To mentally stimulate our captive population

Enrichment implementation

- Design an enrichment device
- Evaluate effectiveness and any changes in activity budgets

These are only a couple of possibilities. We encourage students to come up with their own mutually beneficial topics.

To apply, submit an online application from our website at:

<http://www.aquariumofpacific.org/volunteer/information/C160/>