



ANNUAL REVIEW

2018



# NORTH CAROLINA AQUARIUMS AND JENNETTE'S PIER



482,079 VISITORS

## FORT FISHER

23,579 Students Hosted

505 Volunteers

31,788 Volunteer Hours

### AWARDS

Viewer's Choice Awards 2018 - WWAY

Best Aquariums in the US - Travel Channel

Best of Best Shorepicks, Best Family Attraction - *StarNews*

Best of the Best Tourist Attraction - *StarNews*



391,984 VISITORS

## PINE KNOLL SHORES

21,312 Students Hosted

332 Volunteers

20,304 Volunteer Hours

### AWARDS

Voted 9th Best Aquarium in the Nation - *USA Today's* 10Best

Reader's Choice Awards



303,354 VISITORS

## ROANOKE ISLAND

22,072 Students Hosted

97 Volunteers

10,434 Volunteer Hours

### AWARDS

Top Attraction - *Outerbanks.com* and *Visitor's Guide*

Top Ten Things to Do on the Outer Banks - *U.S. News and World Report Travel*

Certificate of Excellence - *TripAdvisor*



172,023 VISITORS

## JENNETTE'S PIER

10,600 Students Hosted

5 Volunteers

361 Volunteer Hours

34 Events

48 Wedding Receptions

### AWARDS

Perfect Coastal Wedding - *Weddings Magazine*

Couples' Choice Award® - *WeddingWire*

Best of Weddings - *The Knot*

# LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



Charlton Burns, *Board Chair*

"We are pleased to share with you this 2018 edition of the Aquarium Society's Annual Review, full of great stories from the NC Aquariums and Jennette's Pier. Our Aquariums and Pier are treasures for North Carolina. Through a wide range of programs and initiatives, they continue to be statewide leaders in education and conservation. And with more than 1.3 million annual visitors, the Aquariums help drive the state's growing tourism economy. The private Aquarium Society is proud to partner with the Aquariums to help fulfill their mission, and we thank YOU for the role you play—through your participation in our events, your memberships, donations, and gift shop purchases—all of which help strengthen the Aquariums' position among the best public aquariums in the nation."

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Nags Head, NC

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Greensboro, NC

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Raleigh, NC

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Raleigh, NC

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Wake Forest, NC

Jim Mulvey, *Director of Development*  
Wendell, NC

Heather Flynt, *Controller*  
Raleigh, NC

## AQUARIUM DIVISION STAFF

Maylon White, *Division Director*  
Raleigh, NC

Hap Fatzinger, *Director*  
NC Aquarium at Fort Fisher

Mike Remige, *Director*  
Jennette's Pier in Nags Head



Maylon White, Aquarium Division Director

## A TIME OF CHANGE

The Aquariums and the Aquarium Society both experienced major personnel changes as 2018 came to an end, welcoming highly qualified individuals into key management roles while saying goodbye to leaders whose tenures will long be remembered.

At the state level, Aquarium Division Director David Griffin retired in January after leading the Aquariums for 16 years and seeing them rise to national prominence. Replacing David is Maylon White, who served as director of the Roanoke Island

Aquarium for the last nine years. Maylon oversaw a major renovation and led the team effort to create such innovations as the Sea Turtle Assistance and Rehabilitation Center which was awarded Top Honors by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. Hardly a stranger to the world of public aquariums, Maylon spent 26 years with the Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center before joining the NC Aquariums.

The Aquarium Society likewise bid farewell to its longtime leader Neal Conoley, who retired at year end following 40 years of service to the Aquariums. Neal started work with the Aquariums in 1978 as education specialist and went on to found the nonprofit Aquarium Society in 1986, launching what has become a role model for a successful partnership between the public and private sectors.

Replacing Neal as president is Jay Barnes, who has also enjoyed a long and successful career with the Aquariums. Jay began as exhibits curator at the Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores and later served as Director for 20 years, overseeing major renovations that tripled the size of the original facility. After retiring from the state in 2009, he joined the Aquarium Society staff where he has led fundraising efforts and membership programs as director of development. In that role he helped grow the Aquariums' membership rosters and launched popular giving programs like Aquarium Scholars.

The Aquarium Society reached out to another seasoned professional to lead its development efforts, hiring Jim Mulvey, who comes with significant experience in major gifts campaigns. Jim has a thirty-plus-year history with nonprofits, the last nine of which were with the College Advising Corps, a national nonprofit organization that helps low-income students gain access to college. He had previously worked with the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, North Carolina State University, and the Catholic Diocese of Raleigh.

The Aquarium at Fort Fisher also saw change as director Peggy Sloan departed in the fall after seven years in that role to become chief animal operations officer at Chicago's Shedd Aquarium. Replacing Peggy at Fort Fisher is Hap Fatzinger, who returns after serving as director of the Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores for the past three years. Hap can also point to long tenure with the organization, having started as a volunteer in 1996. He served as husbandry curator and brought in a number of habitats and animals, most notably Luna, a rare albino alligator that has become one of the Aquarium's most popular residents.

The Aquariums can be proud of the succession of experienced and dedicated professionals whose passion and vision helped make the Aquariums what they are today, and will now lead us into an exciting future with new challenges and opportunities!



Jay Barnes, Aquarium Society President



## GIFT SHOPS MAKE A SPLASH

In 2018, the Aquarium Society and Barbara Bayer, director of retail operations, were recognized by *Museums and More Magazine* for the design and offerings at all three Aquariums and Jennette's Pier gift shops. The newly redesigned shops offer visitors unique souvenirs to remember their experience. Part of that experience includes supporting the Aquariums and Pier's mission of reducing single use plastic by purchasing and selling items that are not individually wrapped and by offering durable multi-use plastic or glass straws for purchase.

Run by the Aquarium Society, the gift shops first made a splash after undergoing major renovations that lead to record-breaking sales in 2017.

The gift shop at the Aquarium on Roanoke Island underwent a show-stopping floor to ceiling renovation. With the help of architect and designer Peter Sollogub, a new concept for the gift shop was born that better reflected the Aquarium. Personality, playfulness and colors inspired by the sea turned the once neutral gift shop into a spectacular environment that tells the stories of the animals visitors have just encountered. Displays of a ship, shark, turtle and otter are putting excited smiles on the faces of guests young and old.

The success of the Roanoke Island gift shop prompted the Aquarium Society to also revamp the shops at Fort Fisher, Pine Knoll Shores and Jennette's Pier. Creating stories with merchandise has proven to be a great tool for increasing sales. With proceeds going to support new exhibits, animals, educational programs, and conservation initiatives, these renovations not only give visitors a fully immersive experience, but also help the Aquarium Society's efforts to financially support each location.



**+1.3** Million Annual Visitors



**4** Locations



## DOLPHIN IN DISTRESS

In October, Jennette's Pier Stranding Coordinator Rachel Potts, along with a network of government agencies and concerned citizens worked together to rescue a bottlenose dolphin in the Roanoke Sound.

A caller to the Outer Banks Marine Mammal Stranding Network said the dolphin would surface and an orange buoy would follow, and then both would disappear.

When she first arrived on the scene, Potts scanned the sound with powerful binoculars from a private dock near Ballast Point.

All of a sudden, she heard the animal surface.

"I heard it first, its chuff." Potts said, "Then I spotted it."

Potts and Karen Clark of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission took a boat out to assess the situation. Jamie Moore assisted the water search in his airboat and charter boat captain Marc Kerns took Clark out in the second sweep.

Anna Barbosa, also of the WRC and Bruce Crostic of the Division of Marine Fisheries, joined the efforts and were able to snag the crab pot buoy lines trailing behind the animal with a boat hook from their vessel. After six hours of determined efforts, it only took Crostic a mere second to cut the line that entangled the dolphin.

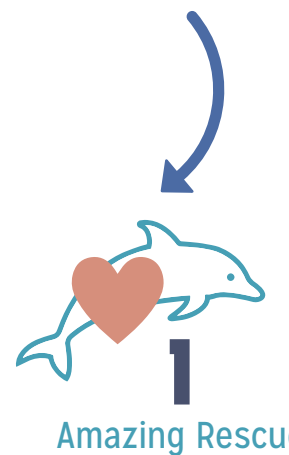
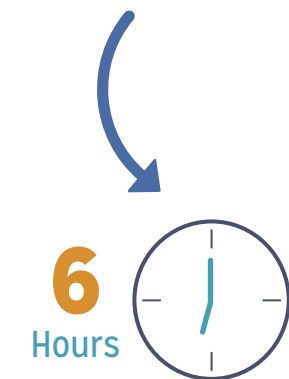
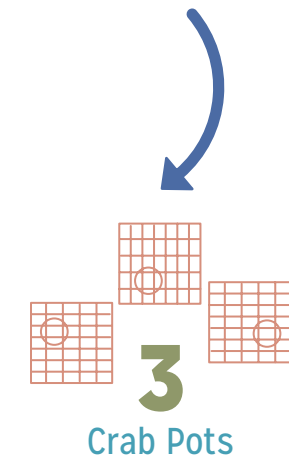
"Bruce cut the line and the animal swam off quickly," Clark said. Looking at the wounds, it appeared the animal was entangled no more than a day.



The teams, working from side by side boats, then pulled up the line that was tangled around the dolphin's tail and noticed the crab pot had tangled with two additional ones.

Clark stressed that no one is blaming the crabbing industry for the incident.

"This type of interaction rarely occurs in our local waters," she said. "We are just thankful the animal was noticed and reported so quickly."



## ORPHANED OTTERS REHABBED AND RELEASED

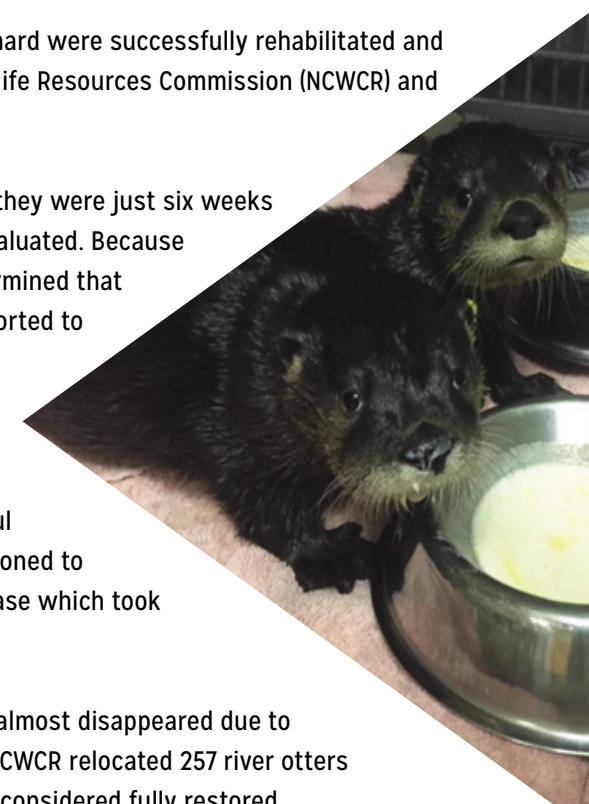
Two orphaned North American river otter pups found on the NC coast near Engelhard were successfully rehabilitated and released. The cooperative efforts of the Aquarium on Roanoke Island, the NC Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWCR) and the NC Zoo ensured the animals' well-being.

The pups, orphaned when their mother was struck by a car, were rescued when they were just six weeks old. The pups were taken to the Aquarium on Roanoke Island where they were evaluated. Because they had not been exposed to excessive human contact, the Aquarium staff determined that they were good candidates for release back into the wild. They were then transported to the NC Zoo where they spent 16 weeks being rehabilitated. During that time, they were taught to catch fish, something their mother would have taught them, preparing them to be returned to the wild.



When the pups were transported for their release, the staff was careful to reduce noise including not talking so they would not be conditioned to humans. The Aquarium, Zoo and NCWRC coordinated the release which took place in late August in Hertford County.

In the early 20th century North American river otters had almost disappeared due to trapping, water pollution and wetlands destruction. After the NCWCR relocated 257 river otters from the mountains to the coast in the 1990s the population is now considered fully restored.



## ANSWERING THE CALL

The NC Outer Banks, on average, sees a higher number of species strandings than any other locations along the East Coast because of its proximity to the Gulf Stream and the Labrador Current. In response to stranding calls, the Aquarium Society, with support from the NC Coastal Federation, added a stranding response coordinator position in 2018.

Rachel Potts, who was already working as an educator at Jennette's Pier, was promoted to this position. During the past year she responded to approximately 30 stranding calls for various marine mammals, collected data for approximately 10 animals, two of which were live strandings, and performed/assisted with five necropsies. Rachel also assisted with approximately 45 seal haul-outs, in which a wide perimeter is set up around a seal pup that has come onto the beach, keeping it safe until it returns to the ocean on its own.



When asked about her work, Rachel notes, "The Outer Banks Marine Mammal Stranding Network is a fantastic team of people who work hard to investigate strandings, promote conservation and educate the public. It has been such a rewarding experience to be a part of this team and learn about these animals and why it is important to protect them."

Rachel Potts, stranding response coordinator, teaches school children how to be a first responder.

# GOING GREEN IN 2018

## SAYING NO TO STRAWS

Twenty-two top aquariums across the US, including the three NC Aquariums and Jennette's Pier have eliminated 5 million straws in their coordinated campaign to reduce sources of plastic pollution. The campaign kicked-off with a #NoStrawNovember, a nationwide movement asking people that can to eliminate the use of straws.

Cutting back on plastic straws doesn't solve the problem, but it's an important first step. It gets people thinking and talking about ways they can reduce their reliance on single-use plastic items—and encourages the innovation of ocean-friendly alternatives.

## SUSTAINABILITY CAMPAIGN

In 2018, the Aquariums and Jennette's Pier completed their first annual sustainability campaign. The NC Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores was the winner of the campaign. It proved to be a great opportunity to challenge all locations to meet sustainability goals.

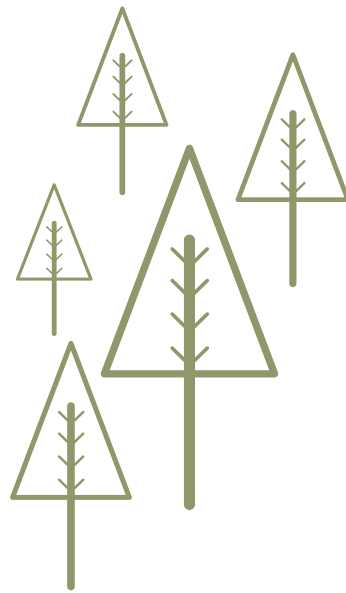


**6%** Reduction in Electricity Use

A savings of almost \$44,000 and 52,966 gallons of gas!



**11%** Increase in Recycling Capacity



**27%** Reduction in Paper Purchased

42,500 sheets of paper saved. That's equal to 5.1 trees!

## RECYCLE AND REDUCE

Jennette's Pier educators Jenna Livernois (left) and Meredith Fish (right) recycled eight, 50-gallon bags of bottles and cans collected during the Outer Banks Seafood Festival. The Aquariums and Jennette's Pier are leading the way in reducing single-use plastic in our region.



## ALL HANDS ON DECK FOR FLORENCE

The NC Aquariums and Jennette's Pier sit nestled in coastal areas, surrounded by the beauty and vitality of sounds and wetlands. Each location serves as a living illustration of our connection to the natural world. Yet, at times, their proximity to the ocean can involve uncertainty and peril, as experienced during the 2018 hurricane season.

As Hurricane Florence approached the NC coast in mid-September, all Aquarium teams worked hard to prepare the buildings and secure the animals. Many staff members postponed their personal preparations to ensure the animals were as safe as possible.



Aquarium on Roanoke Island Ride-Out Team

Approximately a week before landfall, the Aquariums began preparations, following an established protocol for an approaching storm. The primary focus is long-term animal care and safety, from feeding to temperature control. Each plan has a back-up plan in case of power failures and post-storm fuel shortages. This includes feeding the animals and maintaining the appropriate temperature in each exhibit. While each facility is equipped with emergency generators, the Aquariums also make and store as much ice as possible in case the power fails and issues, such as not having fuel, cause the generators to stop running.

Once the storm passed, team members immediately set out to assess the facilities, often putting aside their own personal impacts and spending days at the Aquarium caring for the animals. In the wake of Florence, staff found the Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores without power, but with the emergency generator running properly. However, one of two emergency generators at the Aquarium at Fort Fisher did not operate properly and the chiller system, which regulates temperatures within the building and in animal habitats, had failed. Aquarium staff were able to maintain temperatures by using ice and carrying out water changes to cool the exhibits until a new system could be installed. Thanks to their dedication, before and after the storm, the teams at the Aquariums at Fort Fisher and Pine Knoll Shores braved serious challenges and kept the animals safe. Fortunately, there were no issues at the Aquarium on Roanoke Island or Jennette's Pier.

In addition to the immediate impact of Hurricane Florence, the storm stalled progress in other areas. Prior to September, the Aquariums and Pier were charting a record-breaking year including connecting more guests with nature and increasing efforts to save species. Fort Fisher was closed for a total of 13 days due to the storm, while Pine Knoll Shores was closed for 12. In addition, the storm and its aftermath caused significant delays for several new exhibits and projects.

Yet, the teams are turning challenges into opportunities. The Aquariums and Pier are welcoming new and returning guests in 2019, while making plans for improvements and continuing to provide expert care to animals. Most importantly, the Aquarium Society is thankful for the dedication and resilience of the Aquarium team and their communities.

## SOUTHERN BANK SPONSORS SOUNDSIDE PIER

The Aquarium Society and the Aquarium on Roanoke Island received a \$75,000 contribution and sponsorship from Southern Bank for its Soundside Pier.

Soundside Pier invites visitors to explore, fish and enjoy the waters of the Croatan Sound. Since the pier's completion, it has been a popular venue for Aquarium education programs and field experiences. Aquarium staff work with students, camp groups and visiting families to explore the sound by kayak, conduct fishing and crabbing programs, and enjoy other hands-on activities. For those who come to fish, the pier offers wheelchair-accessible fishing stations and extension areas that allow Aquarium programs and angler activities to take place simultaneously.

Another way the pier serves the Aquarium's mission is as a venue for weddings, receptions, parties and other events that generate much-needed revenue for Aquarium operations.

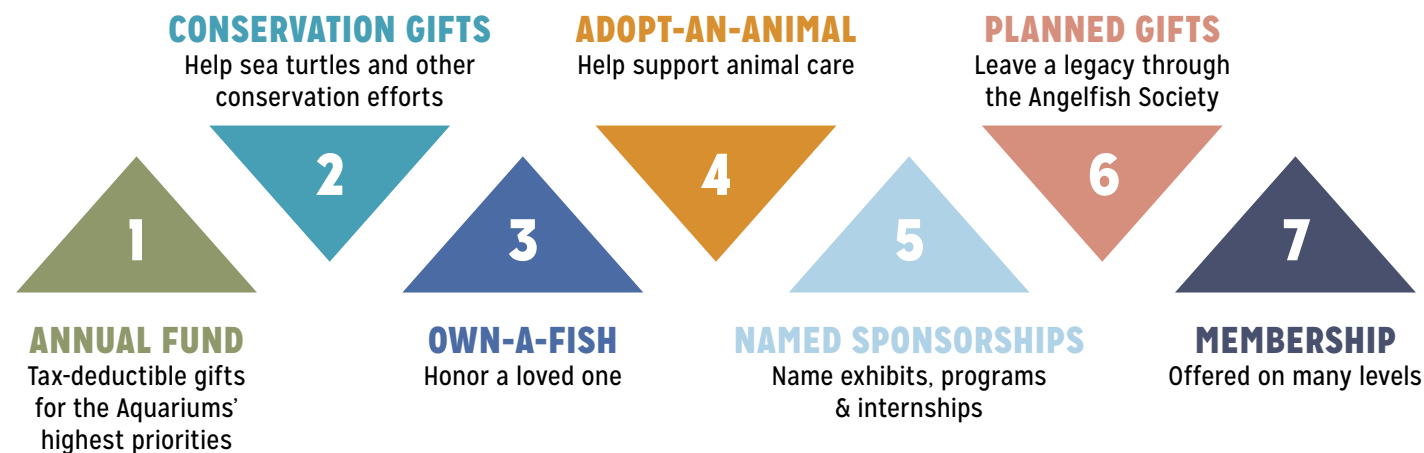
Another highlight of the pier includes graphics along the rails that provide visitors insights into the local area, including features on commercial fishing, early history and natural science. "Own-a-Fish" plaques found along the rails offer visitors the opportunity to support the Aquarium with a custom engraved plaque.

The Aquarium and Aquarium Society would like to express profound gratitude for this sponsorship and are pleased to have the support of neighbors like Southern Bank.



In November 2018, the contribution was celebrated with the unveiling of a new archway and was attended by representatives of Southern Bank, the Aquarium Society and the Aquarium.

## HERE'S HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT THE AQUARIUMS & PIER!



For more information on giving options, visit [ncaquariumsociety.com](http://ncaquariumsociety.com) or contact [development@ncaquariums.com](mailto:development@ncaquariums.com)

## 2018 DONORS

(\$500+)

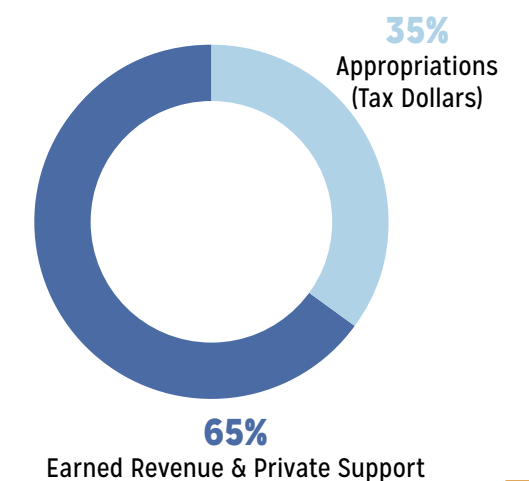
Maryann Ackiss  
Advance Signs  
Deborah Albert  
Sharman R. Allen  
American Chemistry Council  
Karen W. Askew  
Association of Zoos & Aquariums  
Atlantic Elevators  
Atlantis Lodge  
Joseph & Missy Balleydier  
Marvin & Cynthia Barnes  
Shantel Barrera  
Walter C. Bartlett  
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Tracy B. Bayne  
Bill & Georgia Belk  
Bembridge Insurance Agencies  
William & Marianne Berry  
Myra Best  
Betsy Blackwell & John Watson  
Frank L. Block  
Bonzer Shack Bar & Grill  
Branz Technologies  
Carson Brice  
Jay Briley  
Brick & Mary Craig Brown  
Laura Burgett  
Charlton & Peg Burns  
William C. Butler  
R.A. Bryan Foundation  
The Cannon Foundation  
Carolina Beach Jeep Go Topless  
Coastal Carolina Neuropsychiatric Center  
Crystal Coast Tourism Development Authority  
CB Sub Shop  
Lucille M. Chaveas - In Memory of Kevin W. Yurecka  
Chesnutt, Clemmons & Peacock, PA  
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Chick-fil-A at Monkey Junction  
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Dairy Queen  
Dan Cameron Foundation  
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Duke Energy Foundation  
Carolyn C. Edwards  
Emerald Isle Realty  
William C. Etheridge Foundation  
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Jennifer L. Fitzpatrick  
FlanneryBuilt General Construction  
FotoFX  
Dick & Billie Futrell  
Maria E. Gardner  
Goodnight Educational Foundation

Grady-White Boats  
Shawn Gregory  
Art & Carolyn Green  
Green Sheep Water  
Grooms Equipment  
John Hackney Agency  
Thomas & Susan Hackney  
A.C. & Dot Hall  
Hanover Pediatrics  
Kathi Jo Harris-Temple  
M. Peebles & Avery Harrison  
Allan & Nancy Harvin  
Brian Hetzell  
Olivia Holding  
Robert P. Holding Foundation  
Igoe Creative  
The Ivy Cottage  
Freida M. Jeter  
Yvonne Michele Johnson  
Pamela Johnston  
Joseph Jones  
Cindy A. Keen  
Kelly's Restaurant  
Roger Kemble  
Lisa Kemplin  
Lisa L. King  
Greta T. Lassiter  
Mary Katherine Lawrence & Art Klose  
Lisa's Pizzeria  
Sarah Long  
Vincent MacDonald  
Alex & Carolyn MacFadyen  
Mann Custom Boats  
Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk  
Bob & Carol Mattocks  
David & Lesley McAdams  
Sam & Kim McConkey  
Margo McKnight  
MCO Transport  
Stephanie D. Meadows  
Skylar Elizabeth Miles  
The Brent Milgrom Family Foundation  
Allan & Margaret Mims Foundation  
Susan Moffat-Thomas  
Adrienne Moore  
James E. Moore Insurance Agency  
Mt. Olive Pickle Company  
Tammy P. Murphy  
Mystic Aquarium  
Nance's, Inc.  
NEST - Network for Endangered Sea Turtles  
New England Aquarium  
New Knowledge Organization  
Melissa M. Newton  
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North Carolina Community Foundation  
North State Foundation  
Betsy & Mitch Oakley  
David O'Loughlin Family  
Mike Otto  
Outdoor Lighting of Wilmington  
Outer Banks Community Foundation  
Brian & Suzanne Pecheles  
Pennymen Group  
Pepsi Bottling Ventures/Pepsico  
Walter & Pam Phillips  
Charles & Mary C. Pierce

Edythe Poyner & Steve Williams  
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Quality Landscape  
Reach Properties Keller Williams  
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Chuck & Bonnie Revelle  
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David & Magdalena Scholle  
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Alexander & Jennifer Speal  
Spring G Clary Atkins  
Eddie R. Stallings  
Stan White Realty & Construction  
Overton S. Suiter, Jr.  
Sun Realty  
Donald & Heather Swanner  
Bill & Mary Hannah Taft  
Carmen Thomas & Brooke Jones  
James J. Thompson  
Transportation Impact  
Triad Foundation  
Lorraine Twohig  
Gloria B. Vandalen  
Mary C. Watzin  
Wave Foundation  
Wells Fargo Foundation  
Jordy & Ann Whichard  
Ray & Linda White  
Rick & Myrna Willetts  
Hope Williams & Tom Bersuder  
Willis Cable Construction  
Rebecca Woodson  
Alex G. Yip

## DID YOU KNOW?

65% of the Aquariums' annual operating budget is funded through earned revenue (like admission fees) and private support (Aquarium Society). State appropriations (taxpayers) only make up 35%.



## BUSINESS MEMBERS

(\$300 Annually)

Ace Marine Rigging & Supply  
 Al Williams Properties  
 Amos Mosquito's Restaurant  
 Austin Fish Company  
 Autumn Care of Myrtle Grove  
 Avian and Exotic Animal Care  
 Basnight's Lone Cedar Café  
 BT Carawan  
 Byrd Quality  
 Carolina Designs Realty  
 Carolina Pain Center  
 Charles Nash, DDS PA  
 Christopher Clark & Associates, DDS  
 ClinLab Consulting  
 Coastal Carolina Orthodontics  
 Coastal Dentistry  
 Dare County Tourism Board  
 Davies Contracting  
 Dorothy Kirtley Real Estate  
 Full Throttle Speedway  
 Gallaher Management Group  
 Graham's Senior Living Homes  
 Grants Creek Nursery  
 Gubbs Vending  
 James Himes & Wendy Himes Lutz  
 The Holiday Trav-L-Park Resort  
 Intracoastal Realty Corporation  
 Island Automation PC  
 Island Essentials  
 Jack Mackerel's Island Grill  
 James E. Moore Insurance Agency  
 Johnson Family Dentistry  
 Kellogg Supply Company  
 Kitty Hawk Kites  
 Kurtis Chevrolet  
 Lookout Ford  
 Mashburn Appraisal Group  
 McFadyen Engineers  
 MedSource Pharmacy  
 Moeller, PA  
 Mollie A. Fearing & Associates  
 MSOC Health - Management Service On Call  
 Mystic Aquarium  
 The Outer Banks Hospital  
 PA Stoeber-Enof EA Services Company  
 Paynter Security Consulting Group  
 Paws & Claws Animal Hospital  
 Port City Land Surveying  
 Potter's Seafood  
 Ram Rent-All  
 ReBath of NC  
 The Reel Outdoors  
 Robinson & Stith Insurance  
 Ryan Kerlin Painting  
 SAGA Realty & Construction  
 Sally Johns Design  
 The Saltbox Café  
 Sam & Omie's Restaurant  
 Rick Soles Property Management  
 SoundBank  
 Suburban Electric Services  
 Timberlands Unlimited  
 Tripp's Pressure Washing

Uptown Properties  
 Doug & Mary Weaver  
 Wilmington Police Recreation Association  
 Windjammer Inn

## BUSINESS LEADERS

(\$500 Annually)

Atlantic Elevators  
 Atlantis Lodge  
 Cindi N. Smith Realty  
 Coastal Carolina Neuropsychiatric Center  
 FlanneryBuilt General Construction  
 Grooms Equipment  
 Lisa's Pizzeria  
 Mann Custom Boats  
 MCO Transport  
 Mt. Olive Pickle Company  
 Nance's, Inc.  
 Stan White Realty & Construction  
 Sun Realty

## OFFSHORE CLUB

(\$1000 Annually)

Advance Signs  
 Deborah Albert  
 American Chemistry Council  
 Association of Zoos & Aquariums  
 Joseph & Missy Balleydier  
 Marvin & Cynthia Barnes  
 Harold H. Bate Foundation  
 Tracy B. Bayne  
 Bill & Georgia Belk  
 Bembridge Insurance Agencies  
 William & Marianne Berry  
 Myra Best  
 Betsy Blackwell & John Watson  
 Frank L. Block  
 Bonzer Shack Bar & Grill  
 Branz Technologies  
 R.A. Bryan Foundation  
 The Cannon Foundation  
 Carolina Beach Jeep Go Topless  
 William C. Butler  
 Crystal Coast Tourism Development Authority  
 CB Sub Shop, LLC.  
 Lucille M. Chaveas - In Memory of Kevin W. Yurecka  
 Chesnutt, Clemmons & Peacock, PA  
 Marc & Sissy Chesnutt  
 The Corcoran Family  
 Drew & Vickie Covert  
 Dairy Queen  
 Dan Cameron Foundation  
 Lauren Donnachie  
 Duke Energy Foundation  
 Emerald Isle Realty  
 William C. Etheridge Foundation  
 Catherine Everett  
 Ashe B. Exum  
 FotoFX  
 Dick & Billie Futrell  
 George Smedes Poyner Foundation  
 Goodnight Educational Foundation  
 Grady-White Boats  
 Art & Carolyn Green  
 Green Sheep Water

Grooms Equipment  
 John Hackney Agency  
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 Olivia Holding  
 Igoe Creative  
 The Ivy Cottage  
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 Roger Kemble  
 Mary Katherine Lawrence & Art Klose  
 Alex & Carolyn MacFadyen  
 Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk  
 Bob & Carol Mattocks  
 David & Lesley McAdams  
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 Margo McKnight  
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 NEST - Network for Endangered Sea Turtles  
 New England Aquarium  
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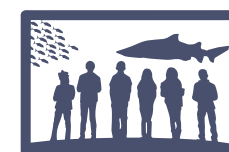


## AQUARIUM SCHOLARS

Aquarium Scholars is a partnership among the NC Aquariums, NC public schools, nonprofit NC Aquarium Society, and the NCSU Friday Institute, through which private donors fund access to STEM-based Aquarium education programs for Title I Schools across the state. For the past two years, Aquarium Scholars has been a priority at the NC Aquarium Society as it has worked to secure more than half-a-million dollars in program contributions from businesses, foundations and individuals.

The first grants were awarded and the programs took place during the spring of 2018. The second cycle awarded grants for the full 2018 - 2019 school year starting in the fall and continuing through the spring.

Teachers from Title I Schools can access the online application at [ncaquariums.com](http://ncaquariums.com) and select the location they wish to visit, click on Education and go to the Aquariums Scholars tab.



### CLASS VISITS/FIELD TRIPS

to a NC Aquarium  
 or Jennette's Pier

\$166,700

Total Grants Awarded



### AQUARIUM OUTREACH

Aquarium programs  
 brought to NC schools

212

Number of Grants Awarded

69

Outreach Visits

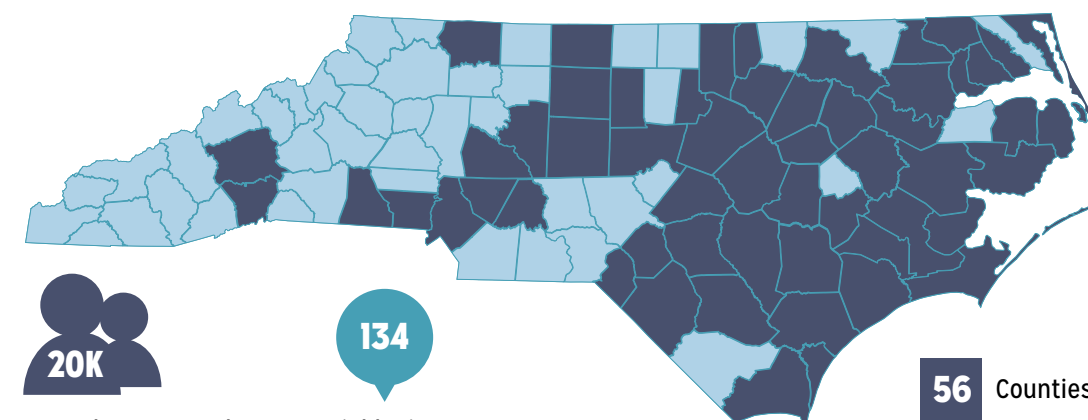


### VIRTUAL LEARNING

Live Online programs with  
 Aquarium staff and animals

9

Virtual Education



20K

> 20,000 Students Served

134

Field Trips

56 Counties Served

## AQUARIUM SCHOLARS SPONSORS

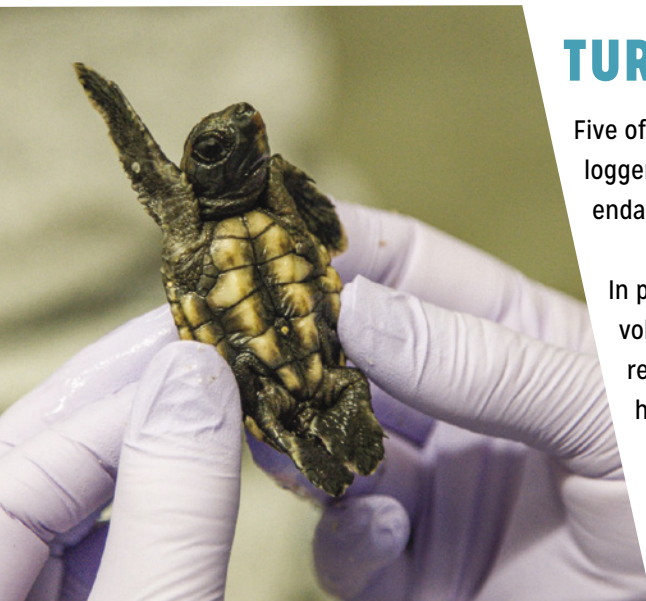
The NC Aquarium Society is grateful to the corporations, organizations and individuals that have made this possible!

### FOUNDERS

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 Duke Energy Foundation  
 Grady-White Boats  
 Wells Fargo Foundation

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 George Smedes Poyner Foundation  
 Tetlow & Roy Park Aquarium  
 Legacy Fund

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 Triad Foundation  
 North Carolina Aquarium Society  
 Board of Directors  
 Other Individuals



## TURTLE RESCUE, CARE, RELEASE

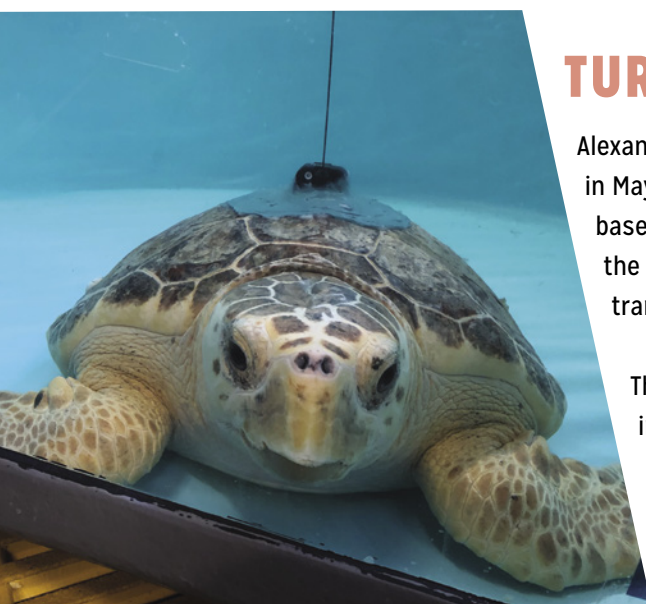
Five of the seven sea turtle species live in North Carolina waters, including the loggerhead, green, hawksbill, Kemp's ridley and leatherback—all of which are endangered or threatened.

In partnership with a number of state organizations, staff and many volunteers, the Aquariums take action by rescuing, rehabilitating and releasing injured, stranded, and cold-stunned sea turtles. Each year hundreds of sea turtles are brought to the Aquariums for care and rehabilitation, which can take months or even years. Once recovered, turtles are released back into the ocean or find a new home in an Aquarium to help teach others about the importance of sea turtle conservation and caring for our oceans.

## ENTANGLED TURTLE

In October 2018, Ada Lovelace, a sub-adult loggerhead sea turtle was found severely entangled in a ghost net that was wrapped around her front left flipper and neck. She was retrieved in the northern waters off the coast of NC by a few people on a pelagic birding vessel.

After removing the netting, Ada was brought to the Sea Turtle Assistance and Rehabilitation Center (STAR) at the Aquarium on Roanoke Island. Unfortunately, because the injury was so severe, her flipper had to be removed by veterinarians. Thanks to the care she is receiving, Ada is expected to make a full recovery and weighs 229 pounds! She even has a potential release date around late spring/early summer of 2019—when ocean waters warm up!



## TURTLE TRACKING

Alexander, a loggerhead turtle, was brought to the Aquarium on Roanoke Island in May 2018 with a head injury. Like many Aquarium turtles, he gained a fan base that checked on his progress regularly. After successful rehabilitation at the STAR Center, he was cleared by veterinary staff and fitted with a satellite transmitter, before being released in December 2018.

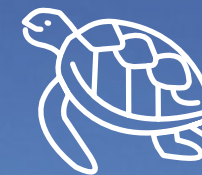
There is very little information about how sea turtles respond after head injury, so the tracker provides the Aquarium with new information as Alexander moves. The data collected from the satellite tag will help shed light on how these turtles do in the wild after treatment.

130  
RESCUED



Each year more than one hundred sea turtles are brought to the Aquariums for care and rehabilitation, which can take months or even years.

198  
RELEASED



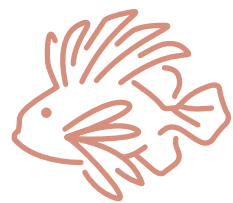
Turtle releases include turtles that have been in rehab more than a year, as well as turtles that are ready for release and were rehabilitated at other aquariums along our coast.







**2,001**  
Minutes of  
Accumulated  
Dive Time



**287**  
Lionfish Collected



## LIONFISH MITIGATION PROJECT UPDATE

In 2017, a grant provided by the Aquarium Society funded a dive team project aimed at controlling the exploding lionfish population by spearfishing on selected shipwreck sites off the Outer Banks. The lionfish, an invasive species, has been rapidly taking over reef and wreck sites, depleting food sources for native fish.

In 2018, the NCARI Dive Team conducted 16 dives to survey and collect lionfish at these sites, with a total accumulated dive time of 2,001 minutes and 287 lionfish collected. From preliminary data collected since the program began, the number of lionfish caught appears to be dropping, and the hope is that a trend of falling lionfish populations will be established at these sites.

In keeping with the project's marketing component, the Aquarium hosted a booth at the Outer Banks Seafood Festival, where lionfish was the secret ingredient in the Chefs' Cook Off. The goal is to continue to keep the public thinking about lionfish as a sustainable and delicious food.



## SPOT A SHARK

Working collaboratively with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), Spot A Shark USA was launched in June 2018 by the NC Aquariums. This "citizen scientists" program engages those who adventure on top of and below the water to assist in efforts to learn more about sand tiger sharks and their importance to the marine environment.

Sand tiger sharks play a critical role in making sure our oceans remain healthy. During the past several decades, it is estimated that the population of the sand tiger shark has decreased by more than 70%. Since their decline can upset the entire ecosystem it is important to gather more information about how they are using NC shipwrecks as habitat and how they breed and pup their offspring.

The program encourages recreational divers who are exploring the NC coastline to take photos of sand tiger sharks and upload to [www.SpotASharkUSA.com](http://www.SpotASharkUSA.com). From there, researchers review the photos to gather critical information and data. Because the NC coastline is rich with shipwrecks and is a highly desired location for divers, the program has had a great deal of participation and seen amazing success in its first year. The data gathered will help scientists better understand the sharks to determine what else can be done to aid in sand tiger shark conservation. In addition to AZA, this program is also in partnership with the South-East Zoo Alliance for Reproduction and Conservation, Duke University Marine Lab, WILDME, WILDBOOK, Georgia Aquarium, and Minnesota Zoo Foundation.

## PARTNERS IN SLIME

Since 2011, the Aquariums, partnering with the NC Wildlife Resources Commission, have been head-starting the Carolina gopher frogs, *Rana capito*. Gopher frogs are listed as endangered in North Carolina and are under consideration for federal listing.

Only 7 of 23 historical populations of this species remain in a few ponds scattered across the coastal plain.

Together with expert herpetologists, the partnership has developed successful protocols for collecting eggs from ponds, rearing the frogs and releasing them back into their natural habitat.

More than 1,300 have been head-started and released since 2011.



**1**

Frogspawn (Eggs)



**2**

Tadpole (Larva)



**3**

Froglet (w/ Legs)



**4**

Gopher Frog (Adult)

## SHAPING THE FUTURE

The influence of the NC Aquariums team reaches beyond our shores and far past state borders. Many Aquarium team members are actively involved in shaping the future of zoos and aquariums around the world through involvement with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). Team members volunteer their time and expertise to advance collective goals and help guide the continued evolution of aquariums and zoos as leaders in animal care and conservation.

Currently, staff serve on the following commissions, committees and programs:

Accreditation Commission  
Animal Welfare Committee  
Aquarium Affairs Committee  
Conservation Education Committee  
Honors and Awards Committee

Professional Development Committee  
Public Relations Committee  
Safety Committee  
Volunteer Committee  
SAFE: Sharks and Rays In-situ and Ex-situ Research

To learn more about AZA and the programs the Aquariums are involved in visit [www.aza.org](http://www.aza.org).

# MAJOR DONORS

## Cumulative Giving

The NC Aquarium Society gratefully acknowledges the following major donors for their generosity through the years, in support of the NC Aquariums and Jennette's Pier.

### GRAND BENEFACTORS

(Gifts of \$1 Million or More)

NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund  
NC Waterfront Access & Marine Industry Fund  
Pepsi Bottling Ventures/Pepsico  
Triad Foundation

### BENEFACTORS

(Gifts of \$500,000 - \$1 Million)

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Dominion Energy  
NC Association of Outdoor Advertisers  
NC Coastal Recreational Fishing License Program  
NOAA - National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration

### GUARDIANS

(Gifts of \$100,000 - \$500,000)

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### CONSERVATORS

(Gifts of \$25,000 - \$100,000)

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NEST - Network for Endangered Sea Turtles  
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(Gifts of \$5,000 - \$25,000)

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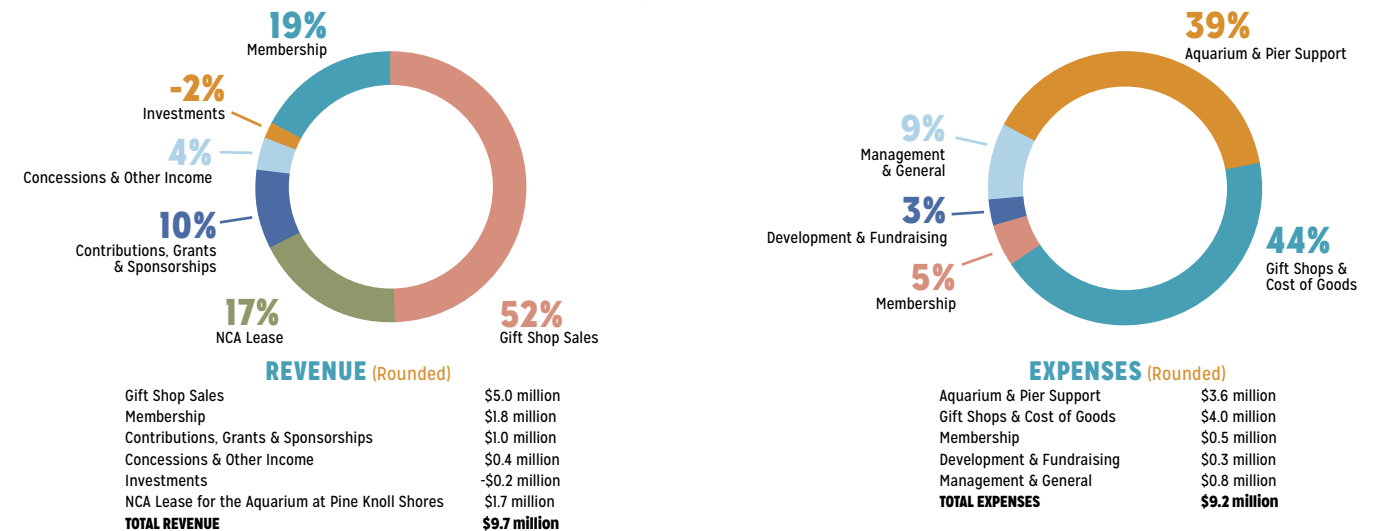
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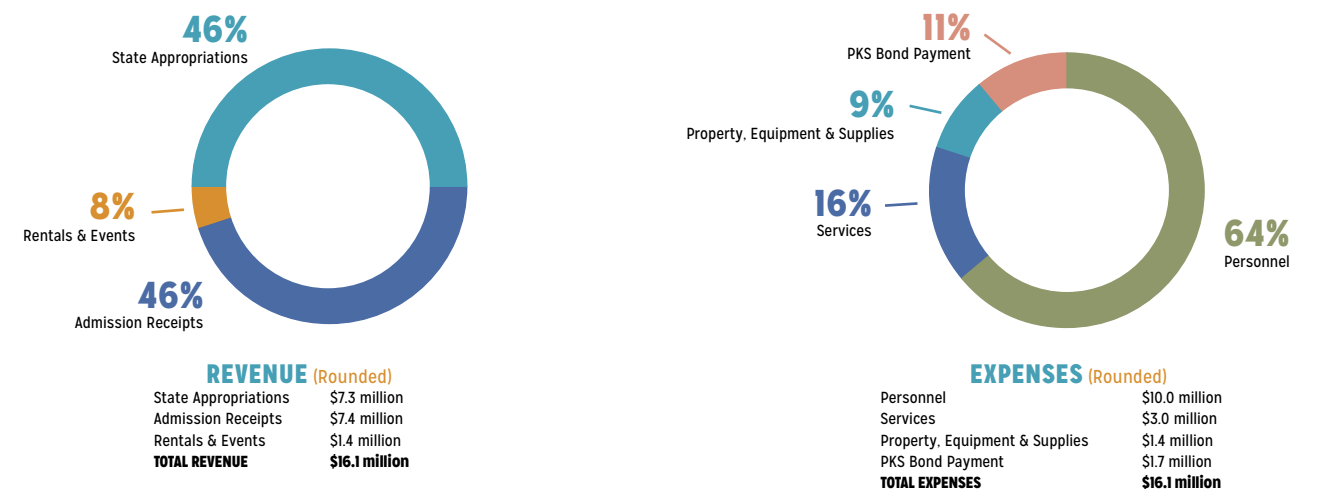
## 2018 FUNDING AND REVENUE

The Aquariums and Pier's enduring success is thanks to a dedicated staff, enthusiastic volunteers, broad support from state leaders and private support made available through the Aquarium Society. Using an entrepreneurial approach, the Aquariums now fund half of their operational needs from earned revenue and private contributions.

### 2018 AQUARIUM SOCIETY



### 2018 NC AQUARIUMS & JENNETTE'S PIER



For more detailed information, including financial records and organizational history, visit [www.ncaquariumsociety.com](http://www.ncaquariumsociety.com).



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