

## Marine Mammal Internship

The internship begins with an orientation program, which is inclusive of all departments at Dolphin Quest, to provide the intern a comprehensive understanding of our company, our mission, our program and our expectations of them. The Marine Mammal Training Internship has four focuses that encompasses our goals for the interns.

### Goals for Marine Mammal Interns

The goals for the Marine Mammal Training Internship were developed to match the mission, vision and values of our company. It is our belief that these goals will be transferable to any marine facility or organization that the intern chooses for his/her future. To that end, the goals for the Marine Mammal Training Interns include:

- Learn to provide unique and innovative experiences for our guests with our dolphins and other animals
- Develop skills to interact with guests and promote marine stewardship
- Cultivate a work environment of trust and respect for every individual
- Learn the importance of character and integrity in a professional environment
- Learn to communicate openly and honestly
- Develop creativity
- Provide an opportunity for personal and professional growth
- Have lots of fun and enjoyment
- Experience and learn about animal health and well-being
- Become global stewards
- Develop a strong sense of professionalism
- Learn to deliver sensational service

### Marine Mammal Internship – Areas of Focus

#### Health and Care of our Animals

Interns will assist marine mammal specialists in the overall daily care of the dolphins, which will include daily food prep, health assessments, feeding, enriching and possibly training. A mentor system is used wherein marine mammal specialists and Crew Members will be allocated to interns individually or as a group as they teach the skills using successive approximations (*learn the theory by shadowing and observing paired with subject specific handouts*), followed by supervised practical application. Each progression is critiqued and signed off by a marine mammal specialist before the intern advances to the next level. The timing of the progression will be based on the individual's competencies and skills, but could follow as such:

- Learn, understand and perform proper animal diet preparation
- Learn correct operation of facility resources
- Learn to identify the animal collection
- Understand animal compatibility
- Learn how to feed
- Learn how to perform the dolphin daily assessment and reason for performing routine daily checkups
- Build knowledge of husbandry behavior and criteria
- Continue to study and learn each behavior signal for each animal
- Practice with single animal stationing and feeds
- Practice with multiple animals stationing and feeds
- Assist marine mammal specialist with behavioral training goals
- Backup assistance during an Encounter Program
- Practice program delivery to program participants
- Assess guest needs, animals needs in delivering a program and assist with program coordination and animal separation

**Education, Conservation and Global Stewardship**

Interns will develop interpretive skills that will help them connect with guests and provide information using an approach that makes the information relevant to the guest. Basic information will be provided during orientation. From there the interns will assist with Quest Engagement, which provides the opportunity to have one-on-one conversations with visitors regarding dolphins, other marine animals, the marine environment and conservation. In addition, interns will learn deliver informal presentations to the guests visiting our site. Interns also have the opportunity to assist in teaching various children's programs. These programs are based on fun, educational activities that include information about marine life and conservation.

**Sensational Service**

During orientation, the interns participate in a Sensational Service Workshop. This two-hour class teaches the basics of providing exceptional guest service to both customers as well as the Crew. This workshop includes a discussion on what is meant by sensational service, why it is important, techniques for delivering sensational service, and an in-depth explanation of our fifteen "Customer Service Standards".

**Professionalism and Teamwork**

Throughout the internship program, interns are held accountable for skills such as open and honest communication, working as a team, developing not only trust and respect of others, but other's trust and respect for the intern as well, the importance of character and integrity and finally a strong sense of professionalism and proper behavior in a work environment. The goal is to help interns succeed professionally in any chosen field.

**Additional learning opportunities**

Interns will spend about 60% of their time working on the marine mammal team, and about 40% of their time on other teams.

**Training Lecture Series**

A portion of this time is paired with theoretical learning through the Training Lecture Series written and approved by the Dolphin Quest Community. Each of these lectures is approximately two hours and includes required supplemental reading, quizzes and a final exam. Many interns are able to receive college credit as the result of this lecture series.