**ISSUE #220** 

# 

Membership Publication of Friends of the Waikiki Aquarium

UPCOMING EVENTS Seaduction 121st Birthday Celebration



PAST EVENT RECAP

Members' Night & 2024 Annual Meeting Tim Guard Distinguished Lecture Series Art with Heart Holiday Fair

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Traditionally, the kilo i'a was an expert of fish and marine life. He studied the behaviors and movements of i'a. The kilo stood at a high point of land overlooking the ocean to watch for an expected school of fish and steered the fishermen in the school's direction. The success of surrounding the school was entirely up to the kilo.



## A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Aloha Friends,

As we enter 2025, I extend my heartfelt thanks to our members, donors, volunteers, partners, and the Aquarium team for your dedication and support of FOWA's mission.

This past fall and holiday season brought a series of remarkable events highlighting our community. The **Annual Meeting and Members' Night** was a fantastic evening filled with familiar faces, new connections and a Halloween themed celebration complete with tours of the galleries, educational activities, and keiki games, all topped off with a very memorable costume contest!

In November, we were thrilled to bring back our **Tim Guard Distinguished Lecture Series** at the University of Hawaii, Manoa campus, with renowned researcher, **Dr. Carl Meyer**, who shared fascinating new shark research with nearly 100 guests.

In addition, FOWA proudly supported volunteers and staff at their joyous holiday parties, celebrating all their hard work and the critical role they play in the success of our beloved Aquarium. We also launched our inaugural "Art with Heart" Holiday Fair, providing a meaningful platform for conservation and creativity to meet, while showcasing exceptional artistic talents within our community.

Looking ahead, we're excited to kick off the year with some special events. Tickets for Valentine's Day **Seaduction** are now available, offering tables for two within our galleries, as well as a more casual option on the lawn. We are also hoping to host our beloved **Ke Kani O Ke Kai** summer concert series (injection well construction permitting), promising another unforgettable season of Hawaiian music under the stars.

Finally, I'd like to personally recognize longtime volunteer, the late **Jean Carr**, who we lost in 2023. She generously named Friends of the Waikīkī Aquarium as a recipient in her trust, continuing to look after the Aquarium, and ensuring it remains vital for many years to come.

We look forward to seeing you all at the Waikīkī Aquarium this year, and appreciate your ongoing support and generosity, past and future.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Elizabeth Churchill

Executive Director Friends of the Waikīkī Aquarium



# BOARD SPOTLIGHT

**Alan Matsui**, a Partner at KMH LP, has been a dedicated member of the Friends of the Waikīkī Aquarium Board since 2019, serving as Treasurer. He joined the board to help foster

appreciation and conservation of Pacific marine life, a mission that resonates deeply with his personal values. For Alan, the Waikīkī Aquarium is a special place where he enjoys witnessing his daughter's amazement as she explores the exhibits, sharing in his appreciation for marine life.

# JOIN FOWA AT OUR UPCOMING EVENTS

# LOVE IS IN THE AIR!

Whether you're celebrating the holiday with your Valentine, Galentine or a group of friends, join us for an unforgettable evening at the Waikiki Aquarium. Seaduction will feature live music, a champagne reception, local food and drink partners, and an opportunity to learn about the different mating and reproductive systems of the Aquarium's marine residents!

There are three seating options:

### TABLE FOR EIGHT SOLD OUT

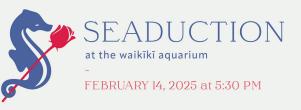
This special table will be located in front of the highly coveted Hunters on the Reef exhibit. This exclusive table for eight includes welcome champagne presented in a special keepsake glass for each guest, five (5) bottles of wine at your table, and three-course dinner service within the galleries.

# TABLE FOR TWO\$300 per table

34 romantic tables for two will be arranged throughout the Aquarium's galleries, fronting exhibits such as Barrier Reef, Jellyfish, Weedy Sea Dragons and more. Tables for Two include welcome champagne in a special keepsake glass, a bottle of wine, and three-course dinner service within the galleries.

# GENERAL ADMISSION ON THE LAWN **\$75 per person**

General admission seating will be available on the Aquarium lawn where guests can enjoy a beautiful sunset over Waikīkī and an evening under the stars. General admission seats include a welcome champagne and a buffet dinner.







The evening's menu will feature a culinary experience provided by Chart House Waikiki.

## TABLE FOR TWO / TABLE FOR EIGHT

**Appetizer** Arugula Salad with candied pecans Mango balsamic vinaigrette & shaved parmesan

#### Entrée (choice of one)

served with asparagus marinated with garlic butter: Braised Short Ribs served with mashed potatoes Mac Nut Crusted Mahi Mahi served with mashed potatoes or rice Veggie Curry served with rice

> **Dessert** Chocolate Tiramisu

## GENERAL ADMISSION ON THE LAWN

**Appetizer** Tossed Salad with lilikoi dressing

**Entrees:** Pulehu Chicken Mac Nut Crusted Mahi Mahi Veggie Curry Noodles, stir-fry veggies & white rice

> **Dessert** Chocolate Tiramisu

## A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR AQUARIUM UPGRADES



Greetings, and a Happy New Year to all!

We have begun the deconstruction of the beloved Edge of the Reef exhibit. This vital project is an important step in preventing exhibit water from being discharged into the sewer system or ocean, aligning with our deep commitment to sustainability, conservation, and protecting Hawai'i's precious marine environment.

For decades, the Edge of the Reef exhibit has been a cornerstone of the Aquarium experience, captivating visitors, schoolchildren, and volunteers with its celebration of Hawai'i's unique marine ecosystems. While saying goodbye to this cherished exhibit is bittersweet, it also paves the way for an exciting future.

We are thrilled to announce plans for a larger, more interactive exhibit that will deepen connections with Pacific marine life and continue to inspire appreciation for our oceans for generations to come.

As we move forward, we invite you to join us in making this vision a reality. Your support–whether through a donation, sharing our story, or visiting the Aquarium–will help ensure the continued success of this mission.

Cordially yours,

Dr. Andrew Rossiter

Director, Waikīkī Aquarium





# **DON'T LET IT LOOSE**

In partnership with the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture-Plant Quarantine Branch, the Department of Land and Natural Resources-Division of Aquatic Resources, and the Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species, the Waikīkī Aquarium hosted the launch of a new campaign. "Don't Let It Loose" aims to raise awareness about the dangers of releasing invasive species into local ecosystems and to prevent their introduction and spread.

A news conference was held to discuss key insights into how the community can actively contribute to safeguarding local ecosystems.

## 121<sup>ST</sup> BIRTHDAY SEA-LEBRATION

Date TBD

You're invited to celebrate the Waikīkī Aquarium's 121st birthday with a day of celebration in March 2025. Taking place from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., festivities will include critter encounters, live exhibit demonstrations, hands-on activities, educational booths, and more. Stay tuned for more details so you can celebrate our birthday with us!



## STAFF SPOTLIGHT ANTHONY RYAN BURKE

Name: Anthony Ryan Burke

Position: Coral Biologist in Live Exhibits

#### Where are you from?

I moved to Honolulu after spending 11 years in Miami. Born & raised in California.

## How long you've been at the Waikīkī Aquarium?

My first day was August 5th, 2024.

#### What inspired you to pursue this career path?

In 2001, when I was 8 years old, I became a certified scuba diver while visiting Honolulu! On my first dive, I found myself mesmerized by the living reef at the bottom of the sea. Prior to this experience, I had never known of corals. The following day, I came to the Waikīkī Aquarium, and the rest is history.

### **Previous Work**

- Manager of Aquaculture Systems NOAA Coral Program 2023-2024
- Founder Radial Aquatics 2020-2024
- Manager Experimental Reef Laboratory University of Miami RSMAS 2021-2023
- Aquarium Master University of Miami 2018-2024

#### **Current role & Responsibilities**

As the Coral Biologist, my time is split across dozens of responsibilities and numerous exhibits. I tend to each and every coral here at the Waikīkī Aquarium, providing welfare checks, disease diagnosis, and medical treatments when necessary. When corals are as happy as ours, they grow surprisingly fast, and they like to fight with neighboring corals. On the display side of the aquarium, it is important that I tend to each colony like a bonsai tree, trimming the colonies appropriately to prevent coral warfare. I am the primary steward of the Barrier Reef Exhibit, but I have to keep an eye on every tank to keep all of our corals in pristine condition!

In the back of the house, I am currently building out the Coral Deck, adding five new coral raceways to effectively double our coral aquaculture volume. These tanks will be used for coral propagation, with the inevitable goal of participating in coral out planting and reef restoration around the Hawaiian Islands. As our corals grow in our display tanks, the trimmings from those colonies will be relocated onto the coral deck where they continue to grow until they are used for scientific study, out planted, or returned to exhibit.

Looking to the future, I will be spearheading the establishment of several new exhibits! In partnership with the State of Hawai'i, the Waikīkī Aquarium recently kicked off the "Don't Let it Loose" campaign to bring awareness to invasive species, both marine and terrestrial. To prepare for this campaign, I established a temporary 300-gallon invasive coral display tank in the lobby of the Waikīkī Aquarium, hosting five species of invasive corals and anemones found in Pearl Harbor. I am currently working on acquiring a 10-foot permanent display tank that will be established as the new invasive species tank in the upcoming months. Following this project, I will be working primarily on building the new Edge of the Reef Exhibit!

### Favorite marine animal

Favorite coral - *Plerogyra Diaboletus* aka Diabolical Bubble Coral Honorable mention - *Thor Amboinensis* (Sexy Shrimp)

## THE POWER OF COMMUNITY & CONNECTION

MAKING WAVES!

What's the chance of two acquaintances crossing paths years after losing touch, only to reconnect after discovering a shared passion? That's exactly what happened with **Judi** and **Kathrine**. Their story began at St. Andrews Priory, where their daughters attended school. Although their paths diverged when their daughters grew up, life brought them back together in an unexpected way. Want to hear more about how our volunteer program helped reunite and grow a friendship? Dive into their inspiring story!



, s Volunteer Spotlight

Waikiki Aquarium

MAKING WAVES! Waikiki Aquarium's Volunteer Spotlight

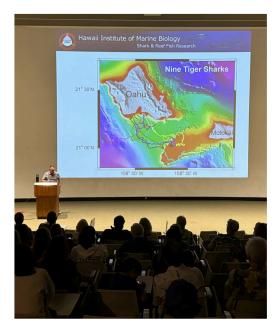
Favorite marine animal?	The Pacific Day Octopus! But truthfully all the animals are amazing!!!	The Grouper of course! In keeping with the naming theme in the tank, I call it "Gorgonzola". I probably have over 100 pictures of it on my camera.
How did you two meet?	Kathrine and I met at St. Andrews Priory as our daughters both attended this school. My daughter moved in her Sophomore year to another school in 2016, so we lost touch.	I met Judi at a volunteer event at the school where both our daughters at- tended. This was probably around 2009 or 2010. She was helping with the silent auction, and I remember her being a very calm and organized presence around all the activities.
How did you reconnect?	We met again at the Waikīkī Aquarium! We both signed on as volunteers and have had a wonderful time working on the same Docent team!	We both attended Docent training to- gether and reconnected, although I think we met in passing while volunteering at exhibits as an educator before that.
Is being a volunteer at the Aquarium a good way to meet and connect with others? How?	YES Definitely! Everyone here has a true interest in serving our community, a love of sharing our Island and culture, and spend- ing time with like-minded people!	It is! The Docent program is especially good for getting to know other volunteers, since we spend time together as a group before and after the school groups arrive. I've also found that trainings, enrichment events, and other special events like beach cleanup and volunteer appreciation have allowed me to get to know some of the other volunteers and staff more.
What do you look forward to when volunteering at the Aquarium?	I really look forward to meeting our kama'āina and visitors, as well as working with the staff and volunteers. I definitely learn something new every time I'm there and I find people so welcoming and grate- ful for the information we share. It's such a great feeling to be appreciated and know that you're helping to provide an enriching experience to our Aquarium visitors.	With the schoolkids, I love the enthusiasm and curiosity they have in learning about our marine animals. I also look forward to spending time with the exhibits and "checking in" on my favorite sea creatures when I come to the Aquarium.
Anything else you'd like to share about being an Aquarium Volunteer?	I appreciate the opportunity to work in such a positive, inspiring place! I've volunteered in many ways over the years, and I have to say that the Aquarium staff and volunteers are the most gracious, generous people I've met over the years. An unexpected benefit has been the opportunity to participate in enrichment programs (visits to other facilities, educational tours and talks) that the Aquarium provides to the volunteers.	This is a great place to volunteer! The staff is warm and welcoming, and I've always felt valued as a volunteer. There are great opportunities to learn more about the ocean and marine environments, and lots of flexibility in how you schedule.

## MEMBERS' NIGHT AND 2024 ANNUAL MEETING

On Friday, October 11, 2024, we kicked off the Halloween season early with **Members' Night and the 2024 Annual Meeting**. We welcomed over 300 attendees for a fang-tastic evening filled with games, educational activities in the classroom, a scavenger hunt throughout the galleries, fun-filled booths, underwater pumpkin carving, and a Halloween costume contest.

Congratulations to our costume contest winners and mahalo to our Aquarium staff and volunteers who made the evening possible!





# TIM GUARD DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES

On Thursday, November 21, 2024, we welcomed 100 attendees for the return of the Friends of the Waikīkī Aquarium's Tim Guard Distinguished Lecture Series featuring **Dr. Carl Meyer**, University of Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology researcher. The discussion, "**Science Reveals the Secret Lives of Sharks**" highlighted the unexpected discoveries that deepen our understanding of how sharks survive in challenging environments, and their vital importance in maintaining healthy ocean ecosystems.

The lecture underscored the importance of these findings in advancing conservation efforts and introduced innovative strategies to minimize human-shark conflicts, fostering a more sustainable coexistence between humans and marine life.

Mahalo to Dr. Meyer for sharing his expertise and passion, and to all who joined us!

## ART WITH HEART HOLIDAY FAIR

On Friday, December 13, 2024, we celebrated the season of giving while supporting local artists and marine conservation at our inaugural **Art with Heart Holiday Fair**. This unique event featured handcrafted works from local artists, interactive art activities, conservation focused educational booths, and exclusive tours of the aquarium exhibits. Proceeds from the event supported educational activities and conservation efforts as part of the Waikīkī Aquarium's mission.

A heartfelt mahalo to our talented vendors and all who attended for making this event a resounding success and for contributing to the preservation of our marine ecosystems.



## **NEW & RENEWING MEMBERS** (September through December 2024)

Braden Abe Taryn Agena-Tong Keline Akiyoshi William Allison Andrew Alt Jessica Ansley Kerrin Asato Sheri-Lynn Ayala Michael Bagley Ashley Barrett Adrian Barry George Beane Brenda Becker Nathan Bingham Holly Bolick Caida Bowen Quintin Bray Brooke Brotherton Angela Burchett Marcus Burdios Ryan Campbell Jessalyn Cannings Kathryn Carey Namakananea Chan Ryan Chang John Chang Alexis Chapman Jill Chapman Elizabeth Chase Kelly Chau Somnakrottanavouth Atsushi Chida Paul Ching Katherine Chlebo Sungwon Peter Choe Ho Suk Choi Devin Choy Nathan Christensen Deborah Chun Monica Chun Nathaniel Clark Danielle Clements Jansen Nancy Cockrum Collins Cockwell Amanda Cook Christina Cooper Price Christopher Couch Kylie Cruz Thomas Davis Leilani De Wolff Valerie Dela Cruz Monikka Delazerda Chelsea DeMott Amy Detweiler Mary Doi Patricia Domingo

Alexandra Duarte Bridget Dwyer-Dial Amy Eck Egan Ensminger David Estes Victor Falle lan Farnung Megan Flores Emily Freeman Kahala Freeman Jessica Fujimoto Dean Fuller Erin Funkhouser David Garcia Robert Gardiner Sean Garrett Michael Gerard Daniel Germer Carl Gibson Katrina Givan Ronald Gleason Carolina Gomeg Olivia Gurney Catherine Gwinner Christopher Haines Tmeka Hale Amanda Han Kimberly Harmony Atsuko Hasegawa Carol Hasegawa McOuat Corey Haselerhansen Mychal Hatae Jason Taylor Akio Higa Kali Higa Nicole Hines Isabel Hinojosa Andrea Hirashima Alliso<u>n Holden</u> Cintia Holz Shantell Hom Christian Hook Nicole Hosler Jake Houseman Christopher Howell David Hulse Stacy Hutchison-Miller Wesley Irwin Susan Ishikawa Marianne Chie White Ito Erika Alexander Joaquin Sean Johnston Katie Jones Yuri Kaahanui Patti Kadohiro

Dustin Kahawai Brandie Kahoano Kimberly Kalua Jay Kaneshige Joyce Kaulukukui Jina Kawasaki Lawrence Keeno Andrew Keune Silke Keupe Dak Kibler Maile Kim Gerald Kimura Gerald Kimura Allison King Howatt Peter King Ashlee Kishimoto Nancy Kleiber Sadie Klena Liana Kobayashi Yoshihisa Koga Kiliwehi Kono Kiliwehi Kono Randall Kosaki Norman Lau Monique Lau Michael Lau Laurie Lee Martiza Lee Dr. Deborah Lee Nancy Lemas Christopher Lew Maggie Li Sora Lim Alex Lin Alan Lippert Mark Livingston Diane Lobach Anna Luey Eric Lum Eric Lum Douglas Luther Carol Macdonald Garret Madderra Klein Mali Arthur Mallet Garrett Mandich David Marsh Melissa Martin Melissa Martin Jennifer Martin Leon Masden Edyta Matetka Christina M Matheson Nicholas Mauricio Gisele McDaniel Nicholas McLean Helene Meehl Jenna Menen

Ine Miler Linden Miller Lee Miller Michelle Minsky Randy Mita Brandon Mitsuda John Mitsuhashi John Mitsuhashi Wilnette Miyashiro Chelsie Miyashiro Ketty Mobed Camilo Mojica Sharlene Molinare Daniel Morishige Kindra Moug Abigail Moyer Hemant Pralhad Mungekar **Killean Murray** Trinn Murray Caroline Nadel Mckenna Nakamura Keri Nakamura Isabel Navarro Robert Neate Glenn Nishida Monica Nolan Aaron Olivera Lindsey Oneil Alyssa ONeill Benton Pang Karen Park Siwon Park Robert Pattison Daniel Pederson Anthory Pelletti Jack Percelay Crystal Perron Denitsa Pocheva-Smith <u>Denise</u> Pratt Denise Fratt Kristi Quiocho Oshiro Burgess Raby Sri Reddy Paulina Reilly Woston Bojant Weston Reinert Darcy Rieches Valerie Roberts Alyssa Romeo Lina Rosa Daniel Ruefly Gregory Schiavo John Schmeelk Kelly Schnebly Christen Schook Hunter Schuerman Grace Shapiro **Nelson Shigeta** Kelly Shintaku Risako Shizawa **Beatriz Sibert** 

Stanley Simpson Malia Siu Ron Slee James Smith Jae Song Douglas Spencer Claudia Sterling Ben Still Sasha Stone Samantha Stupplebeen Bangay Samuel Suen Keith Sueno Wendy Sugihara Lori Sugimoto Jaclyn Sugrue Karen Sunahara-Teruya Neville Susich Erin Suzuki Harvey Swearingen Jara Joann Takahashi Desiree Takiguchi Lianne Tamasese Hye Jung Tano Kelly Thiele William J. Thomas Peter Thompson Brittney Tipp Jason Tittle Shauna Tonkin Noemi Tsamous Lincoln Vo Michael Wakita James R Walkinshaw Alise Ward Kealohilani Warren Breanna Weber Joseph Weismantel Victoria Wetle Jeb Wheeler Vangie White Vangie White Wendy Wichman Craig Williston Mark Wilson Melly Wilson Scott Wilson Gordon Woods Sharon Yahiku Sharon Yahiku Carrie Yamamoto Kathy Yamashita John Yeh Keante Ying kerry yoneshige Derek Young Dayu Zhang Haogang Zhang Ning Zhao



## ON SALE NOW! YEAR OF THE SEADRAGON MERCHANDISE

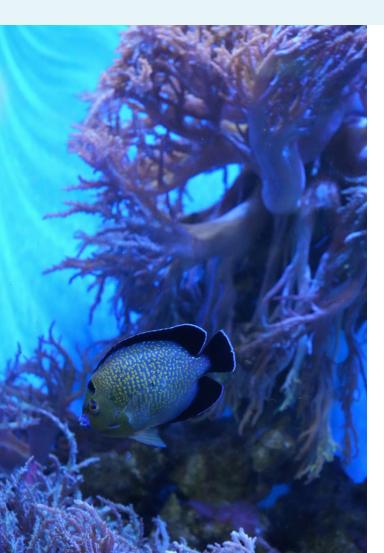
In 2024, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Amazing Adaptations exhibit and FOWA launched its exclusive, limited-edition **Year of the Seadragon** and **Syngnathid Summer** merchandise. The collection includes beach towels, stickers, tote bags, and magnets that don these elegant sea creatures. Items are available for purchase online only, with pick up at the Waikīkī Aquarium. Each purchase supports rebuilding efforts for the beloved Edge of the Reef exhibit as well as ongoing research, education and conservation activities at the Waikīkī Aquarium.

## MAHALO TO JEAN CARR

This past year, we mourned the loss of longtime volunteer, **Jean Carr**. Since becoming a volunteer in 1998, Jean touched countless lives through her dedication and passion for marine education. Contributing over 1,500 hours of service, she delighted in sharing her knowledge with visitors from around the globe. Whether teaching children about Hawaiian reef animals at the Edge of the Reef exhibit or assisting with special events, Jean's warmth and enthusiasm left a lasting mark on our community.

Her love for the Aquarium extended far beyond her time with us. In a deeply moving and heartfelt gesture, Jean generously included Friends of the Waikīkī Aquarium in her trust, ensuring that her legacy of care and commitment will continue to support our mission for generations to come.

Jean will always hold a special place in our hearts and remain an enduring part of the Aquarium 'ohana. Her memory serves as a reminder of the incredible impact one person can have on a community, and we are forever grateful for her considerable contributions.





## MAHALO TO OUR RECENT DONORS!

Anonymous Donor Margaret Camacho Kathrine Fast Michele Kuwaye Laurie Toyama Lee Higa Okamoto Brian Wadnal Carol Wilcox

## DONATE TODAY AND RECEIVE A FREE GIFT!

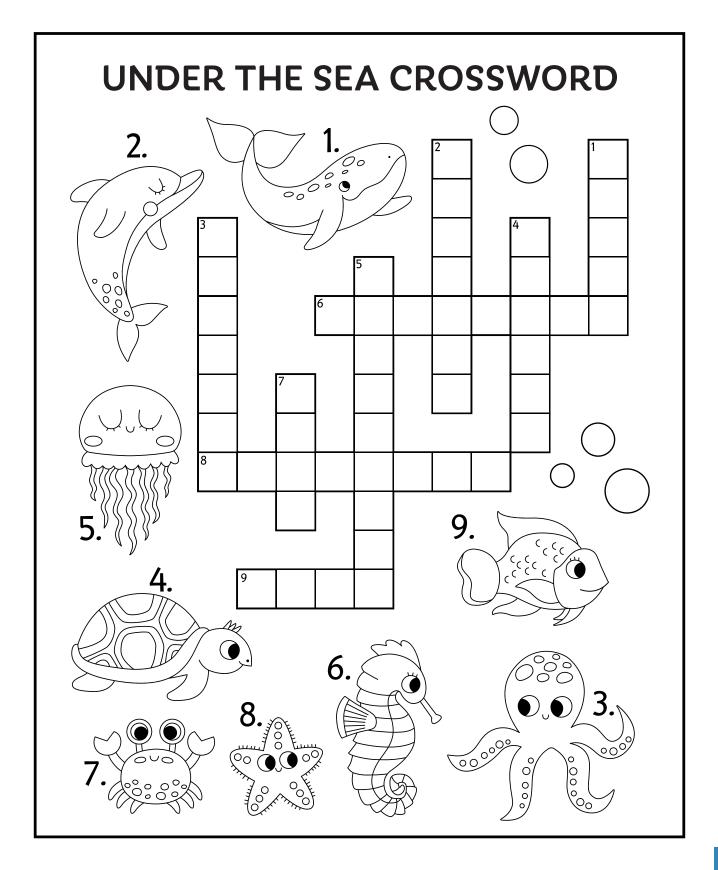
When you make a donation to support education, conservation and research initiatives at the Aquarium, you'll receive limitededition Seadragon merchandise! Check out the amazing selection of FREE gifts when you visit the link below.



www.fowaquarium.org/donate/



Print this page to complete our Keiki Activities!



# MAHALO FOR VISITING THE WAIKĪKĪ AQUARIUM!

## DON'T FORGET TO TAG US! @WAIKIKIAQUARIUM









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