



AQUARIUM
OF THE **PACIFIC**®
A non-profit institution

FOR RELEASE MAY 2010

Contact: Marilyn Padilla
Aquarium of the Pacific
(562) 951-1684
mpadilla@lbaop.org
Digital Images Available Upon Request

AQUARIUM OF THE PACIFIC ANNOUNCES NEW EXPANSION TO OPEN SUMMER 2010

Dive into the world of aquatic medicine through the new Molina Animal Care Center featuring new exhibits and programs for visitors

Even otters get physicals, and sharks take their vitamins!

April 13, 2010, Long Beach, Calif.—Did you know that sea lions and otters see their doctor for physical exams, sharks take vitamins, and sick fish take medicine and sometimes need surgery? The public will have the rare chance to dive into the fascinating world of aquatic medicine at the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach, California, starting Friday, May 21, 2010.

Everyone is invited to explore the newest permanent expansion at the nonprofit Aquarium of the Pacific. The Molina Animal Care Center will enable visitors to see daily animal care shows with education staff, watch the Aquarium's veterinarian conduct medical exams, and learn more about the world of aquatic medicine. The Aquarium will feature new exhibits and programs about animal care geared to all ages.

The new 14,000-square-foot Molina Animal Care Center will accommodate mammals, birds, and fishes. It will provide enhanced healthcare as well as opportunities for Aquarium visitors to see veterinary medicine in action. The Aquarium of the Pacific will be one of the few aquariums that provides an opportunity for guests to observe while its doctor is examining an animal patient.

Two interactive kiosks offer a chance to delve deeper. One kiosk will feature stories of medical successes such as the veterinarian's groundbreaking operation to repair the bill of the Aquarium's sawfish. The other kiosk will present a behind-the-scenes look at the duties of various team members who care for the animals.

Visitors will also learn about the Aquarium's animals with activities that help show the connections between a healthy animal and a healthy environment. This includes daily animal care shows where staff will bring program animals out of their exhibits to give guests a first-hand look at how these species are cared for at the Aquarium and will be cared for in the brand new facility.

The building is targeted to meet Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) Platinum standards, fulfilling the Aquarium's commitment to environmentally sensitive building practices for all new structures. The \$5.5 million care center will reach beyond the confines of a place to care for animals and will become a learning experience for visitors of all ages, offering a unique insight into the world of aquatic veterinary care. It will also showcase the Aquarium's dedication to its wide array of mammals, birds, reptiles, fishes, and invertebrates.

-More-

Aquarium of the Pacific's New Animal Care Center, Page 2

Aquarium Board Chairman J. Mario Molina, M.D. has been an integral part of the vision of the new animal hospital. With his background as president and CEO of Molina Healthcare, he has had a wealth of expertise to offer throughout the process. "We are very pleased with the progress being made on the Animal Care Center. When completed, it will give the Aquarium of the Pacific a world-class facility to provide healthcare to our animals and a place for visitors to learn more about the health and biology of our collection," said Dr. Molina.

"We are also very pleased with the efforts being made to minimize the impact of the new building on the environment and the energy-saving features that have been incorporated into its design," continued Dr. Molina. Dr. Molina brought together his four siblings and Molina Healthcare, Inc. to make a combined gift of \$2 million. The family contributions are from Josephine Molina, Laurence and Janet Watt, Michelle and John Molina, Martha and Faustino Bernadett, and Dr. Molina and his wife Therese. Together, the family's commitment, in combination with corporate support from Molina Healthcare, demonstrates their shared passion for the ocean, education, and conservation. In addition, the Ahmanson Foundation awarded the Aquarium a \$250,000 grant to fund the educational outreach components of the Molina Animal Care Center, including the sponsorship of the interactive exhibit kiosks. More at <http://www.aquariumofpacific.org/exhibits/animalcarecenter/>.

The Aquarium of the Pacific, a nonprofit institution, is dedicated to instilling a sense of wonder, respect, and stewardship for the Pacific Ocean, its inhabitants, and ecosystems. Home to over 11,000 animals, the Aquarium features a variety of programs to engage the public in ocean conservation and environmental education. The Aquarium features Shark Lagoon with over 150 sharks you can touch, its interactive Lorikeet Forest bird aviary, sting ray petting pools, and more in over 50 exhibits.

The Aquarium of the Pacific is one of the top aquariums in the nation and is ranked in the top two Los Angeles cultural attractions. The Aquarium is open daily from 9 a.m.-6 p.m. (closed Dec. 25 and April 16-18, 2010 for the Grand Prix). Admission is \$23.95 adult (12+); \$20.95 senior (62+); \$11.95 child (3-11); and free to children under age three and Aquarium members. The Aquarium is located at 100 Aquarium Way, Long Beach, CA 90802. For more information, visit aquariumofpacific.org or call 562-590-3100. The Aquarium of the Pacific is where people and the ocean connect.

###