

The Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk
Major Gifts Officer
Norwalk, Connecticut

ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

The mission of The Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk is to ignite a connection to Long Island Sound and the ocean to enrich the lives of all people and inspire action to protect our blue planet. For more than 35 years, the Aquarium has played a significant role in shaping the landscape of Norwalk and the region. The second largest family attraction in Connecticut, and 50 miles from New York City, the Aquarium historically hosts nearly 500,000 guests annually. Its primary exhibits take guests on a voyage from the shallow salt marshes and estuaries to the depths of the Long Island Sound and the ocean beyond, culminating with habitats for sharks and harbor seals. Altogether, the Aquarium is home to over 8,000 animals and 285 species in 75 exhibits. A new 4D Theater offers a unique sensory film experience for guests. Its education programs introduce nearly 54,000 students, campers and scouts to marine and STEM education. The Aquarium is recognized as a top aquarium in the nation and is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. It is an active participant in the local and regional community. The strength of the Aquarium is its 60 full-time staff, and part-time and seasonal staff, in addition to volunteers who contribute over 19,000 hours annually.

The Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk, Inc. (TMA or the Aquarium) seeks a full-time Major Gift Officer reporting to the Chief Strategy and Growth Officer.

POSITION OVERVIEW

Reporting to the Chief Strategy and Growth Officer (CSGO), the Major Gift Officer (MGO) will be critical to the success of the organization's philanthropy goals. The MGO will collaborate with the Associate Director of Advancement, the CSGO, and Aquarium Departments to develop and implement strategies that increase contributions from high-net-worth individuals and related family foundations. This is a full-time, exempt position. Some early morning, evening, and weekend hours should be expected for time-sensitive needs and after-hours events.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Identify, research, cultivate, and steward new and existing high-net-worth individuals; reactivate lapsed supporters.
- Secure five-to-seven-figure gifts in support of the Agency's key priorities and strategic objectives.
- Contribute to the success of the organization's \$20M Capital Campaign from silent phase through to completion.
- Establish and lead a strategy to engage with key financial advisors and those overseeing Donor Advised Funds.

- Oversee the Agency's donor recognition society—Guardians of the Sound—increasing engagement opportunities and networking.
- Establish and manage a Planned Giving program.
- Oversee the annual appeal process for high-net-worth individuals in-line with the focus of mass market appeals and year-end messaging.
- Support the Aquarium's signature cultivation and fundraising events, including the annual gala, with focus on improving short- and long-term ROI.
- Maintain accurate, up-to-date donor records in the CRM.
- Maintain professional knowledge by attending educational workshops, reviewing professional publications, establishing personal networks, benchmarking, etc.
- Support/lead special projects as requested.

QUALIFICATIONS

Work experience

- Bachelor's degree or relevant on-the-job experience
- 7-10 years of development experience with a focus on individual philanthropy.
- Experience and proven track record in securing five-to-seven-figure gifts
- High fluency in Microsoft Office Suite
- Contributes to team effort by accomplishing shared goals
- Experience with CRM systems a plus

Knowledge and skills

- Commitment to the Aquarium's mission, with an appreciation for the important role that the Aquarium plays in conservation, education and the life of a vibrant community.
- Commitment to equity and social justice, and strong alignment with our organizational values.
- Ability to interact with all levels of the organization and external vendors and work independently or collaboratively.
- Excellent written and verbal communication and interpersonal skills.
- Continuous improvement / problem solving mindset and way of working.
- Proven ability to build strong relationships with a variety of constituents, including high net worth individuals.
- Proven track record in cultivating and soliciting five-seven figure gifts; planned giving commitments a plus.
- Strong creative thinking capability to develop engagement strategies with maximum impact.
- Exceptional listener with ability to understand the needs and motivations of others, find common ground and synthesize information into compelling narratives.
- Exceptional strategic thinking and problem-solving skills.

- Strong organizational skills, high attention to detail and discipline in stewarding donor information and database records.
- A high level of integrity and a strong work ethic.
- Professional presentation and demeanor that inspires confidence in high-net-worth prospects and donors.
- Willingness to work evenings, weekends and holidays as needed.

This job description is not designed to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities that are required of the employee for this job. Duties, responsibilities and activities may change at any time with or without notice.

The Maritime Aquarium is an equal opportunity employer with a commitment to diversity. All individuals, regardless of personal characteristics, are encouraged to apply.

Salary Range: \$60,000-\$67,000

To Apply

[Click on this link to apply](#)