



Vice President of Marketing

Mystic Aquarium

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Jesse Bryan

VICE PRESIDENT, EXECUTIVE SEARCH

Development Guild DDI

800-537-9011 x309

jbryan@developmentguild.com

developmentguild.com

BOSTON | NEW YORK

Mystic Aquarium seeks an innovative, Vice President of Marketing to lead a team and drive strategy and overall mission-success within marketing, communications, public relations, and membership

About Mystic Aquarium

Founded in 1973 as a “living laboratory,” Connecticut’s world-famous Mystic Aquarium is home to thousands of marine mammals, fish, invertebrates, and reptiles that are central to its mission of marine conservation, research, and education. The 18+ acre campus provides a broad array of environments for different animals as well as research and care facilities, educational exhibits, and playful learning areas for children and families. In 2023, the Aquarium hit a record number of 850,000 visitors to campus and 1.9 million followers on TikTok who are transported through diverse environments like the Arctic; North America’s Atlantic, Gulf, and Pacific coastal waters; and tropical, and marine ecosystems. Mystic Aquarium underscores global concerns to both their in-person and virtual guests by elevating their mission to inspire people to protect our ocean environments through conservation, education, and research.

The Aquarium is a division of Sea Research Foundation, Inc., a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, and is counted among the nation’s leading aquariums with its 300+ species and extensive collection of marine mammals, including New England’s only beluga whales.

The Aquarium also houses a Veterinary and Animal Health Center, an 18,000 sq-foot Ocean Science and Conservation Center that was recently completed, state-of-the-art classrooms, conference facilities, and a \$1.5M aquaculture lab and animal holding area. Other highlights include interactive exhibits where visitors can experience the animals up close at the shark, ray tank, penguin pavilion, and jellyfish gallery.

Mystic Aquarium is a member of the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums (AMMPA) and an accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). With an annual budget of \$30M, 250 full-time and part-time staff, and 600 volunteers, Mystic Aquarium enjoys prestigious local, national, and international partnerships with premier educational and academic research institutions.

As a leading research organization located in the beautiful coastal town of Mystic, Connecticut, Mystic Aquarium employs a full staff of scientists, trainers, and specialists engaged in projects focused on the conservation and sustainability of our ocean planet.

About the Vice President of Marketing

Reporting to the Chief Advancement Officer, the Vice President of Marketing will lead Mystic Aquarium’s efforts around Marketing, Communications, Public Relations, and Membership. They will be responsible for shaping and enhancing Mystic Aquarium’s public image and relationships with key stakeholders, as well as driving attendance and attendance-related revenue.



The Aquarium seeks a leader who will bring a blend of skills in public relations, community engagement, membership management, strategic planning, and creative content development.

Working in close partnership with Mystic Aquarium's leadership, the Vice President of Marketing will be a catalyst for innovation; they will "see around corners" and anticipate visitor interests and behaviors by carefully analyzing data to shape practical, real-world, and highly visible initiatives that are aligned with the leadership's strategy.

The Vice President of Marketing will lead and manage a department of dedicated staff and contractors who support Mystic Aquarium's conventional (video/audio/print), traditional (video/audio/print), and digital (online/mobile/social) marketing and communications functions. It is critical that all marketing strategies are sustainable, offer a positive return on any financial investment, and are consistent with the organization's overall conservation, operating, and business objectives.

Key Responsibilities

- In partnership with leadership, lead, plan, direct, and implement strategies for all marketing, membership, communications, and public relations on behalf of Mystic Aquarium
- Work closely with the Chief Advancement Officer on fundraising-related marketing strategies to further drive philanthropic revenue
- Constant and consistent communication and collaboration with Aquarium leadership and cross-functional departments
- Participate in the planning and vision of Mystic Aquarium at the executive levels
- Analyze and evaluate existing and potential marketing activities and strategies and make suggestions to leadership for improvement
- Maximize outreach to and engagement of diverse audiences through online, social media, and mobile engagement
- Provide direction to ensure Mystic Aquarium's external relations strategy is aligned with overall vision and goals
- Oversee the membership strategy, primarily focused on increasing the membership revenue line
- Maximize visitor and patron engagement in education, public programs, and events
- Prepare and execute a proactive crisis management plan to address potential risk and public relations challenges
- Develop and manage the Marketing budget in collaboration with marketing operations staff
- Lead, manage, and mentor a team of committed and engaged professionals
- Continually improve awareness of Mystic Aquarium among field influencers, donors, and the general public

Key Qualifications

- Minimum 10 years of professional marketing experience working for an institution of similar size
- Minimum of 5 years of supervisory experience

- Sophisticated marketing, branding, and public relations experience, with a track record of conceiving and implementing successful strategies, plans, and programs that drive sustained attendance and ticket sales
- Broad-based knowledge of the full range of marketing techniques and tools, technologies including branding, advertising, direct marketing, market research, and interactive technologies
- Experience leading teams and stakeholders to adopt new processes and procedures
- Demonstrated ability to plan, organize, and manage key communications and public relations functions
- Excellent written and verbal communication and persuasion skills, with an ability to effectively present to a variety of internal and external constituencies
- Well-organized and deadline-oriented, with exceptional attention to detail and follow-through
- Experience working within or closely with a development department is a plus
- Mastery of current social media trends to help inform strategies around digital and social media platforms
- Emotionally mature and self-possessed; patient and tactful with a sense of humor
- Experience in a membership-driven organization is a plus but not required
- Working knowledge of Tessitura, Satisfi, and Prospect2 is a plus
- Interest in the mission of Mystic Aquarium to inspire people to care for and protect the ocean planet through conservation, education, and research.

Diversity and Inclusion: Mystic Aquarium embraces the importance of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in its business and conservation practices. They strive to foster a sense of belonging within their organization, our guests, and the communities that they serve and are committed to dismantling systemic inequities.

Please submit your application [here](#)

For more information, please visit www.developmentguild.com.

For more information about Mystic Aquarium, please visit: www.mysticaquarium.org/footer/about-us/

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About Development Guild DDI

For 45 years, Development Guild DDI has consulted to leaders across the nonprofit spectrum. We have successfully collaborated with more than 650 clients nationwide in the sectors of health & science, education, environment, the arts, and social justice. We are experts in executive search and fundraising and are at the forefront of delivering best practice in these services.

With each engagement, we work in teams tailored to a client's particular needs, providing sector-specific intelligence, cross-sector insight, and hands-on functional expertise. We combine our perspective on nonprofit leadership with our knowledge and experience in both fundraising and executive search. This distinct perspective enables us to deliver the most strategic and measurable impact.

