



SOUTH FLORIDA
SCIENCE
CENTER
AND AQUARIUM

BECOME A VOLUNTEER



Inspire For a Lifetime.

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Welcome Volunteers!

Dear Volunteer,

On behalf of the South Florida Science Center and Aquarium staff, we would like to welcome you to our volunteer team. Volunteers are an essential part of our daily operations and helping us achieve our mission to "Open Every Mind to Science." The Science Center serves as a leading educational and cultural resource for visitors of all ages within South Florida. We hope that the contribution of your time is both beneficial and gratifying.

You are a vital asset for this organization, which could not survive without the support and dedication of community members like you. The donation of your time and efforts are not taken lightly. As an organization, we aim to give our volunteers tasks that accommodate their interests as well as promote a lifelong learning experience.

This handbook has been assembled as a guide to inform you of the essentials of the volunteer program. Within this handbook you will find our organization's mission, volunteer roles and responsibilities, and emergency information. Please use this as a reference guide to acquaint yourself with the Science Center and all that it has to offer.

We hope that the personal satisfaction and enrichment you gain in your work as a part of our team will encourage you to continue as a volunteer for years to come. Please feel free to contact me with any further questions you may have.

Thank you,

The Volunteer Department
4801 Dreher Trail N.
West Palm Beach, FL 33405

Mission Statement

Open every mind to science.

History of the South Florida Science Center

Founded and incorporated in 1959 by the Junior League of the Palm Beaches, the South Florida Science Museum opened in 1961 as a learning environment specific to natural science and natural history. In 1964, a new wing housing the planetarium opened, originally dedicated by and named after astronaut Buzz Aldrin. In 1971, a third phase of the facility was unveiled, more than doubling the floor space of the Museum to its current size, and adding exhibit space, classrooms, an auditorium and organizational support areas. The institution eventually became known as the Science Museum and Planetarium of Palm Beach County and in the 1980s, was renamed the South Florida Science Museum, reflecting the organization's increasingly broad subject matter, educational purpose and geographic appeal. In 2008, the planetarium and theater were completely renovated and renamed through the support of the Dekelbom Family Foundation. The rapid growth of the Science Museum is testament to the significant role that it assumed, and continues to fulfill, within the community, serving as an educational and cultural resource for visitors of all ages and backgrounds.

The South Florida Science Center and Aquarium, formerly the South Florida Science Museum, now operates as a "best-in-class," community-based science center providing visitors with engaging and interactive science education experiences. Since originally opening our doors, we have hosted over five million visitors and we are on track to serve 210,000 this year with 65,000 public and private school children from Palm Beach, Martin, Broward, and Miami-Dade counties. In April 2012, with a successful \$6 million capital campaign, we broke ground on an exciting expansion project that led the way towards the transformation of the South Florida Science Museum into the South Florida Science Center and Aquarium. With a grand re-opening on June 6th, 2013, guests now enjoy a 6,000 square foot building addition that houses the 3,000 square foot "Aquariums of the Atlantic" gallery and a 3,000 square foot Florida-themed permanent exhibit hall complete with a "River of Grass" Everglades exhibit, an interactive NOAA Science on a Sphere exhibit, and a Student Science Showcase area for winning science projects from the Palm Beach County School District. Most recently, we completed re-construction of our 5,000 square foot Hall of Discovery, containing 30 new and rehabilitated hands-on exhibits, an upgraded planetarium, a new 1,000 square foot early childhood education room with water play, photo booth, seating area and a light/bright wall; an upgraded theater, a new science laboratory and upgraded amenities.

Volunteer Program Purpose

The purpose of the South Florida Science Center and Aquarium's volunteer program is to create opportunities for community investment by allowing volunteers to share the excitement of science learning through innovative and interactive experiences. As a non-profit organization, we rely on our volunteer department to help fulfill our mission statement and enhance the visitor experience. Volunteers can be assigned any number of tasks at any point in time ranging from cleaning exhibits, assisting guests, participating in educational activities, or working with school groups.

Volunteer Program Overview

Rules

- Must commit to at least 25 volunteer hours in a year's time
- Do not congregate in groups during your shift
- Maintain a positive attitude while interacting with guests
- No eating, drinking, or chewing gum on Science Center floor
- Do not congregate around admissions desk or gift shop
- Inappropriate language is not permitted at anytime
- No cell phones or head phones may be used on Science Center floor
- No sitting on benches or chairs on Science Center floor (if you need a break please use volunteer office)

Benefits

- Science Center membership (after completion of 50 hours of service in a year)
- Complimentary planetarium shows
- Annual Volunteer Appreciation Banquet each Spring
- 10% discount in gift shop
- Upon request, volunteers may receive letters of recommendations, hour verification, or course evaluations

Dismissal

Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and procedures of the South Florida Science Center and Aquarium or who fail to perform their volunteer assignments may be subject to dismissal. A volunteer will have the opportunity to meet and discuss with their supervisor the reasons for dismissal prior to any action taken place. One warning will be given if caught violating any rule within the volunteer handbook however, upon a second infraction the science center reserves the right to dismiss the volunteer from further service.

Reasons for dismissal may include the following:

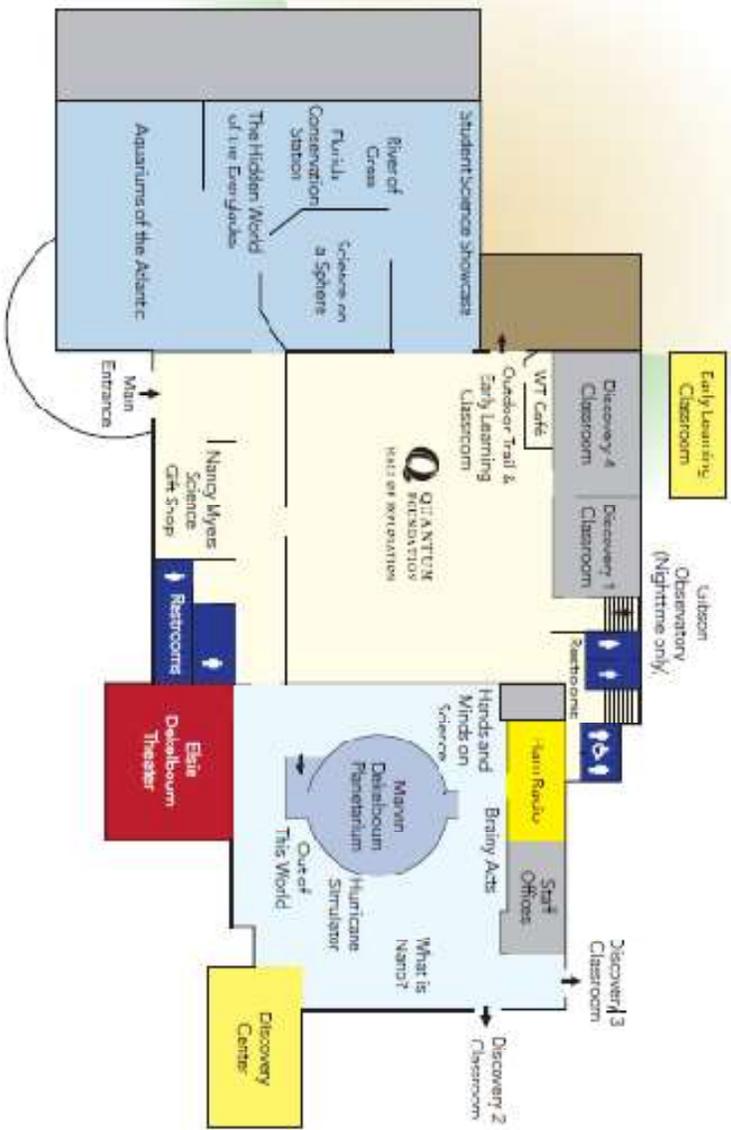
- Misconduct or insubordination
- Failure to abide by policies and procedures outlined within this manual
- Volunteering under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer or use of alcohol or illegal substances
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment
- Touching other volunteers or guests. **Touching guests, other volunteers, and staff is strictly forbidden.**
- Theft, destruction, or inappropriate removal of property belonging to the South Florida Science Center and Aquarium.

Volunteer Rules and Responsibilities

1. Sign in when you first arrive at the science center and sign out when you have finished volunteering for the day. The sign-in sheet is located in the volunteer office and is used to keep track of hours earned.
2. Upon arrival, please put on a blue volunteer vest and name tag. This allows visitors to easily recognize you as a part of the science center.
3. No food or drink is permitted while you are volunteering. If you would like a small snack break, please enjoy your food in the volunteer office or the break room.
4. No electronic devices are allowed to be used while volunteering. Please store all cell phones, iPods, and other electronic devices away before your shift. You may bring a lock and use one of the lockers located next to the volunteer office to store your valuables. The science center is not responsible for any losses or theft.
5. Always be helpful and courteous to guests, and be sure to answer any questions they may have. For example, many guests will ask where the Planetarium is, where the restrooms are, and what the science trail includes. Please familiarize yourself with the property so that you may guide visitors to various requested areas and inform them of our amenities.
6. The image of the science center is influenced by the appearance of our staff and volunteers. Please adhere to all dress code regulations listed within the handbook. Khaki slacks and nice jeans, a nice shirt and closed-toed shoes are the dress code requirements for our volunteers. Any sleeveless shirts, excessive or profane writing on jeans or shirts, short skirts, or open-toed shoes are NOT permitted. Not following the dress code will result in you being asked to end your shift early.
7. Maintain a positive attitude and always reflect the science center's mission to "open every mind to science." The science center has many exhibits and interactive stations that you will need to become familiar with in order to better inform any visitors that need assistance.

We greatly appreciate your support of science education within our community. Thank you for donating your time to the South Florida Science Center and Aquarium!

Future Site of
 Science Trail and
 Miniature Golf
 Course



Safety and Emergency Plans

At the South Florida Science Center and Aquarium we take the safety of our guests, staff and volunteers very seriously and sometimes call on our volunteers to assist in specific situations. The SFSCA maintains a complete *Emergency Procedures Booklet*, and a copy can be obtained at the front desk or from the Volunteer Manager. If you need to report an emergency, please go to the front desk as it is the central point of communication. We have included excerpts from the most relevant sections of the *Emergency Procedures Booklet* here.

FIRE ALARM

Make your way to the nearest exit. Instruct any visitors around you to exit the building, but do not consider it your responsibility to clear the building. **The safe gathering zone is 500 feet in front of the building.** Once gathered outside, remain with staff and guests, and do not reenter the science center unless instructed to.

FIRST AID/MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

Many of the Science Center staff is trained in First Aid and CPR. For minor injuries, please bring guest to the front desk so that they can call the appropriate person to distribute treatment. For a medical emergency, call 911 first, then notify a staff member as soon as possible.

CODE RED

If a Code Red announcement is made over the PA system, this means the building is under lockdown and no one is allowed to enter or exit the building.

CODE RED ADAM

This code means that a child has been lost. Nobody is allowed to leave or enter during this code. Immediately go stand by an exit for the duration of this code. Inform the guest that we are searching for a child and thank them for their patience. Visually check your surrounding area for a child matching the description given. If someone reports a lost child to you, please collect as much of a description of the child as possible (gender, color of shirt, name) and notify the front desk immediately.

Equal Employment Opportunity

The South Florida Science Center and Aquarium is an equal opportunity employer providing equal employment opportunity without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, military status, age or disability (including physical or mental handicap), ancestry, marital status, or unfavorable discharge from military service. Unfavorable military discharge does not include discharges characterized as "dishonorable." Recruitment, selection, and advancement at the SFSCA, as well as all other aspects of the employment relationship, will generally be based on the employee's job performance. This policy applies to all areas of volunteering, including recruitment, hiring, training, promotion, compensation, benefits, transfer, and social and recreational programs. Finally, we prohibit the harassment of any individual, as defined in the policy below.

Prohibition against harassment

The SFSCA is committed to providing an experience free of harassment, which includes harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, including same sex, pregnancy, national origin, citizenship, age, family obligations, disability, marital and veteran's status, sexual orientation, and any other basis of discrimination covered by applicable federal, state or local law. The science center strongly disapproves of and will not tolerate harassment of volunteers or patrons by employees, managers, or supervisors. Similarly, the SFSCA will not tolerate harassment of its employees by non-employees with whom SFSCA employees have a business, services, or professional relationship. The science center's policy is that any form of harassment is completely unacceptable and will not be tolerated. It is the obligation of all managers, supervisors and employees of the SFSCA to provide a work environment free of harassment.

Definition of Harassment

Harassment for purposes of this policy is verbal or physical conduct that is derogatory or that shows hostility toward an individual because of his or her race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, national origin, citizenship, age, family obligations, disability, marital and veteran's status and any other basis of discrimination covered by applicable federal, state or local law, and that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. Harassment may include, but is not limited to, epithets, abusive language, slurs, jokes, or other verbal or physical conduct relation to an individual's race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, national origin, citizenship, age, family obligations, disability, marital and veteran's status and any other basis of discrimination covered by applicable federal, state or local law. Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to unwanted sexual advances or touching, graphic sexual depictions, displays in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, and/or humiliating or offensive comments, jokes, or innuendoes. Sexual harassment may also consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that creates an offensive or hostile working environment. Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature. It refers to behavior that is not welcome, which is personally offensive, and which, therefore, interferes with our work effectiveness.

Complaint Procedure

In regard to harassment, any individual who believes that they are being harassed by a supervisor, SFSCA employee, other volunteer, or believes that their involvement with the SFSCA is being adversely affected by such conduct, should immediately report such concerns to the volunteer manager. If you feel uncomfortable discussing the issue with your own manager, you should promptly notify the Human Resources department. All complaints of harassment should be made in writing and signed by the reporting individual.

After a complaint of harassment is received, a prompt and impartial investigation will be conducted and appropriate disciplinary action calculated to end the problem and prevent its recurrence. All complaints of harassment will be handled in a discreet manner and information will be limited to those personnel with a need to know.

Acknowledgement and Receipt

I acknowledge that I have received the South Florida Science Center and Aquarium Volunteer Handbook. By agreeing, I affirm that I have read the aforementioned document and understand the policies explained therein. I understand that I am expected to comply with all policies and procedures contained in the handbook and that any questions should be directed to the Director of Visitor Services or Manager of Visitor Services for clarification.

Print Name

Signature

Date