

Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

Since Governor Baker announced a stay-at-home order for the state of Massachusetts in March of this year, the “normal” way of doing things has been disrupted and we’ve all pivoted to a new reality brought on by a global pandemic that none of us could have predicted. City and state-wide closures of schools, businesses, and cultural organizations, like the New England Aquarium, in an effort to stem the impact of COVID-19 have proven to be challenging and the financial implications long-lasting.



Our ability to weather this storm is due in large part to YOU, our loyal supporters and friends. Because of you, our animal care staff has continued to provide the highest level of care for the almost 20,000 animals that call the Aquarium home; our educators have developed new virtual interactions and are reimagining our approach to building critical thinkers and ocean problem solvers; and our conservation scientists are continuing their essential research and fieldwork. Our doors may have been closed to the public for more than four months, but the work we are engaged in to protect the blue planet goes on uninterrupted.

With our doors open to the public once again, I am pleased to share with you an abbreviated 2019 Annual Report. While the effects of the current pandemic and the spotlight on racial injustice are critical in this moment and may even overshadow our success in the past year, we are proud of all that we accomplished in 2019 with your support.

We can’t thank you enough for being an essential part of our community and look forward to welcoming you back to Central Wharf in the weeks and months ahead.



Vikki N. Spruill
President & CEO

Together with visitors, teens, fishermen, teachers, scientists, students, legislators, and industry leaders, the New England Aquarium worked to protect the blue planet in 2019.

Over 1.3 million tickets sold protected the blue planet

This year, more than a million tickets to the Aquarium not only supported the animals in our care who help inspire ocean protectors but also helped finance research we do to solve ocean challenges and our rescue and rehabilitation work with endangered and threatened species.



New exhibit inspired coral reef protection

In April, the Aquarium opened a dazzling new Indo-Pacific coral reef exhibit that helps visitors learn about these “rainforests of the sea” that are essential to supporting thousands of species of fish, sea turtles, sharks, and other marine life, and inform visitors about what they can do to protect coral reefs worldwide. [Learn more »](#)



Historic birth chronicled

In the summer, the birth of two anaconda in an Aquarium exhibit of only adult females kindled excitement around the world. DNA testing confirmed the babies were produced by an extremely rare form of asexual reproduction called parthenogenesis. [Read the blog »](#)



More than 2,000 advocated for conservation

This year, a couple thousand visitors sent postcards to members of Congress asking them to support strong, science-based fisheries management policies and protect the highly endangered North Atlantic right whale. [Learn more »](#)



Twenty-one teens led the way

In September, 21 of the Aquarium's ClimaTeens marched as part of the Youth Climate Strike in City Hall Plaza, joining millions of youth worldwide to call for global action on climate change. [Read the blog »](#)



Nearly 200 sea turtles (including Munchkin) rehabilitated

As part of the Aquarium's rescue and rehabilitation work with endangered and threatened sea turtles, more than 195 hypothermic turtles were treated at the Aquarium's Sea Turtle Hospital in Quincy this fall after stranding on Cape Cod beaches. Earlier this year, we released [Munchkin, a 330-pound loggerhead](#) rehabilitated in Quincy, and we're tracking her using a GPS satellite tag to learn about her behavior in the wild. [Read the 2019 rescue blogs »](#)



Global network activated

Through the [Marine Conservation Action Fund \(MCAF\)](#), the Aquarium supports emerging conservation leaders in developing countries. Some of those leaders are named MCAF Fellows, and this fall 11 Fellows came to Boston for the inaugural MCAF Fellows Summit, where they shared their projects with business leaders and conservationists. [Read the blog »](#)



Solutions reduced humans' effect on marine animals

The Aquarium's [Anderson Cabot Center for Ocean Life](#) offers science-based solutions to mitigate the human impact on our oceans and its marine life. In 2019, our researchers teamed up with Massachusetts lobsterman Marc Palombo to test a new ropeless lobster pot system to reduce the danger of entanglement for whales, studied discard mortality of the Atlantic cod to produce best capture and handling practices, and partnered with Mass Marine Fisheries and universities on the creation of recommendations for the recreational fishing industry to support the preservation of local fish stocks.



Legislation progressed to SAVE endangered species

The Aquarium has been a vocal supporter of the [Scientific Assistance for Very Endangered \(SAVE\) North Atlantic Right Whales Act](#), which would provide funding for public and private sectors to work together to protect North Atlantic right whales. The act was voted favorably out of the Senate Commerce Committee on November 13.



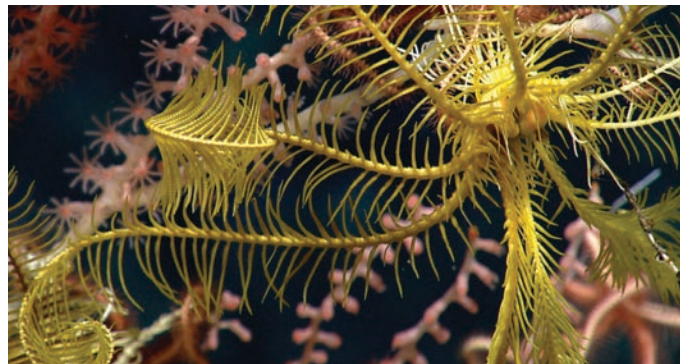
Conservation efforts advanced

In 2019, the Aquarium testified at a Massachusetts State House hearing in support of [House Bill 771](#) and [Senate Bill 462](#) to reduce plastic bag pollution, sharing the negative impacts of plastic pollution on our local wildlife. The Aquarium also partnered with the City of Boston on the [Zero Waste Boston](#) initiative that calls for expanding the city's composting program, increasing access to recycling opportunities, and launching a citywide recycling education campaign. [Read the Zero Waste Boston blog »](#)



Marine areas protected, surveyed

In December, a federal appeals court upheld the designation of the [Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument](#). The Aquarium provided strong scientific evidence that helped in the [establishment of this area](#) as a national monument and conducts regular [aerial observations](#) to survey marine life.



Efforts combined to track whales

The Aquarium announced in October a collaboration with nonprofit engineering company Draper that will commit \$1 million to developing new methods for monitoring whale populations from space. Combining data from several sources, including satellite, sonar, and radar, the new technology will enable scientists to survey whales in remote regions of the ocean.

[Read the blog »](#)



Partnerships championed ocean conservation

The Aquarium affiliated with several companies in 2019 to help protect the blue planet. Boston-based beverage company Proud Pour developed [Cider for Sea Turtles](#), with 13 percent of its top-line revenue being donated to the Aquarium's sea turtle program. The [New England Revolution](#) soccer team helped promote ocean protection and conservation as team players joined a beach cleanup effort, honored our sea turtle rescue staff, and auctioned a special team jersey to benefit the Aquarium. [Gorton's Seafood celebrated 10 years](#) of partnering with the Aquarium to bring sustainable seafood to consumers, and [Phillips Chocolates](#) sold special boxes of turtle chocolates with a portion of the proceeds benefiting the Aquarium. As part of our 50th anniversary celebration, Trillium



Brewing launched For the Sake of the Sea, a craft beer that raised more than \$10,000 for the Aquarium. New sustainable "blue-tech" ocean ventures will benefit from a partnership between [SeaAhead](#) and the Aquarium that will provide grants to entrepreneurs to encourage ocean innovation.

Aquarium committed to accessibility for all

The Aquarium strives to be [open, accessible, and inclusive to everyone](#). Recognized in 2019 as an Autism Welcoming Business by the Autism Alliance, the Aquarium opens early and provides a quieter experience on several Sundays a year exclusively for people with sensory processing needs and their families.



Lectures educated, inspired, entertained

The Aquarium continued its popular lecture series in the spring and fall. With support from the Lowell Institute, the series is free and open to the public and tackles contemporary topics by scientists, environmental writers, photographers, film producers, and others.



New England Aquarium Corporation

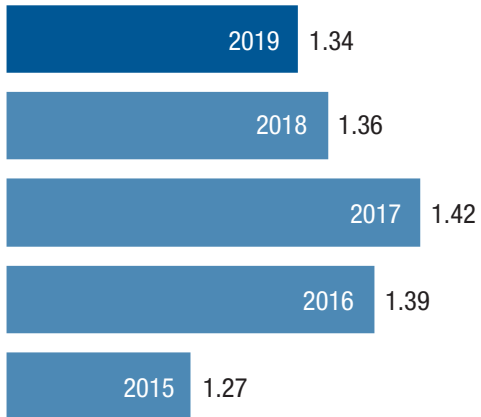
Financial Results (in thousands of dollars)

	FY 2019	FY 2018	CHANGE \$
Operating Revenue & Support			
Admissions – Individuals & Groups	\$23,105.5	\$22,301.9	\$803.6
Retail Sales – Food, Gift Shop & Events	5,419.9	12,064.8	(6,644.9)
Memberships – Individual & Family	2,932.5	3,084.0	(151.5)
Corporate – Memberships & Sponsorships	735.1	756.0	(20.9)
Gifts & Pledges	2,069.7	2,037.1	32.6
Grants & Contracts	2,630.4	3,046.6	(416.2)
Net assets released from restriction	4,353.9	3,282.1	1,071.8
Other	1,226.2	1,302.6	(76.4)
Total Operating Revenue & Support	42,473.1	47,875.0	(5,402.0)
Operating Expenses			
Research, Conservation & Education	\$8,283.2	\$7,806.4	476.8
Exhibit Operation & Maintenance	6,847.5	6,869.6	(22.1)
Plant Operations	8,350.9	8,237.5	113.4
Cost of Retail Sales	2,314.7	9,213.9	(6,899.2)
General Administration & Supporting Services	11,651.7	11,102.3	549.4
Fundraising	3,280.7	2,558.2	722.5
Interest	444.2	432.4	11.8
Total Operating Expenses	41,172.9	46,220.3	(5,047.4)
Operating Reserve (Deficit)*	\$1,300.1	\$1,654.7	\$(354.6)
Other Changes in Unrestricted Net Assets			
Operating Reserve (deficit)	1,300.1	1,654.7	(354.6)
Non-operating Revenues and Expense, Net	169.3	305.6	(136.3)
Net Assets Released to Fund Capital Improvements	1,571.5	51.9	1,519.6
Realized & Unrealized Gains (Losses), Net	455.2	(353.4)	808.6
Gain on Disposal of Fixed Assets & Debt Refinancing	(22.9)	0.0	(22.9)
Depreciation & Amortization Expense	(4,644.9)	(4,855.7)	210.7
Net Non-cash Pension Related Changes	(85.1)	100.5	(185.6)
Increase (Decrease) in Unrestricted Net Assets	(1,256.7)	(3,096.3)	1,839.6
Increase (Decrease) in Restricted Net Assets	6,058.3	954.1	5,104.2
Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets	4,801.6	(2,142.2)	6,943.8
Net Assets – Beginning of Year	50,616.1	52,758.3	(2,142.2)
Net Assets – End of Year	\$55,417.6	\$50,616.1	\$4,801.6

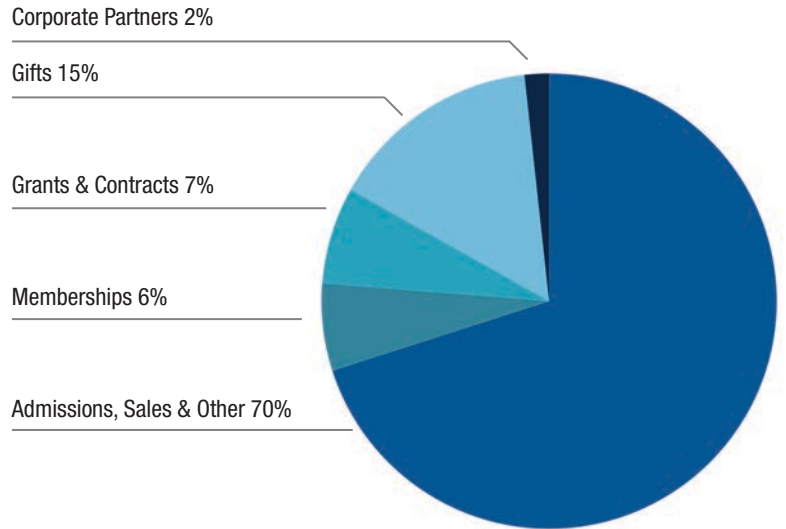
*Operating reserve, as defined by management, excludes capital expenditures, principal payments, depreciation and amortization charges, and non-recurring transactions. Audited financial statements, with an unqualified opinion by Mayer Hoffman McCann P.C., are available on request.

Total Aquarium Attendance

(millions)

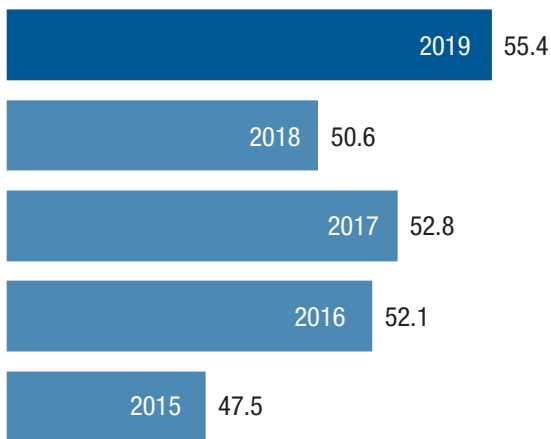


Operating Revenue*

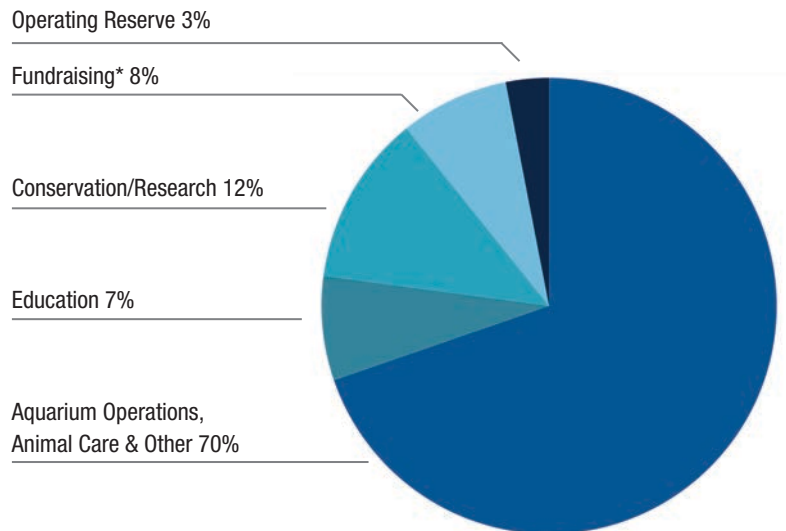


Total Net Assets

(millions)



Operating Expenses



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This list reflects our Governance members as of December 31, 2019.

In Memoriam

We would like to honor the memory of the following Aquarium employees, board members, and supporters who passed away in 2019 and early 2020.

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The New England Aquarium gratefully acknowledges the individuals, foundations, corporations, and government agencies whose generous financial contributions and pledges provided critical support for animal care, conservation, education, and advocacy throughout 2019. We are pleased to recognize the leading contributors and express our gratitude to more than 20,000 members and supporters. This list recognizes philanthropic gifts of over \$500.

We would like to extend a special thank you to our 101 Charter Members, who have been with us since the Aquarium opened its doors—and some even before that! More than 50 years later and we are still incredibly fortunate to have your support and goodwill. Thank you!

Great Benefactors

The following donors have committed \$1 million or more cumulatively since the New England Aquarium's opening in June of 1969.

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