OCEAN AMBASSADORS
mobilizing the next generation of marine scientists

The Marine Mammal Center

2017-2018
Academic Year
WELCOME!

ABOUT THE MARINE MAMMAL CENTER:

At The Marine Mammal Center, we are guided and inspired by a shared vision of a healthy ocean for marine mammals and humans alike. Our mission is to advance global ocean conservation through marine mammal rescue and rehabilitation, scientific research, and education.

ABOUT OCEAN AMBASSADORS:

The Marine Mammal Center is pleased to offer the opportunity for participation in our Ocean Ambassadors program. Ocean Ambassadors is an exciting marine science education program tailored to meet the unique needs of students in grades 6 through 8 and their teachers. This program allows us to reach middle school students at a formative time in their lives and ensure that they become the next generation of informed scientists and engaged citizens who will care for and ensure the health of our oceans and environment.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Ocean Ambassadors is founded on the following principles:

1. Children in middle school are in a challenging and transformative time and need programs tailored specifically for them
2. Teacher professional development is essential and organizations like TMMC can be a resource as Next Generation Science Standards are adopted in the state of California
3. An in-depth, hands-on, project-based learning model can engage a broad range of middle school students
4. A high quality STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) education can foster students who understand and care deeply about the environment and their community regardless of whether they follow STEM careers or not.
EXPECTATIONS:

The Marine Mammal Center will:

- Provide structured curriculum for teachers (10 lessons, labs, field trip/ activity guides, toolkit of resources, instructional videos)
- Facilitate three professional development meetings throughout the year to prepare and support teachers (Launch, Mid-Year, Debrief/ Reflection)
- Supply materials during visits and data for projects (journals, field equipment, video footage, etc.)
- Provide financial and logistical support for field trip transportation – including two visits to TMMC (fall focused on research [all students], spring focused on patients/project presentation [a group of select students]) and one field trip in the field [all students]
- Provide final project guidance and support
- Coordinate final project presentation event

School Partner will:

- Participate in all three professional development meetings throughout the year to prepare and support teachers (Launch, Mid-Year, Debrief/Reflection) and review regularly provided resources
- Incorporate all activities into their curriculum at their pace and teach prep activities before scheduled field trips
- Schedule and coordinate school logistics for the field trips
- Take ownership of the program and engage students in final projects
- Communicate with TMMC about how things are going, what support is needed, and provide program evaluation data around student learning.
ELIGIBILITY:

All institutions serving the 6th through 8th grade audience will be considered for participation in Ocean Ambassadors. However, to maximize the impact of the program, the following factors will be given extra consideration:

- Schools with administrative and/or district support
- Schools with full grade level participation
- Under-resourced schools
- Schools or educators that contribute unique skill sets or resources to the Ocean Ambassador’s community

APPLICATIONS:

A complete application and administrative letter of support is required for consideration to participate in Ocean Ambassador’s.

REVIEW & SELECTION PROCESS:

Applicants will receive a confirmation receipt of their application within a week of submission.

Applications will be reviewed for completeness, commitment to participation, and alignment with program priorities.

Program managers will meet with applicants and administrators to review the program expectations and address participant needs.

Teachers will enroll for next professional development launch session to commence participation.
TIMELINE:

Year Round: Request for proposals & applications available

   Informational meetings & recruitment

June 30: Confirmation of participation & approximate student numbers

August: Educators submit contracts and pre-program evaluation data

September: Professional Development session #1 & official launch

September-November: Implementation of curriculum

October/November/December: Field trips to The Marine Mammal Center

January: Professional Development session #2

February-April: Implementation of curriculum & field trips to see wild marine mammals

May: Community events presenting student “Calls to Conserve” & ConservationCon at TMMC

May (end of) or (early) June: Final Professional Development session #3 & celebration

June: Educators submit post-program evaluation data
OUR FUNDERS:

The Ocean Ambassadors program is provided at no fee and with transportation support, so that financial constraints do not limit participation in the program. The program was made possible by the Thelma Doelger Charitable Trust, the Dean Witter Foundation, the Wells Fargo Foundation, Genentech, Tesoro, the Norman Raab Foundation, and many other generous funders of our education programs.

FAQ’S:

*What is the rate of acceptance into Ocean Ambassadors?*

As a growing program, there is no set number of schools or teachers that will be accepted each year. Our objective is to serve at least 2000 students in 20 Bay Area schools by 2020. All applicants with a complete application that demonstrate commitment to the program will be seriously considered for participation.

*Are community groups eligible to participate in Ocean Ambassadors?*

All entities serving middle school audiences are eligible to apply, however priority is often provided to schools for reasons related to impact and available resources. Please review the section on eligibility to consider what factors might apply to your situation and direct any further questions to oa@tmmc.org.

*Can I view the curriculum before applying?*

Because Ocean Ambassador’s resources are still considered proprietary information, only current participants are allowed unrestricted access. If you have a specific question or concern and would like to review the curriculum or other resources with us, please reach out to oa@tmmc.org.

*What is the time commitment to participate in Ocean Ambassadors?*

During your informational meeting with program managers, this question will be discussed in greater detail as you examine different aspects of the program and how they might be implemented at your school. Time commitments will vary based on your learners and teaching style. Ocean Ambassadors is also designed to fit in with lessons or units that you may already be teaching. We want it to work for you. A rough estimate
including teaching time, planning time, professional development sessions and field trips might be approximately sixty hours over the course of the year.

*Do you allow multiple grades to participate?*

We have found that Ocean Ambassadors is best implemented with a single grade level – 6th, 7th or 8th - so would ask that this discussion and decision occur amongst your faculty prior to applying to the program. There have been workable exceptions in the past so if you would like to discuss this further, please reach out to us at oa@tmmc.org.