

# The SWMEA CONNECTION

newsletter of the Southwest Marine/ Aquatic Educators' Association 2014 Spring

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## Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (Intel ISEF)

May 10th - 16th 2014

Los Angeles Convention Center

As the Education Outreach Supervisor at the Aquarium of the Pacific, I look for ways to unite and interface with the scientific community outside the walls of our Aquarium. I was first introduced to Intel ISEF in the fall of 2011 and remember feeling immediately drawn to the uniqueness of the event and appreciating its positive global impact. [Intel ISEF finalists come from more than 70 countries, regions, and territories.]

I quickly resolved to play whatever role I could to help. That year, I primarily supported the Education Outreach Program in Los Angeles and helped serve more than 3,000 local middle and high school students who attended the fair and participated in Forensic Science-themed labs.

Since 2011, my participation and role with Intel ISEF has grown and now, three years later, I am the

*(continued on page 5)*



\_\_\_\_\_ *from the President* \_\_\_\_\_

Dear SWMEA,

This spring SWMEA will truly step into the digital age. It's about time, right? Starting sometime in March, new members and renewing members will be allowed to pay for their membership with PayPal! Woo hoo!

We also have an update on the SWMEA webinar series. Although we had wanted to start our webinar series in February, we ran into some issues with finding an affordable webinar hosting platform that allows for interactive webinars. Luckily, we now have multiple options. So, although the start of the webinar series has been delayed, we will be ready to begin in April. Please keep your eyes peeled for emails regarding the first webinar.

If you are interested in presenting a webinar on a topic that you think might be useful to our SWMEA members, please let me know. Most current SWMEA members work for informal education programs and serve either the public or formal educators. People have expressed interest in topics related to the Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards as well as climate change and serving underrepresented populations.

In the meantime, we'd like to invite you to participate in a free Ocean Literacy webinar on March 13th:

*Ocean Sciences play a new, more prominent role in the Next Generation Science Standards. The ocean literacy guide describing the essential principles and fundamental concepts was revised and updated in 2013 and new curricula are now available that support the NGSS goals. Now more than ever, science educators play an important role in helping K-12 teachers to use ocean sciences to achieve these ambitious new standards. Come find out about these important events and how Ocean Literacy has come of age.*

Presented by: Craig Strang, Lynn Whitley, Diana Payne, Kurt Holland and Sarah Schoedinger

Hosted by: Peter Tuddenham and the College of Exploration

Date: Thursday, March 13, 2014

Time: 3:30-4:30 PM ET / 12:30-1:30 PT / 10:30-11:30 AM in Hawaii

For more information on how **to join this webinar, please visit** [http://www.marine-ed.org/events/event\\_details.asp?id=415887](http://www.marine-ed.org/events/event_details.asp?id=415887)

All the best for a great spring,

Emily

## SWMEA Connection Call for Articles

We hope you enjoy this edition of your SWMEA Connection newsletter. We encourage all members to contribute articles and other news regarding your facilities and what's happening in your neck of the woods (or desert or ocean, wherever you may be)!

Check out the schedule below to see the deadlines and publication dates of upcoming SWMEA Connection editions. It's never too soon to start thinking about items you would like to submit for inclusion. Please send any articles to Kellie at [kkorhonen@dolphinquest.com](mailto:kkorhonen@dolphinquest.com) or to me at [sschenk@mandalay-bay.com](mailto:sschenk@mandalay-bay.com). Kellie and I both look forward to receiving your contributions, and to making the SWMEA Connection the most informative, interesting, and best looking newsletter out there!

Sincerely,  
Steven and Kellie

### Upcoming Newsletters

**Summer 2014**

**Deadline - May 15th**

**Publication - June 1st**

**Fall 2014**

**Deadline - August 15th**

**Publication - September 1st**

**Winter 2014**

**Deadline - November 15th**

**Publication - December 1st**

**Spring 2015**

**Deadline - February 15th**

**Publication - March 1st**

# Underwater Parks Day Celebration

On January 18, 2014, nine aquariums and marine science centers in Southern California celebrated the annual Underwater Parks Day, with kid-friendly activities designed to raise awareness of the "underwater parks" or Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). At SEA LIFE™ Aquarium at LEGOLAND California Resort, local conservation organizations, including I Love a Clean San Diego, H2O Trash Patrol and Agua Hedionada Lagoon Foundation, hosted tables during a mini Conservation Expo; guests could learn how to get involved in caring for our ocean locally. Underwater Parks Day is an effort to explain the need for Marine Protected Areas that are a critical tool in replenishing fish populations and restoring the health of our coastal waters. The entire California coastline is now covered under a network of MPAs. The San Diego MPAs closest to SEA LIFE are Swamis in Encinitas, La Jolla, Point Loma and Imperial Beach. During the event, a diver educated guests about these special ocean places while inside the Lost City of Atlantis, SEA LIFE's 200,000 gallon tank. This child-friendly presentation presented a fun and educational twist

on underwater parks. Other Aquariums hosting Underwater Parks Day events included Cabrillo Marine Aquarium in San Pedro, Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach, Ocean Institute in Dana Point, Birch Aquarium at Scripps in La Jolla, Santa Monica Pier Aquarium and Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History's Ty Warner Sea Center.

These nine organizations have formed the Southern California Aquarium Collaborative (SCAC), aimed at educating the public about the importance of MPAs. This group created hands-on exhibits, videos, "kid-friendly" posters, reusable tote bags emblazoned with MPA messaging, citizen scientist opportunities and a curriculum guide all developed, tested and

used by SCAC aquarium educator partners. The group adopted four key messages for the MPA project. The importance of protecting MPAs for future generations, how these areas are unique, how larger older fish produce more offspring and how MPAs can be used by the public are highlighted in all of the deliverables. MPA messages have reached guests and teachers that visit the SCAC sites from Santa Barbara through San Diego. The efforts of SCAC show teachers how to implement the MPA topics into their science curriculum and spread the MPA messaging to guests that visit the organizations. Classroom curriculum on MPAs is being designed and will be released in Spring 2014.



*submitted by  
Lori Walsh Education/Operations Supervisor  
SEA LIFE® Aquarium at LEGOLAND®*



# Shark Reef Aquarium Attends Touch-a-Truck

On Saturday, March 1st, organizations from around the Las Vegas Valley brought their vehicles to Touch-a-Truck. At this event, kids are allowed to climb in and pretend to drive big semis, ambulances, SWAT vans, fire trucks, and police cars and honk their amazingly loud horns. Once again, Shark Reef Aquarium participated by bringing our shark transport vehicle and allowed kids and adults a chance to see a live leopard shark up close and explain how sharks can be moved from one facility to another.

While honking horns and playing in cars and trucks is a lot of fun, it is all done for a worthy cause. Proceeds from TOUCH-A-TRUCK® help to support Family to Family Connection, a 501(c)3, non-profit. Family to Family Connection helps to build stronger families and gives them the tools to provide a safe and nurturing environment for their children through parent education and community networking.



*Intel ISEF continued from page 1*

co-chair for the Los Angeles Local Arrangements Committee. This role entails the recruitment of organizations, universities, and individuals that can help support our volunteer, interpreter, and judging needs. [More than 1,000 judges, 500 general volunteers, and 200 interpreters are needed throughout the week.]

Though the immensity of the event is impressive and the personnel are fantastic, I can honestly say that I am drawn to volunteering my time because of the student finalists. These students embody such an incredible level of dedication and commitment and bring forward new approaches and perspectives to their fields of study.

One of my most memorable moments with Intel ISEF occurred during my first year's involvement in 2011. Two months prior to Intel ISEF, I judged the Los Angeles County Science Fair in the Animal Biology category. I met the most amazing high school student named Adrienne McColl. Adrienne was investigating ways to restore the declining population of the Southern California Spiny lobster. Adrienne's research centered around lobster larvae and she succeeded in keeping the larvae alive for 129 days, far surpassing the record of any professional scientist by more than two months.

plishment, I along with the other judges, agreed that Adrienne should be nominated to attend Intel ISEF. Not only did Adrienne go onto compete in Intel ISEF 2011, but she won Best in Category for her research. To this day, Adrienne and I stay in touch. She is pursuing her degree in Aquatic and Fishery Science at the University of Washington. Most recently we are working on developing a way to showcase her research with the public at the Aquarium of the Pacific through a hands-on activity for guests.

Adrienne embodies the spirit of independent research and is a prime example of why I volunteer my time to Intel ISEF. It is this marriage of opportunity, which Intel ISEF affords, and capability, that students strive to achieve, that make volunteering a great investment for my community. Only in an event such as this one can a Southern California student present her science next to her peers from more than 70 different countries. Not only

does this event introduce global competition, but there are multiple examples of how our local communities benefit from this event. Local students not only participate as finalists, but thousands of students will get the opportunity to participate in the Education Outreach Program, exposing them to interesting projects and ideas.

In an effort to continue building, and ultimately benefiting, the local scientific community we need to have members from our communities step up as judges and volunteers at Intel ISEF. Events like this help create and encourage the next generation of scientists, who then can begin to pave the way for the next generation after them. I firmly believe that experiencing Intel ISEF just once will help local scientists witness how this event champions and celebrates young scientists in a way that is life-changing for students. And finally, I believe that community service and volunteerism are an investment in our community and the people who live in it.



Interested in volunteering at Intel ISEF this May? Find more information and register online or contact us at [isefvolunteer@societyforscience.org](mailto:isefvolunteer@societyforscience.org).

Given this impressive accom-

*submitted by Milena Acosta, Outreach Supervisor, Aquarium of the Pacific*

Upcoming Events

**March 22 - 28, 2014**

**AZA Mid Year Meeting in Memphis, Tennessee**

**April 22, 2014**

**Earth Day**

**May 16, 2014**

**Endangered Species Day**

**June 8, 2014**

**World Oceans Day**

**July 19 -24, 2014**

**NMEA Annual Conference in Annapolis,  
Maryland**

**September 12 - 18, 2014**

**AZA Annual Conference in Orlando, Florida**

## **Become a SWMEA member today!**

**The Southwest Marine/  
Aquatic Educators'  
Association (SWMEA) is a  
marine educators network  
throughout Arizona,  
California, Colorado,  
Nevada, New Mexico, and  
Utah. Members receive  
four on-line newsletters  
each year and a  
subscription to our  
listserve. Receive  
discounts on our  
semi-annual professional  
development seminars as  
well as discounts in  
several SWMEA facilities.**

**For more information  
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### *The SWMEA Connection*

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