

Aquarium Volunteers and Volunteer SCUBA Divers

Anyone interested in diving for the Museum should submit a copy of their SCUBA certification **with** the adult volunteer application, note interest in diving, and list dive experience on the application in the space for additional information. A background check is also required for volunteer divers. All information is kept confidential.

The volunteer coordinator will follow up with applicants promptly when the complete application has been received and reviewed.

Before being accepted as a volunteer diver, candidates must

- 1) *observe 2 dives, assisting as appropriate with all aspects other than the actual diving-i.e., food preparation, checking tanks and equipment, etc.
- 2) meet and interview with aquarium staff

*Interview and first observation can be set for the same time if possible.

If you are accepted as a volunteer diver, we will notify you after your interview and observations have been completed, and work with you to schedule your volunteer times.

Opportunities to volunteer at MMNS as a diver:

- **Regular Public Fish Feeding Dives**

Fish feeding dives are scheduled for Tuesday and Friday mornings at 10 a.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. These are the advertised times. If any of these times fit really well with your schedule, you can let us know and we will see if you can fit into a regular rotation.

Sunday dives are assigned to a regular person each Sunday of the month—1st Sunday, 2nd Sunday, and so on. Typically, Tuesday and Friday dives also are done by a diver who can commit to that particular day/time, each week. If we need a diver for any of these slots we will let you know when we are meeting with you.

However, we always need to have enough trained volunteer divers so that we can call if we need someone to substitute or just to help out as needed.

- **Maintenance Dives**

Some of the larger tanks (Pearl River, MS Sound, Paddlefish/Sturgeon) and the terrarium (or “swamp” area) need regular maintenance by someone diving in the tank. These tasks are coordinated with the specific staff responsible for managing the tanks, based on volunteer availability. If you’d like to volunteer for a regular dive time other than the public fish feeding dives, this may be a good option for you.

- Other assistance with public events or behind the scenes
Throughout the year, Museum public events occur that may feature the use of the touch tank, or other interactive ways to inform the visitors about diving and aquatic life. In addition to diving, during public events, volunteer divers assist with information and activities relating to the aquarium habitats.

Visitors not only love seeing the variety of aquariums here at MMNS, but are also tremendously fascinated by the interactions that occur when there is a person in the aquarium environment! Our goal is to capture that fascination and turn it towards education about Mississippi's diverse aquatic life.

Be aware that all volunteer divers are expected to have their own gear. This includes mask, weight belt, wetsuit or dive skin, and booties.