

Service Systems Associates named Monterey Bay Aquarium's Business Partner of the Year

Service Systems Associates, Inc. (SSA) was recently honored by the Monterey Bay Aquarium as their "Business Partner of the Year." SSA became a member of the Business Partner program when they assumed management of the retail operations at the Aquarium in 2004. There are more than 90 companies who are members of this prestigious partner club.

At the Monterey Bay Aquarium's annual Business Partner reception, Executive Director Julie Packard gave their retail operator, Service Systems Associates, special recognition for their commitment to ocean conservation. She said, "We're deeply grateful to SSA for their very generous contributions toward our education programs, research and sustainable seafood initiatives. SSA and our other business partners provide critical support for our work to inspire the next generation of ocean stewards."

Kevin McNicholas, president of SSA, said the partnership is a win-win and a natural fit. "We support the Aquarium and its efforts to inspire conservation of the oceans. By working closely with Aquarium staff, our retail management team has made a concentrated effort to offer environmentally friendly and educational products for sale in the Aquarium's giftshop. It's all part of the goal to ensure the Aquarium's guests become the next generation of ocean stewards."



Pictured from left: Tim Brantley, SSA Senior Vice President, Kevin McNicholas, SSA President, Andrew Fischer, SSA General Manager at Monterey Bay Aquarium (MBA); Julie Packard, MBA Executive Director, and Ed Prohaska, Chief Financial Officer and Vice President of Enterprise Development.

SSA General Manager Andrew Fischer said the partnership is more than just donating money, as SSA provided things such as the donation of admission tickets received by SSA from the Aquarium as part of its Business Partner recognition program, to the area's Boys and Girls Club. "We received terrific responses from the kids who were able to visit the Aquarium, many for the first time. Hopefully, this donation helped our guests develop a connection to nature and plant the seeds for environmental stewardship in the future. We look forward to continuing this worthwhile partnership with both the Aquarium and the Boy's and Girl's Clubs."

He added that the retail management team for SSA has helped make the partnership a success. The team was also recognized at the reception. They include: Maura Rogers, Barbara Reuther, Maria Haskell, Rosemary Gill, Joezay Valdez, Sabrina Wedderburn, Julie Lacy, Jill Norasate, Annie McCollough, Joaquina Arias and Franci Weaver.

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The **Monterey Bay Aquarium**, acclaimed as one of the world's finest, has attracted more than 44 million visitors since it opened in 1984. It has won national awards for its permanent and special exhibitions, its architecture, and its cultural, educational and economic impact over the past 25 years. The Aquarium celebrates its silver anniversary in 2009.

Service Systems Associates manages retail and food service concessions at museums, botanic gardens, zoos and aquariums in the United States, including the San Francisco, Los Angeles and Denver Zoos, Pittsburgh Zoo and PPG Aquarium and Monterey Bay Aquarium. They are a national leader in visitor service operations for zoos and aquariums, serving over 15 million guests annually. Service Systems Associates is celebrating 20 years of service in 2009.