



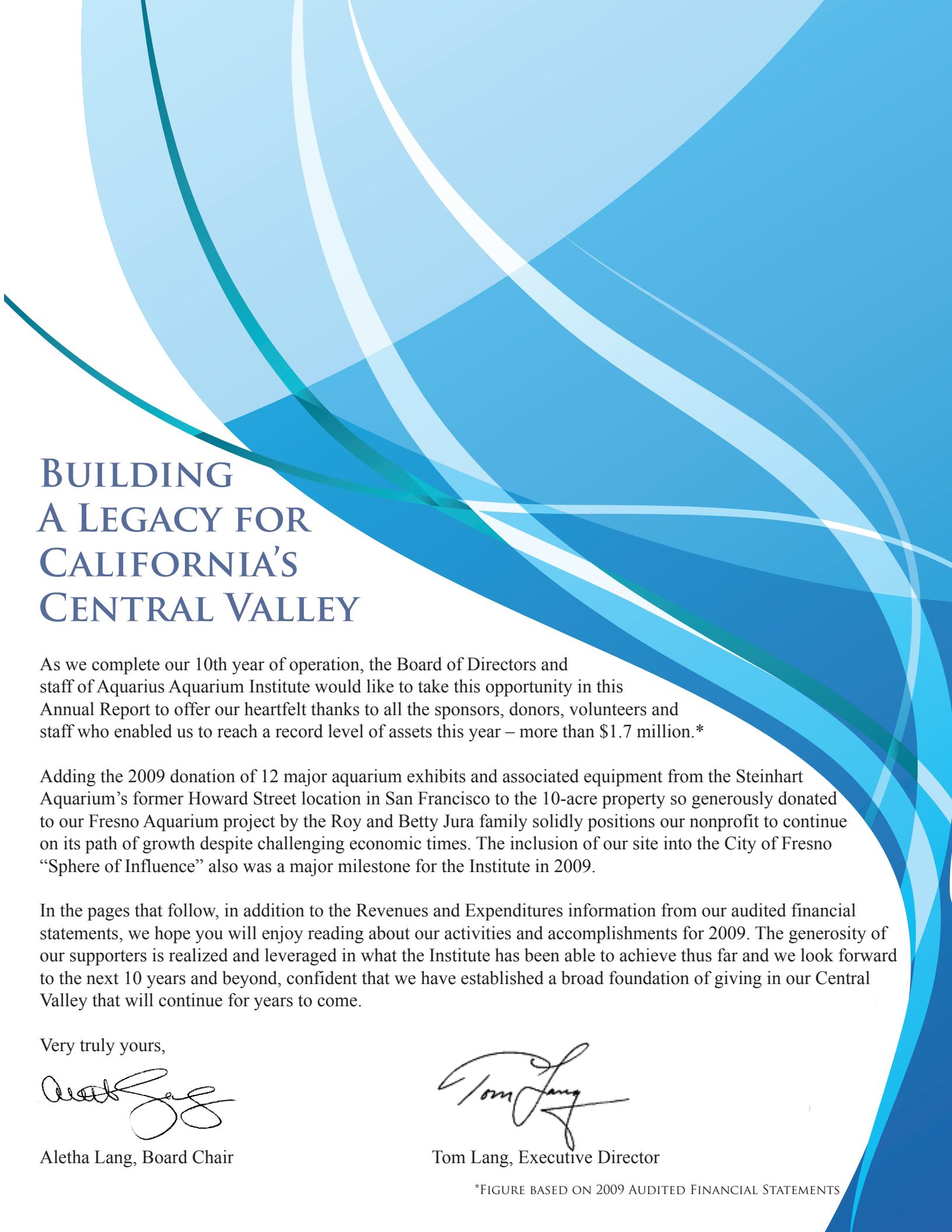
# AQUARIUS AQUARIUM INSTITUTE

## 2009 ANNUAL REPORT



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JUNE 30, 2010



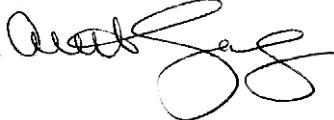
# BUILDING A LEGACY FOR CALIFORNIA'S CENTRAL VALLEY

As we complete our 10th year of operation, the Board of Directors and staff of Aquarius Aquarium Institute would like to take this opportunity in this Annual Report to offer our heartfelt thanks to all the sponsors, donors, volunteers and staff who enabled us to reach a record level of assets this year – more than \$1.7 million.\*

Adding the 2009 donation of 12 major aquarium exhibits and associated equipment from the Steinhart Aquarium's former Howard Street location in San Francisco to the 10-acre property so generously donated to our Fresno Aquarium project by the Roy and Betty Jura family solidly positions our nonprofit to continue on its path of growth despite challenging economic times. The inclusion of our site into the City of Fresno "Sphere of Influence" also was a major milestone for the Institute in 2009.

In the pages that follow, in addition to the Revenues and Expenditures information from our audited financial statements, we hope you will enjoy reading about our activities and accomplishments for 2009. The generosity of our supporters is realized and leveraged in what the Institute has been able to achieve thus far and we look forward to the next 10 years and beyond, confident that we have established a broad foundation of giving in our Central Valley that will continue for years to come.

Very truly yours,



Aletha Lang, Board Chair



Tom Lang, Executive Director

# MISSION

TO ELEVATE PUBLIC CONSCIOUSNESS AND  
UNDERSTANDING OF OUR AQUATIC WORLD

# PURPOSE

To foster respect, understanding and conservation of the world's aquatic ecosystems through educational programs, interpretive exhibits and aquarium propagation, spawning and rearing of aquatic species. The Institute offers environmental teaching programs to help bring educational parity to Central Valley students and citizens of all backgrounds and cultural groups.

These programs not only benefit our historically underserved region, but also promote awareness and appreciation of the interdependence of land, rivers, and the sea in our diverse inland population. The Institute also advocates for solutions to challenges facing our riparian, coastal and ocean resources.

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ALETHA C. LANG, CHAIR  
Business Owner

WILLIAM S. FISKE, SECRETARY  
Attorney at Law

VICKI CROW, C.P.A., TREASURER/CFO  
Fresno County Auditor-Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector

RAYE GRANT, DIRECTOR  
Vice-President, Morgan Stanley Smith Barney, Inc

DEBBIE VLAMINCK, DIRECTOR  
Business Manager

## STAFF

THOMAS J. LANG, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CEO

A photograph of two young children, a boy in a red shirt and a girl in a yellow shirt, interacting with marine life in a tidepool exhibit. The boy is holding a small starfish, and the girl is reaching towards it. The background shows a wooden structure and a blue wall.

# TEACHING TIDEPOOLS

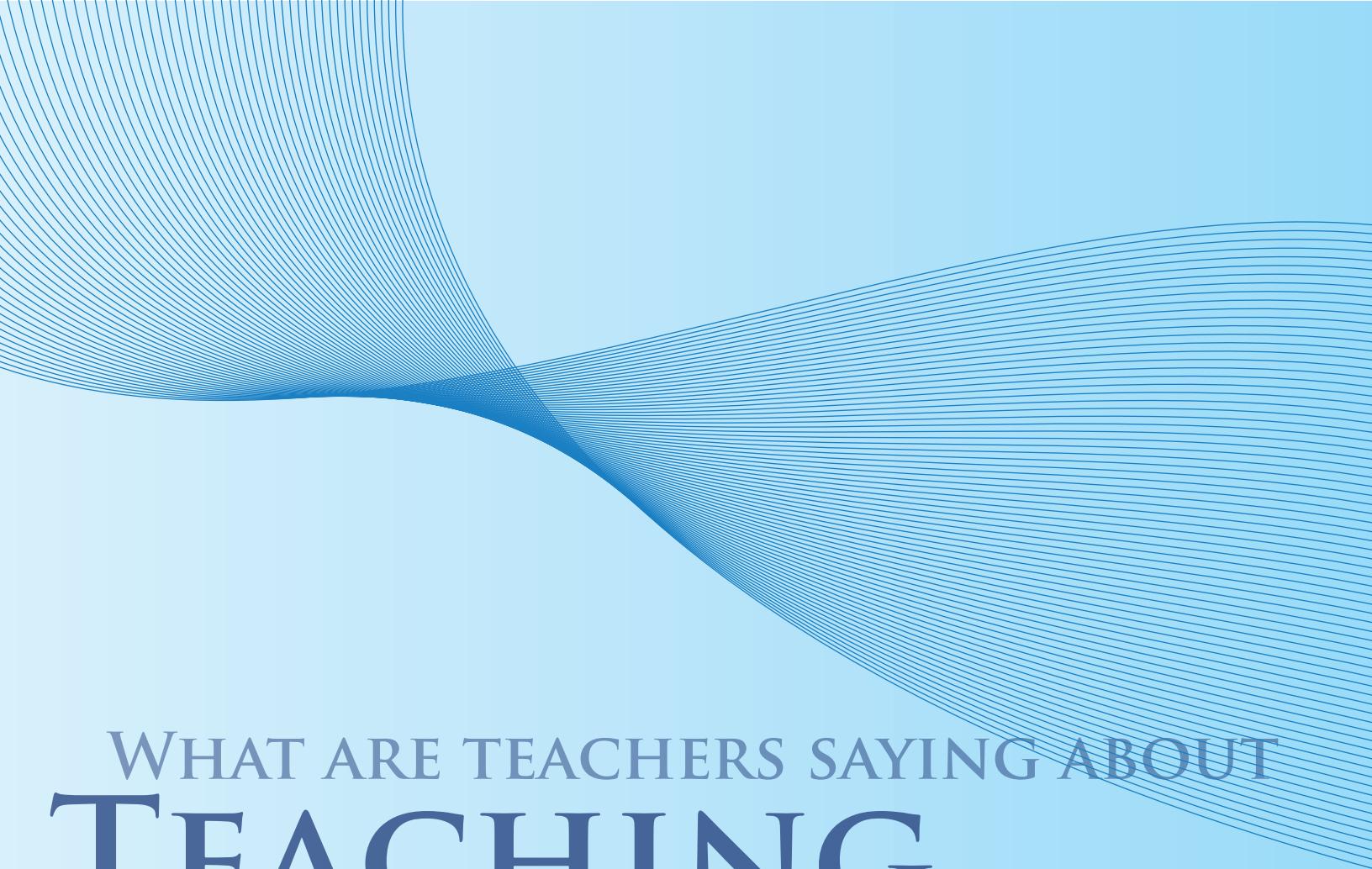
# TEACHING TIDEPOOLS! EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH PROGRAM

After receiving a significant boost from First 5 Fresno County in 2006 - 2007 in the form of a \$126,000.00 grant, the Institute's popular Teaching Tidepools! Program has continued to touch pre-school and kindergarten classes as a fee-based program.

In order to offset some of the costs to feed and maintain our collection of living California tide pool creatures and keep our fees to the schools as low as possible, the Institute also relies on portions of our membership renewals, as well as donor and sponsor support to help provide additional funding for this important educational program.

In many respects, these school visits spanning our Valley represent the face of our organization to hundreds of parents and teachers and thousands of students who remember what we have presented long after we leave.





# WHAT ARE TEACHERS SAYING ABOUT TEACHING TIDEPOOLS

“ I wanted to thank you, very much, for the experience you provided to the pre-school students at West Hills College Lemoore. Your interaction was perfect... Very informative, creative, gentle, and educational. The students were able to learn and remain comfortable surrounded by the new environment. What an intriguing program you share... ”

I know my daughter was impressed. ”

-Libra Howard  
English Instructor

“ Thank you so much for the wonderful presentation on tidepools. Our class is still talking about it! We loved the hands-on approach to learning! ”

-Lisa Taylor  
Copper Hills Preschool

RUN FOR THE REEF  
AND  
WATER PLANET  
ADVENTURE DAY



# RUN FOR THE REEF AND WATER PLANET ADVENTURE DAY

Our 7th annual Earth Day **Run for the Reef** once again attracted runners and walkers of all ages to the Shops at River Park in Fresno, where the Sugar Pine Trail provides the perfect route for the timed 5k run and 2-mile run/walk events.

Healthy snacks, plenty of water and beautiful scenery make our signature community fundraiser an annual favorite for participants and our generous sponsors. Continuing in his position as Race Director, Ken Takeuchi of Pro Race Group was up before dawn, chalking his precisely measured start, finish and turn-around lines. We are extremely grateful to Ken for his years of dedication to our organization.

We are also very grateful for our great volunteers who staffed the check-in tables, functioned as street crossing guards and made sure the food and water tables remained well stocked. Without them, the event could not have happened.

Then, just as the final walkers returned from the course, our volunteers moved everything over to the front of Borders Books for the start of our second annual **Water Planet Adventure Day!**

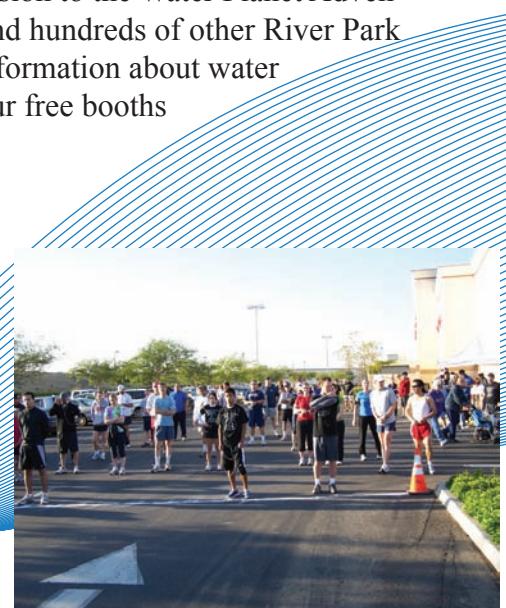
There, donors from Air-Time Inflatables had already set up their bounce house and giant slide for kids and DJ Chad Davis was playing tunes inside a safe play area we created for crafts, games,

clowns, face-painters and the Bubble Man - a morning of fun all revolving around our Water Planet. Displayed all around the perimeter of the play area were over 300 "Watershed Art" posters created by 5th and 6th grade students from Fresno, Clovis, Central and Kings Canyon Unified School Districts depicting the water cycle in the Central Valley.

Just outside of the play area were tables for water conservation information staffed by local water agencies such as the Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District (which also sponsored the event with a generous grant), U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, City of Fresno Water Conservation Program and other water-friendly groups and companies.

Inside a nearby storefront, the Institute's new Teaching Tidepools! tank gave children and adults the opportunity to see and touch our collection of living California tide pool animals as well as interact with Institute staff educators and our trained volunteer docents during the event.

Even though this was a huge effort by many people, we are extremely pleased with the impact this day of outreach had on our community. 418 wristbands were distributed for admission to the Water Planet Adventure Day play area and hundreds of other River Park shoppers received information about water conservation from our free booths





# 2009 SAN JOAQUIN RIVER CLEANUPS

What made Aquarius Aquarium Institute's two San Joaquin River Cleanups in 2009 different from all other local river cleanups? It was our unique combination of shore and underwater cleaning! Collaborating with RiverTree volunteers, the Fresno Fire Water Rescue Team and scuba divers organized by Aqua Sports dive shop, we pulled trash, tires, invasive plants and other debris from the San Joaquin River and cleaned its banks just ahead of the restoration flows that began on October 1, 2009.

# MARINE LIFE PRESENTATIONS

## WALT SMITH

On October 10th, 2009, Walt Smith, a fish and coral exporter from Fiji, presented a collector's point of view on the sustainability of harvesting from the reefs. Walt gave our members and attendees some interesting perspectives on the vastness of the oceans and where many of the fish and coral exhibited in U.S. Aquariums are sourced.

## ERIC H. BORNEMAN

On November 7th, 2009, Eric H. Borneman, a well-known aquarium and coral ecologist, spoke to our members and general public attendees as part of our Aquarium Lecture Series. Eric presented an informative PowerPoint presentation and talked about the current state of the ocean's coral reefs, especially in the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico. He also shared his experience as part of an innovative coral breeding program.

# MENTORING STUDENTS AT CART

For the 7th consecutive school year, Aquarius Aquarium Institute mentored high school students in the Environmental Lab at the Center for Advanced Research and Technology, a project-based charter school operated jointly by the Fresno and Clovis Unified School Districts.

Learning how to care for a living coral reef aquarium, the students learn about

chemistry, marine biology, zoology and ecosystem dynamics in a nontraditional setting. This school year, the Institute also received approval to work with CART students in the California Department of Fish and Game's *Salmonids in the Classroom* program where students raise salmon from eggs and release them into the Merced River in the spring.

# THE BIG FRESNO FAIR



Every year, it seems like more and more people come by the Aqua Sports booth and want to see and touch Aquarius Aquarium Institute's California tide pool animals now in our new, larger exhibit tank. We are very grateful to **Aqua Sports owners Mike and Karen Sahakian** for their continued support over the years!



# MOVING EXHIBITS FROM SAN FRANCISCO TO FRESNO



# THE PENGUIN WINDOW

“ AS SOON AS MY WIFE HEARD YOUR PLANS FOR THE FORMER PENGUIN WINDOW SHE WAS DELIGHTED TO SUPPORT ITS MOVE TO FRESNO. ”

-ARNOLD GAZARIAN



Special thanks to Dianne and Arnold Gazarian for their financial support in moving the Steinhart's former penguin exhibit window and to Steve Salcedo, owner of San Joaquin Glass for its safe keeping.

# A COLLABORATION IN RESEARCH

SAN FRANCISCO



FRESNO



TO

TO

In 2009, Aquarius Aquarium Institute worked in collaboration with Frederick Goetz, Ph.D. of the Great Lakes WATER Institute in establishing broodstock for a new Tambaqui (Black Pacu - *Colossoma macropomum*) breeding program.



MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

# A LANDMARK STEP

FRESNO LAFCO APPROVES SPHERE OF  
INFLUENCE CHANGE FOR OUR FRESNO  
AQUARIUM PROJECT

On April 15, 2009, after months of study, the Fresno County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) unanimously approved the inclusion of Aquarius Aquarium Institute's 10 acre property into the City of Fresno Sphere of Influence. This action fulfills an important requirement by the County that the future Aquarium connect to City water and sewer lines.

Special thanks to the Roy and Betty Jura family for their financial support of the Institute's sphere of influence change process.



## DESIGNING A NEW PHASE ONE AQUARIUM BUILDING

After moving the exhibits from the Steinhart Aquarium to Fresno earlier in the year, we set about designing a building to house them with our architect, Arthur Dyson, AIA.

Our Board of Directors wanted a smaller Phase One Aquarium that could be built almost entirely with proceeds from a state Proposition 84 tier 1 grant, or about \$7 million, yet still retain the “look and feel” of the much larger future building Art has designed for the Aquarium.

During 2009, after frequent meetings with Institute staff, he accomplished exactly that! Words alone cannot express how fortunate we are to have such a world-class architect in Fresno who listens to the needs of his clients and creates truly great architecture from their vision.



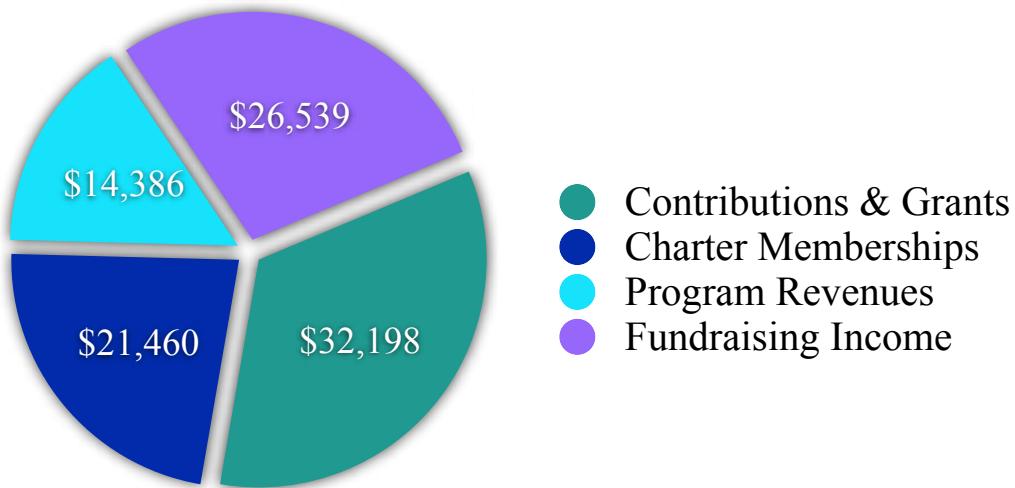
# TROPICAL BREEZES GALA

ONCE AGAIN, THE POLYNESIAN  
CLUB OF FRESNO ENTERTAINED  
INSTITUTE SUPPORTERS AT OUR  
ANNUAL GALA.

# 2009 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

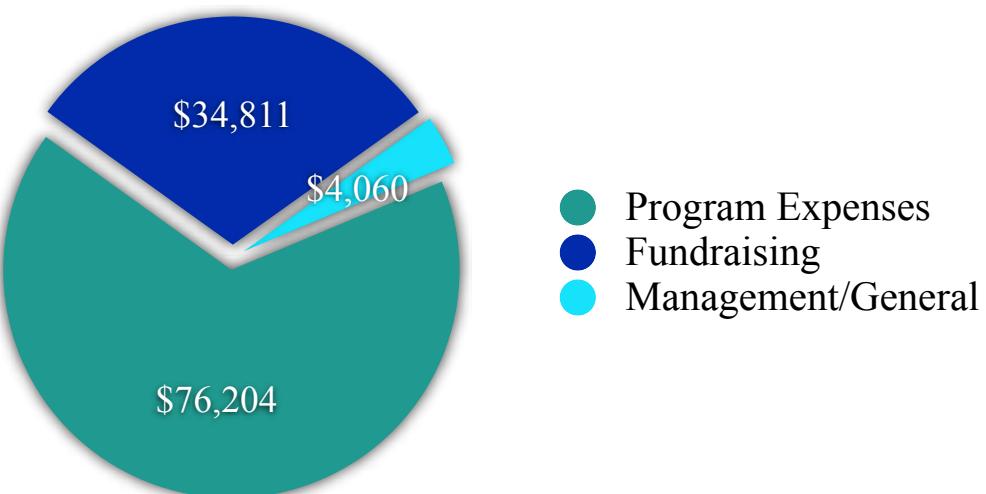
REVENUE

\$107,206



EXPENSES

\$115,075



# VOLUNTEERS SPONSORS & DONORS

In every event we do and every project we undertake, the Institute's sponsors, donors and volunteers make it possible. Our Board of Directors is extremely grateful to everyone who has given of their time, talent and treasure in this past year and we look forward to continuing the relationships we have forged as we continue on this exciting journey. We're also always excited when new people join our efforts to make our San Joaquin Valley a better place and welcome those we have yet to meet with open arms!

- Tom and Aletha Lang, Founders