

## Volunteer Advisory Council Update

The Volunteer Advisory Council (VAC) met on February 27<sup>th</sup> to discuss topics that effect all volunteers. The meeting started on a high note; Priscilla Eckert, a Monday 1st guide, mentor, tour guide, and husbandry volunteer, joined the VAC. Priscilla's multiple roles make her a great addition to the Council. The main focus of the meeting was a discussion with guest speaker Craig Gundlach, the Director of Security and Emergency Preparedness, who spoke on the Aquarium's response to Coronavirus. This initial conversation between the Security office and the volunteer leaders of VAC informed the subsequent communications with all MBA volunteers about the COVID-19 virus, the key safety considerations, as well as temporary leave options for volunteers. The information gathered during this meeting has been disseminated over the last few weeks.



As you may recall, the VAC has three main areas of focus for 2020: Exhibits, Climate Change and DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion). The Council discussed the Aquarium's participation in "Climate Crisis and Action: A discussion with Californian Leadership", an event that was held at MIIS on February 19<sup>th</sup>. They also discussed the letter they sent to Margaret Spring regarding Climate Change action at the Aquarium. In regards to DEI, the Council viewed and discussed a video on accessibility by our Vice President of Exhibits, Beth Redmond-Jones. For those who have not viewed this video, we invite you to do so, and to learn more about Beth's passion for accessibility, rivaled only by her passion for Exhibitions. You may connect by going to the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TEzzWGeyELc>, to view the YouTube video entitled, "Imagine the Future of Museum Accessibility". The Council looks forward to the opportunity to partner with Beth and with other Aquarium staff, to further promote Accessibility and Inclusion throughout the Aquarium. Lastly, the Council talked about ways they could increase their connection to you all. Stay tuned or go to Tidepool to review the Volunteer Advisory Council charter and to learn more about the work of the VAC.