



**ST. LOUIS AQUARIUM FOUNDATION**

**STRATEGIC PLAN 2026**





# CHAPTER 1

## DEFINING THE FOUNDATION TODAY



Who Is the  
St. Louis Aquarium  
Foundation Today?

What Is Our Focus?

Who Do We Serve  
and How?



# MISSION AND CORE INITIATIVES

## OUR MISSION

As the nonprofit partner to the St. Louis Aquarium at Union Station, the Aquarium Foundation engages the community through access and education programs, serving as the region's recognized voice for water stewardship.

## OUR CORE INITIATIVES

**Access** – Provide free Aquarium admission to 25,000 underserved youth annually through our H2O Friends program

**Education** – Deliver aquatic-themed, STEM-based conservation education programs and classes for schools and teachers

**Conservation** – Find out how to “take action” in our local water conservation efforts through interactive exhibits throughout the Aquarium

**Volunteering** – Through a robust volunteer program, engage the community in the St. Louis Aquarium and further the educational reach of our programs into the community and our waterways

# OUR BRAND THE ST. LOUIS AQUARIUM FOUNDATION...

## IS

STEM education for ALL

Breaking down barriers (access,  
inclusivity, etc.)

Leading by example

A resource for education and conservation

The HUB for connecting, educating and  
inspiring people and organizations to take  
actions in improving our environment and  
its ecosystems

## IS NOT

For profit

The Aquarium

Preachy and guiltig

The Region's recognized  
voice for water  
stewardship



# CURRENT PROGRAMS & EVENTS



What programs & events does the Foundation currently offer?

What are the goals associated with each?



# PROGRAMS

## Education Programs

- In-person (on-site and off-site) programs
- Virtual programs
- Camps
- High school shadow days
- Volunteer program

## Other Programs

- Aquarium free access program
- Stream Clean-ups (6-7 program dates scheduled for 2023)

## Program Goals

- Educate
- Raise awareness
- Expose students to future Marine Biology (and similar) career opportunities
- Facilitate opportunities for action



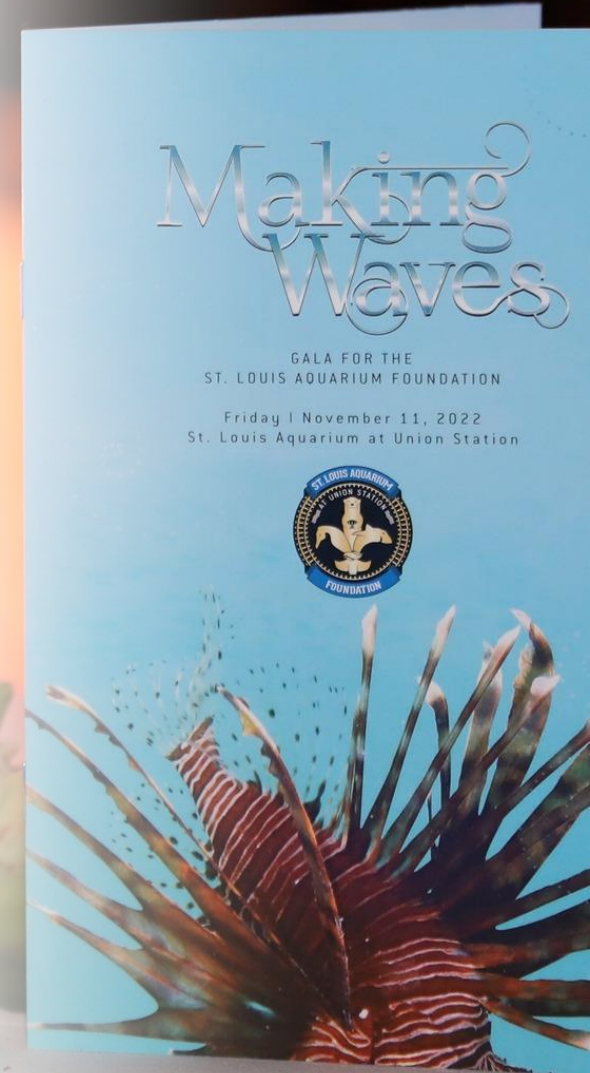
# EVENTS

## Event Types

- Gala
- Volunteer Recognition event
- Donor Cultivation event
- Member Evening
- Chalk The Walk event
- (Off-site) Host a table at local community events

## Goals

- Raise awareness
- Raise funds to support Aquarium access and programming
- Show appreciation for those who contribute to the Foundation and its conservation and education programs





# WHAT MAKES US DIFFERENT?

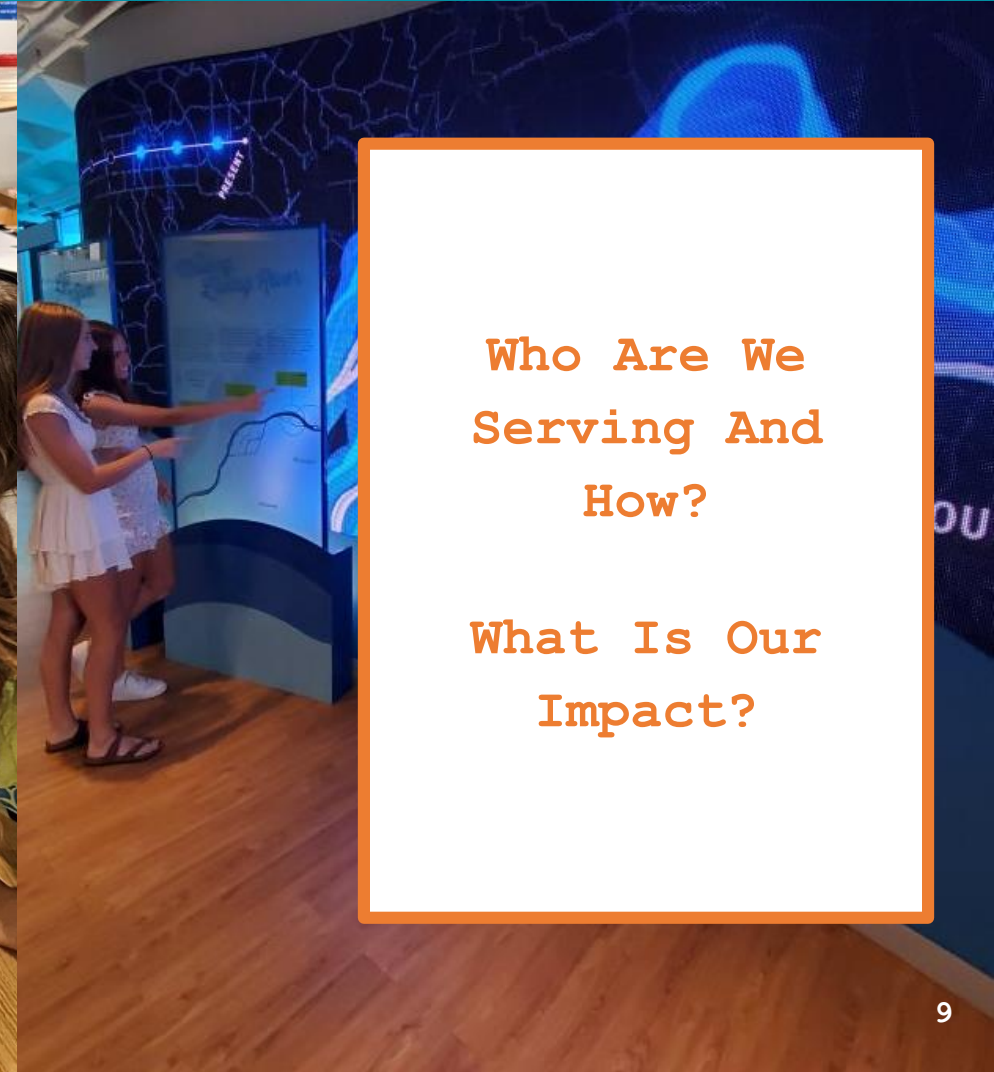
**What are the qualities that only the St. Louis Aquarium Foundation possesses?**

- We offer educational, engaging and entertaining aquatic-based opportunities
- The impact of our conservation programs on the St. Louis environment is visible, measurable and reaches beyond our community
- Our staff and partnerships bring great institutional knowledge, experience and passion for aquatic animals and water stewardship
- As a small organization, every contribution (volunteered time and/or funding) significantly impacts the success of our programs and directly benefits the St. Louis community



# CHAPTER 2

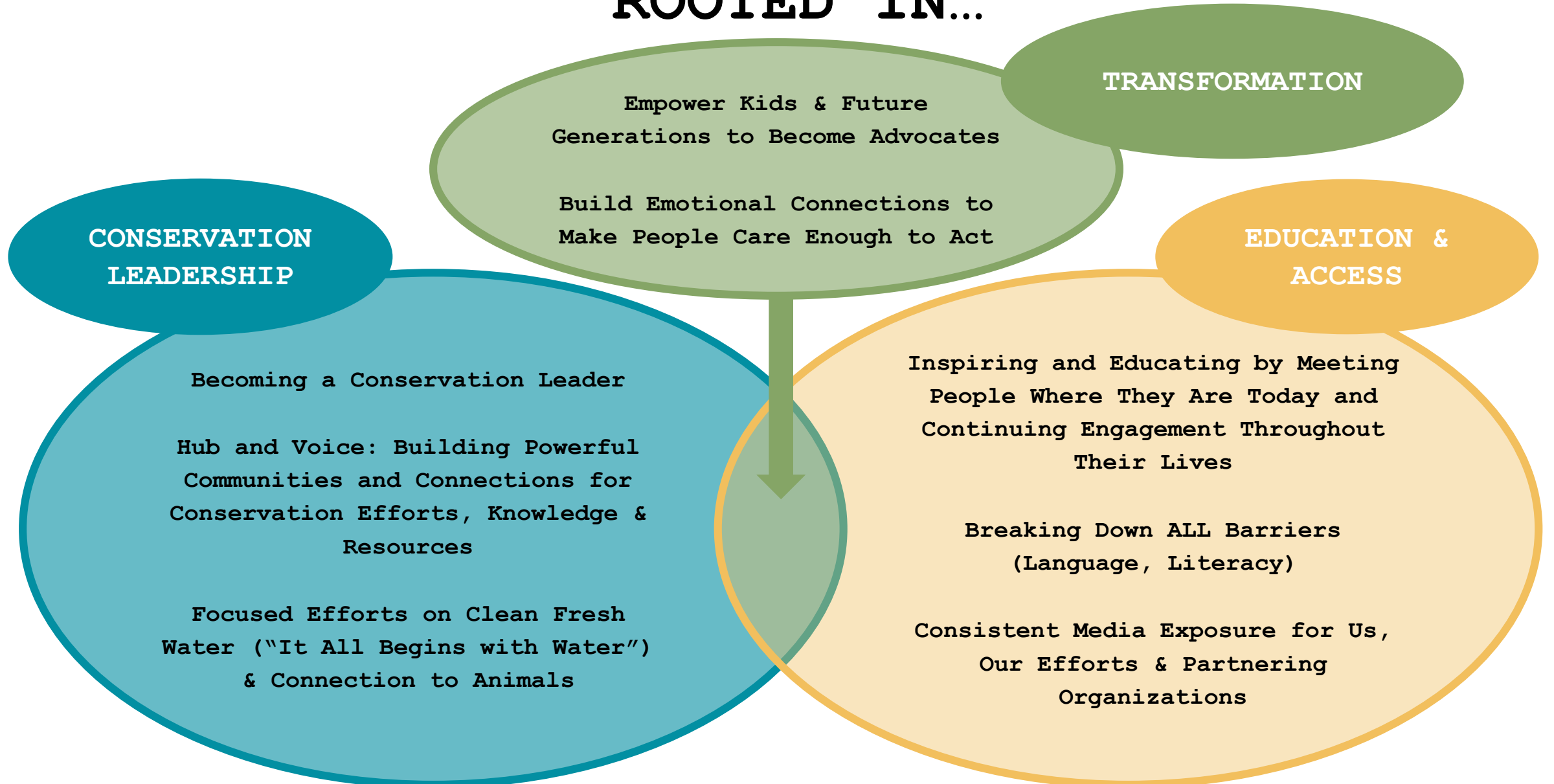
## OUR VISION FOR THE FOUNDATION



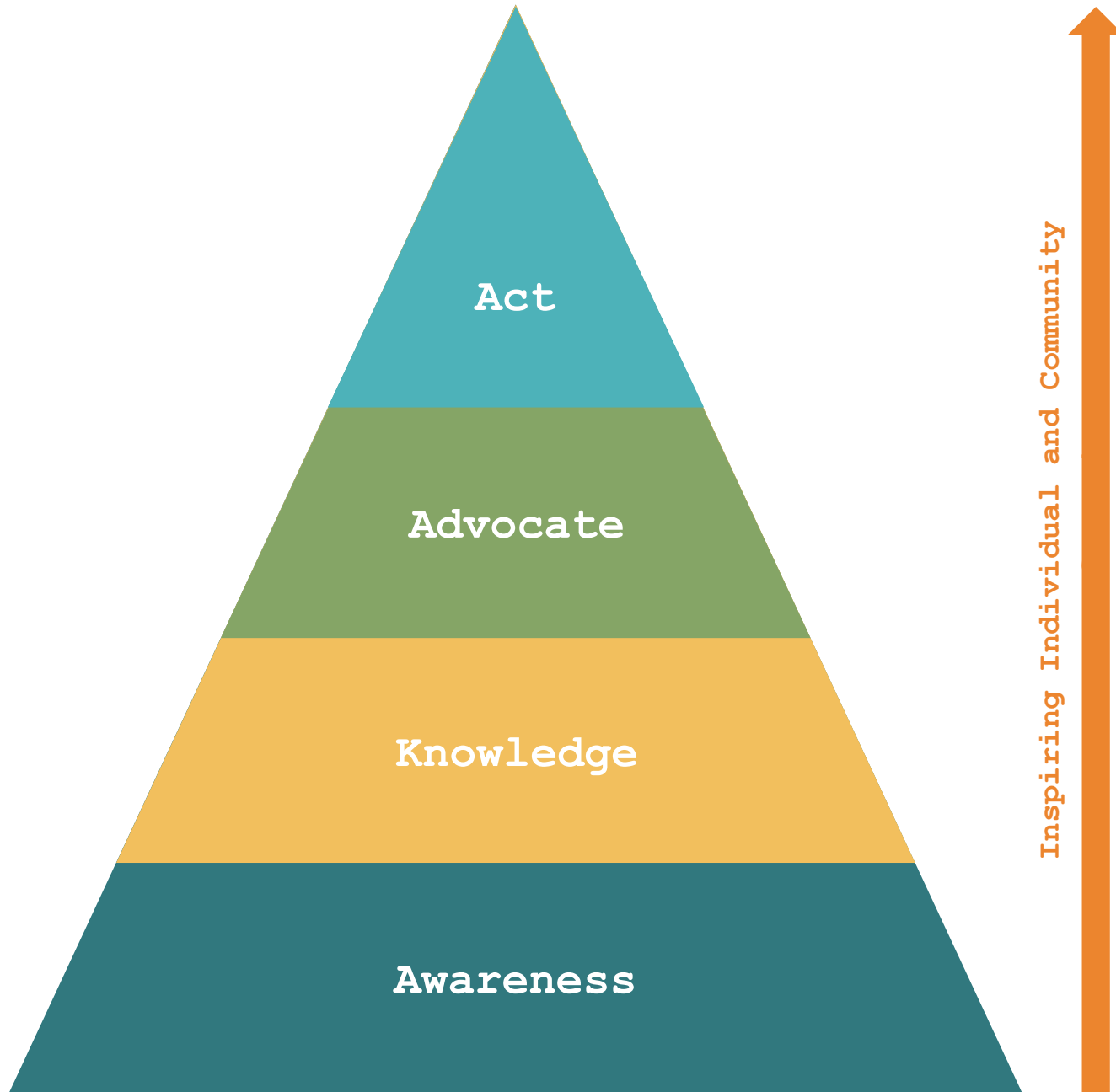
Who Are We  
Serving And  
How?

What Is Our  
Impact?

# THE VISION FOR THE FOUNDATION IS ROOTED IN...







## INSPIRING ACTION

Through Engagement and Creating Stronger Emotional Connections, We Can Move Individuals from Awareness to Action

We Inspire Action By

- Our Actions
- Creating Opportunities for Others to Join Us
- Offering Ideas for Individual Improvement
- Advocacy
- Removing Barriers



# REVISED MISSION AND CORE INITIATIVES

## OUR MISSION

As the nonprofit partner to the St. Louis Aquarium at Union Station, the Aquarium Foundation engages individuals through access, conservation and education programs, building powerful communities for water stewardship.

## OUR CORE INITIATIVES

**Access** – Provide access to education for all through free Aquarium admissions, outreach programs and an ongoing effort to identify and remove other barriers.

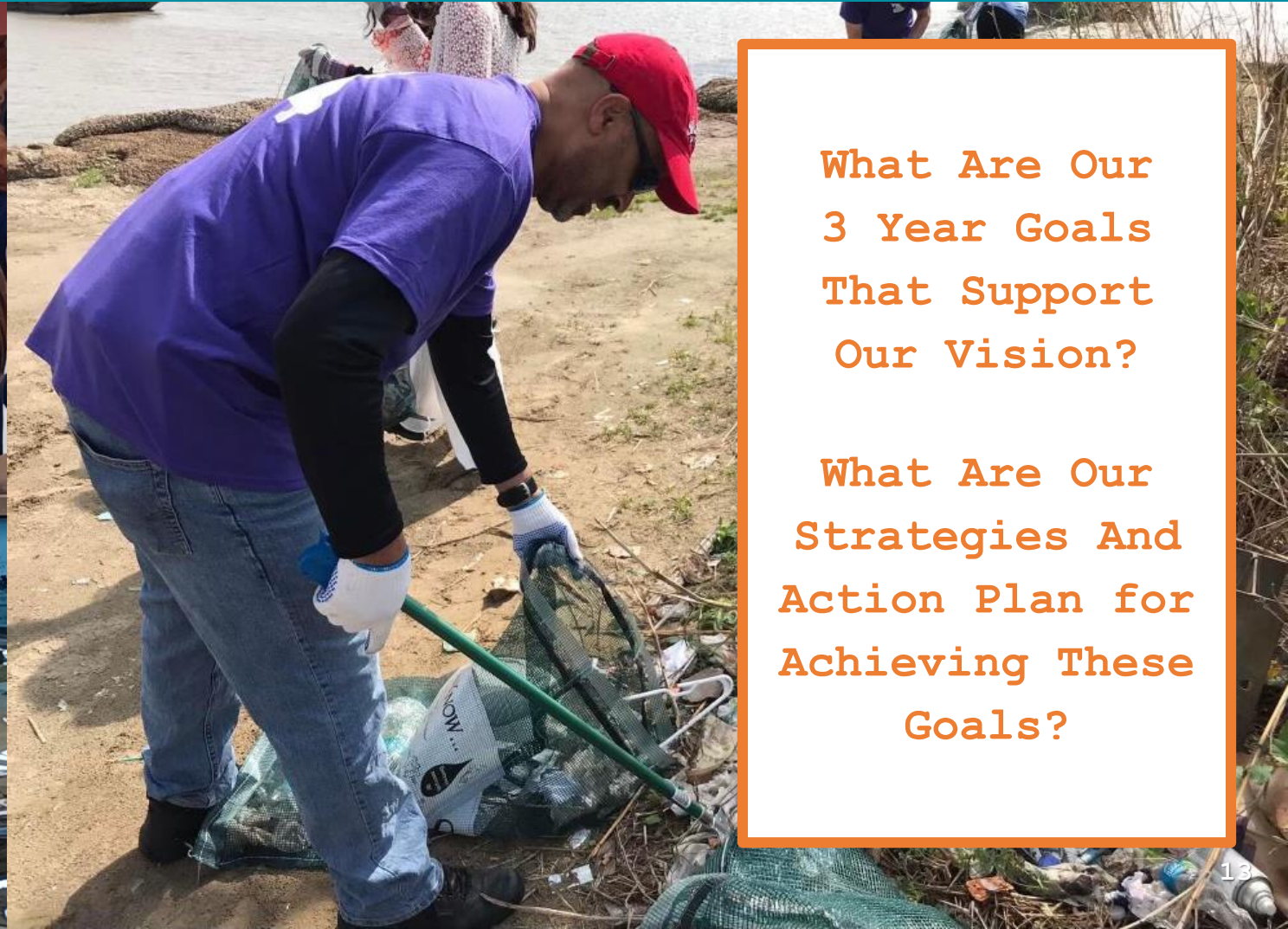
**Conservation** – Provide educational & actionable opportunities for regional water conservation efforts.

**Education** – Deliver informal and formal opportunities for water themed and STEM-based education programs and classes for learners of all ages.



# CHAPTER 3

## OUR 2026 STRATEGIC PLAN



What Are Our  
3 Year Goals  
That Support  
Our Vision?

What Are Our  
Strategies And  
Action Plan for  
Achieving These  
Goals?

# Goal 1: Build A Powerful Community That Inspires Action For Improving Water Conservation

## MEASUREMENT METRICS

- Building a community that represents many components of the local area
  - Residents
  - Businesses
  - Education institutions
  - Foundations and other organizations focused on water, animals and conservation
- Establishing programs that provide opportunities for the community to learn about and participate in conservation focused activities
- Assisting community groups and organizations with planning and implementing changes in their daily operations and lives
- Creating opportunities for advocacy
- Measuring and promoting program impacts

## STRATEGIES

- 1) Identify and launch local endangered species ID / conservation program
- 2) Seek out opportunities for conservation partnerships with community groups
  - a) Foundation River Clean-up program expansion
  - b) Grow participation in programs hosted by Others
  - c) Extend conservation reach and impact
- 3) Identify conservation funding opportunities
  - a) Host annual event to support Foundation conservation efforts through fundraising & awareness
  - b) Seek out conservation grants
- 4) Develop a social media program that targets residents with awareness and education opportunities for integrating conservation practices into everyday living
- 5) Create a program to collect and publish data supporting positive impacts of Foundation initiatives



# GOAL 1 IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

2023		2024				2025				2026			
Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2		
Strategy 1: Identify & Launch Local Endangered Species Program													
Strategy 2a: Grow River Cleanup Program													
		Strategy 2b: Grow Participation in Programs Hosted by Others											
		Strategy 2c: Extend Conservation Reach & Impact											
Strategy 3a: Host Annual Conservation Focused Event													
Strategy 3b: Seek Out Conservation Grants													
Strategy 4: Develop Social Media Program Focused on Daily Conservation Practices													
Strategy 5: Create Data Collection Program													

## Goal 2: Empower Learners Of All Ages To Become Champions for Change Through Education And STEM

### MEASUREMENT METRICS

- Deeply integrating the Foundation's education programs into an elementary grade level curriculum at every St. Louis City school
- Expanding program participation for
  - PreK-12 students (formal and informal education)
  - Adults (ages 18+)
  - Senior communities
- Improving the level of continued engagement following each program
- Expanding our volunteer program to 500 active participants with improved retainage and better engagement
- Provide 15,000 free admissions annually to onsite and offsite STLAQ Foundation programs
- Measuring and promoting program impacts

### STRATEGIES

- 1) Collaborate with St. Louis City elementary schools to integrate St. Louis Aquarium Foundation education programs into 3rd - 5th grade curriculums
- 2) Redefine the role of the Education Advisory Council to better support the Foundation in achieving our goals
- 3) Partner with organizations to create new programs targeting audiences outside of traditional K-12 education
- 4) Collect data supporting positive impacts of Foundation education focused initiatives
- 5) Create a process for identifying guest barriers and advising the St. Louis Aquarium on options for removing/improving



## GOAL 2 IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

2023		2024				2025				2026	
Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Strategy 1: Integrate the Foundation's Education Programs into St. Louis City elementary schools											
Strategy 2: Redefine the Education Advisory Council Role											
		Strategy 3: Create New Programs Targeting Audiences Outside of Traditional K-12 Education									
Strategy 4: Create Data Collection Program											
						Strategy 5: Create Process for Identifying Aquarium Guest Barriers					

# Goal 3: Develop Infrastructure to Support the Foundation Growth

## MEASUREMENT METRICS

- Assess and expanded the following to support the Foundation's conservation (Goal 1) and education (Goal 2) efforts
  - Fundraising
  - Staffing
  - Volunteers
  - Space

## STRATEGIES

- 1) Expand the Foundation's Fundraising Capabilities
  - a) Organize and improve donor database for efficient tracking and communications
  - b) Grow list of potential Foundation donors
  - c) Expand VIP Aquarium tour program targeting grant and corporate decision makers
  - d) Improve Development Board Participation
  - e) Grow Foundation membership programs
  - f) Expand "Niche" campaigns for year-round engagement
  - g) Create a Young Professionals Board
- 2) Improve and grow volunteer program
- 3) Assess staffing needs to support growth demands
- 4) Assess space needs to support growth demands



# GOAL 3 IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

2023		2024				2025				2026	
Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Strategy 1a: Improve Donor Database											
Strategy 1b: Grow Potential Donor List											
	Strategy 1c: Expand VIP Tour										
Strategy 1d: Improve Development Board Participation											
Strategy 1e: Grow Foundation Membership Program											
	Strategy 1f: Expand "Niche" Campaigns										
Strategy 1g: Create a Young Professionals Board											
Strategy 2: Improve and Grow Volunteer Program											
Strategy 3: Assess Staffing Needs											
Strategy 4: Assess Space Needs											



ST. LOUIS AQUARIUM FOUNDATION



Monumental Strides