

Friday, October 9, 2009

CANADA'S ARCTIC - IN THE GRIP OF CHANGE

Vancouver Aquarium brand new exhibit creates active connections to the people, land & animals of the north

Vancouver, BC – The Vancouver Aquarium proudly announces today's opening of its new interactive exhibit, ***Canada's Arctic – In the Grip of Change***.

Canada's Arctic is vast, diverse and changing – the animals, land and people all have unique stories to tell. The new exhibit aims to engage visitors young and old to show how climate change is impacting Canada's Arctic. By establishing active connections between visitors and this fascinating region, the exhibit will foster awareness, understanding and relationships between those in the north and the rest of Canada.

The Vancouver Aquarium has pioneered cutting-edge exhibit design featuring fully-interactive multi-media displays. The Aquarium hopes to stimulate dialogue and understanding of this little known area that is vital to our entire eco-system.

"When you explore the stories of Canada's Arctic, you'll see how our own actions and decisions – no matter where we live – can affect this amazing region," says John Nightingale, President, Vancouver Aquarium. "In a few short months the eyes of the world will be on Vancouver and we hope that this new exhibit will help to shed some light and focus on Canada's Arctic."

MARINE LIFE

A vital element of the Arctic ecosystem is the Arctic cod, now on display in the new exhibit. Its importance in the arctic food web cannot be over emphasized. It is one of the key species in the Arctic, because it is a critical link between tiny drifting marine animals (zooplankton) that it feeds on, and other Arctic fishes, seabirds, seals and whales that eat the cod. The question the Aquarium asks is how will global warming affect Arctic cod?

THE PEOPLE

The Vancouver Aquarium has positioned the new Canada's Arctic exhibit to create connections – visitors are invited to meet the people of Canada's Arctic who live in a place where ice and cold shape their lives. A large majority of them are Inuit, but thousands of other Canadians have also made the Arctic their home. Inuit means "the people" in Inuktitut. It is their one common language, even though different dialects are spoken. Inuit are one people across Canada's Arctic with a common culture and a shared history.

TECHNOLOGY

The mission to create active connections has allowed the Aquarium's content team to conceive innovative new paths to learning never seen before at the Vancouver Aquarium. In conjunction with Ideum, the Aquarium has developed new applications for two Ideum MT2 tables. MT2 stands for: Multi-Touch, Multi-User. Essentially, this innovative concept allows an exhibit display table to be manipulated like a giant iPhone or iPod Touch.

Canada's Arctic – In the Grip of Change is now open to the public at the Vancouver Aquarium.

About the Vancouver Aquarium

The Vancouver Aquarium is a global leader in connecting people to our natural world, and a self-supporting, non-profit association dedicated to effecting the conservation of aquatic life through display and interpretation, conservation practices, education, research, and direct action. Learn more at www.vanaqua.org

-30-

Media Contact:

Public Relations Coordinator
publicrelations@vanaqua.org
604.659.3752