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## **NATIONAL AQUARIUM IN BALTIMORE RECEIVES \$800,000 CHALLENGE GRANT FROM THE KRESGE FOUNDATION**

### **Grant Challenges Other Donors to Support a Worthy Institution**

Baltimore, Md. (April 10, 2003)—The National Aquarium in Baltimore received an \$800,000 challenge grant from The Kresge Foundation to support the Aquarium's largest expansion project ever – a 10-story glass building that will take visitors on new journeys through the Chesapeake Watershed, across Maryland's Allegheny Cascades, and immerse them in the Australian wilderness.

The highly competitive Kresge Challenge grant is designed to challenge other potential donors to support the Aquarium's worthwhile expansion programs. The grant is contingent upon the Aquarium successfully raising the balance of its \$15 million capital campaign. To date, the campaign has raised \$11.7 million.

"Private donations build the platform from which we inspire aquatic stewardship in future generations," said David M. Pittenger, executive director of the National Aquarium in Baltimore. "We are grateful for the Kresge Foundation's generous support and its vote of confidence in our past contributions to the community and in our future plans."

Neal Borden, co-chairman of the Aquarium's capital campaign, said, "This grant will serve as a lightning rod to help meet our fundraising goals. We look forward to challenging the community and broader audiences to help build on our success as a beacon of stewardship and support a worthy cause."

The Aquarium's 65,000 square-foot project will enable visitors and school children to have new and memorable ways to explore water as a universal life source for animal species rarely seen in Baltimore. From flying foxes to laughing kookaburras and live crocodiles, they'll meet elements of nature that, for many people, are worlds away from Baltimore.

The expansion will allow greater capacity, new programming and more vitality to the Aquarium, a leader in conservation education and also a tourism anchor in Baltimore. Construction for the new building began in September 2002 and is expected to be complete in spring 2005. Additional capital improvements will take place between the fall of 2005 and spring of 2007.

The National Aquarium in Baltimore, a non-profit organization and world-class aquatic institute, is Maryland's leading attraction, hosting more than 1.5 million visitors per year. Dedicated to education and conservation, it serves the environment, students, teachers, visitors and communities through a wide variety of programs. Its Web address is [www.aqua.org](http://www.aqua.org).