International Ocean Film Festival “Seas the Night” Fall Benefit
for the Festival’s Student Education Program

Thursday, November 8: 5:30pm – 10pm
@ Gallery 308 / Fort Mason Center for the Arts & Culture
Tickets on sale September 27

Dr. Jeff Boehm, Executive Director of The Marine Mammal Center
to Receive “Ocean Champion” Award

16th Annual Festival runs March 7 – 10, 2019
www.intloceanfilmfest.org

17 September 2018 - San Francisco, CA: To the Romans, the Mediterranean was *Mare Nostrum* – “Our Sea.” And while their other Latin motto, *Carpe Diem* may have meant “Seize the Day”, the ocean – as we know all too well – belongs to all of us: a shared responsibility highlighted by the work of the San Francisco based International Ocean Film Festival. **Thursday, November 8**, the acclaimed nonprofit committed to “Saving the Oceans One Film at a Time” will “**Seas the Night**” – their fall fundraiser benefiting the Festival’s student education programs. Taking place at **Gallery 308 in the Fort Mason Center for the Arts & Culture** (2 Marina Blvd. San Francisco), the evening features fine wine, sustainable seafood stations provided by **Waterbar, Fog Harbor Fish House** and **The Grotto** in addition to a live auction, sneak previews of the films from the upcoming 2019 festival and music by **DJ Ryan Mannix**. Also honored that night will be this year’s “**Ocean Champion**”, The Marine Mammal Center’s Executive Director **Dr. Jeff Boehm**. **Individual tickets start at $150 and can be purchased online starting Thursday, September 27 at** www.intloceanfilmfest.org.

“Perhaps no organization has done more to call to the forefront the shared heritage between humans on land and our warm-blooded siblings in the ocean than The Marine Mammal Center,” said **Ana Blanco, Executive Director for the International Ocean Film Festival**. “For 28
years as a volunteer and for the last decade as its leader, Dr. Jeff Boehm has and continues to be the definition of ‘an ocean champion.’

Dr. Jeff Boehm joined The Marine Mammal Center as its Executive Director in 2008. He was formerly the Senior Vice President of Animal Health and Conservation Science at the John G. Shedd Aquarium in Chicago, where he worked for 16 years. There, he oversaw the veterinary medical program and led and coordinated the aquarium’s conservation science division, including conservation partnerships, in-house programs, and educational and advocacy programs and partnerships.

Dr. Boehm traces his career path back to a volunteer position he held at the Center back in 1980. As is the case for many current volunteers (there are more than 1,200 on the Center’s roster) or staff members, the Center experience influenced him greatly. For him, the opportunity to work with incredible wildlife in the context of conservation inspired him to pursue a nontraditional route in veterinary medicine and led him, ultimately, back to The Marine Mammal Center.

Dr. Boehm received his bachelor’s degree from the University of California at San Diego and his veterinary medical degree from the University of California at Davis. He is a diplomat of the American College of Animal Welfare.

“The International Ocean Film Festival is dedicated to using film as a medium to increase public awareness of the environmental, social, and cultural importance of marine ecosystems and foster a spirit of ocean stewardship,” said Blanco. “Commonly referred to as the ‘Sundance of the ocean film festivals,’ We are now in our 16th year as the premier ocean event in North America for ocean-related films. The Seas the Night gala raises funds to allow us to reach middle school and high school students through special daytime programs with film screenings and Q&A sessions with filmmakers, marine scientist, and industry experts.”

Since its launch in 2004, the San Francisco-based International Ocean Film Festival has attracted thousands of spectators of all ages from around the world, including film enthusiasts, sea athletes, educators, and environmental supporters. Since then, the Festival has presented over 50 films from 15 different countries and featured post-film Q&A sessions with visiting filmmakers, special panel discussions with content experts, and the Annual Free Student Education Program. It was the first event of its kind in North America, inspired by the well-established ocean festival in Toulon, France, which has continued to draw large audiences for more than 40 years.

Sponsors for the 16th Annual International Ocean Film Festival thus far include BigBus, the Port of San Francisco, and the Parker Foundation

The 16th Annual International Ocean Film Festival will take place March 7 - 10, 2019 at San Francisco’s Cowell Theatre at Fort Mason. The International Ocean Film Festival is a registered 501(c) 3 non-profit.