



## **RAYS the BAR**

**Donation Matching Challenge 2009-2010**

**The Shirley Family Foundation will match all funds donated up to \$500,000. Your gift gets doubled immediately!**

**Official recognition of your gift will be displayed in our Coastal Center.  
Call Linda Bolin today! 772-225-0505 x-108**

### **Game Fish Lagoon Exhibit**

**\$100,000**

The 750,000 gallon game fish lagoon is a showcase at the Coastal Center. It contains over a dozen species of saltwater fish, including snook, tarpon, cobia, redfish, jacks, drums, sheepshead, permit, snapper, pompano and grouper. Fish are fed daily as part of a public demonstration for visitors. Funds cover maintenance of the lagoon, including feeding the game fish, pump systems, water filtration, and cleaning the lagoon of algae and debris.

### **Oyster Restoration and Research**

**\$75,000**

Florida Oceanographic is the leading organization in restoring the natural oyster beds native to the St. Lucie River and Indian River Lagoon. FOS creates "reefs" with empty oyster shells recycled from area restaurants, and seeds these reefs with juvenile oysters. This restoration sets the stage for a comeback for these mollusks, which have been harmed by pollution and freshwater discharges from Lake Okeechobee. As filter feeders, oysters play an important role in keeping the water clean, and serve as habitat for over 300 estuarine species. Additionally, oyster health is an indicator of the health of the river system and of its water quality. Funds support creation of oyster beds, seeding of beds with juvenile oysters, monitoring and research.

### **Stingray Exhibit**

**\$60,000**

The 10,000 gallon stingray exhibit at the Coastal Center is our most popular attraction and a family favorite. Containing over a dozen Atlantic, Southern and Cownose stingrays, this exhibit is the site of daily educational presentations where visitors can feed and pet the rays. The rays are de-barbed and safe to handle, even for small children. Funds cover food and care for the rays, cleaning and maintaining tank, water treatment, and acquiring new specimens.

### **Environmental Education Programs**

**\$50,000**

Our naturalists and education staff run programs for adults, and children of all ages, starting at age three! Programs include beach walks, Florida Master Naturalist program, home schooling, summer camp, lectures, movies, and classes. FOS staff visit schools and libraries to spread our message of environmental stewardship. Funds are used to staff these programs, as well as providing materials, fuel and transportation for children and educators.

**Coastal Center Land Management & Landscaping** **\$40,000**

The Coastal Center is landscaped with 100% native Florida plants. These include flowering trees and shrubs, mangroves, palms and dune grasses that are native to Hutchinson Island. Funds are needed to repair storm damage, and for removal of invasive species. Funds also help to install and maintain the landscaping, natural plants and wildflowers of the Coastal Center.

**Visitor's Center Aquariums and Exhibits** **\$40,000**

The Frances Langford Visitor's Center is the location of our aquariums featuring dozens of marine species, including lobster, moray eels, horseshoe crabs, anemones, seahorse, urchins, and many species of tropical reef fish. Funds support feeding and maintaining these animals, maintenance of tanks and water systems, specimen acquisition, and creation of visitor interpretation and educational materials.

**Coastal Center Life Support** **\$40,000**

Behind the scenes, Florida Oceanographic staff keeps all of the animals alive and healthy. This includes purchasing and preparing food, medical care, quarantine systems, ensuring water quality and saline characteristics to maintain a natural and healthy environment for the fish and marine invertebrates. Funds will support these efforts.

**Sea Star Touch Tank** **\$30,000**

The touch tank contains live exhibits of sea stars, urchins, sand fleas, anemones, sea slugs, sea cucumbers, conch and crabs. Adults and children can touch and feel these animals, while learning about them. Funds support food and care of the marine invertebrates in the tank, pumping and filtering water, and maintaining water quality.

**Nature Trail Loop** **\$25,000**

A mile long loop trail runs from the Visitors Center and travels through tropical hammocks, and mangrove swamp down to the shores of the Indian River Lagoon. Native bird and plant life is abundant. Visitors learn about the plants and animals that live on Hutchinson Island, the importance of the mangrove swamp, the Ays Indians that once lived on the Island, and the Indian River Lagoon. Funds are used for trail maintenance, signage, invasive plant removal and repair and maintenance of structures along the trail.

**Coastal Center Vehicles and Transportation** **\$25,000**

Help us to pay for use of the Florida Oceanographic boat, the carts and trucks and vehicles needed to keep the Coastal Center running! Vehicles are used to transport animals, supplies, maintain the property, construction and repair of facilities, invasive plant removal, and visitor transport.

**Coastal Center Butterfly & Native Plant Garden** **\$15,000**

This beautiful garden is filled with native flowering plants, attracting many species of butterflies and other pollinating insects. Funds cover care and feeding of the plants, irrigation systems, weeding, feeding, new plantings, and bed maintenance.