

TRIUMPH GULF COAST, INC. PRE-APPLICATION FORM

Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. ("Triumph Gulf Coast") has created a pre-application process to provide initial consideration of potential ideas for projects or programs that may seek an award of funding. Applicants are required to participate in the pre-application process. Notwithstanding the response from Triumph Gulf Coast on the pre-application form, an Applicant may still elect to submit an Application

APPLICANT INFORMATION:

Name of Individual/Entity/Organization: Gulf Specimen Marine Laboratories, Inc.

Brief Description of Background of Individual/Entity/Organization: Gulf Specimen is a 56-year-old environmental education center that markets marine life to schools, research laboratories and aquariums. It conducts school field trips and operates a public touch tank aquarium, and a sea turtle rehabilitation facility.

Since 1962, GSML has provided live marine animals to thousands of the foremost research laboratories and universities in the United States, Canada, Europe and Japan. Over 700 scientific publications cite us as their source of research specimens. Sponges and toadfishes collected in the waters of Wakulla County have been flown in the space shuttle. Our local sea urchins eggs are widely used in embryology and pollution research. In 1968 we provided a bryozoan, *Bugula neritina* to the National Cancer Institute which led to the development of the anti-cancer, anti-Alzheimer's drug Bryostatin. We presently collect and market over 300 marine invertebrates, fish and algae to over 1300 scientific and educational institutions.

In 1980, Gulf Specimen Company became Gulf Specimen Marine Laboratories, Inc. (GSML), a not-for-profit corporation with a tax exempt IRS 501(c)(3) status. GSML is a licensed sea turtle rescue and rehabilitation center with a specially equipped hospital and turtle ambulance. All required permits and licenses from the FWC, Florida Department of Agriculture, and NOAA fisheries are maintained, and we have a 2 acre off shore lease for culturing live rock for aquariums.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Primary Contact Information: Jack Rudloe

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Names of co-applicants, partners or other entities, organizations that will have a role in the proposed project or program:

Young American Conservation Corps, Crawfordville; Florida A&M University; Florida State University; University of Florida; Valdosta State College; Wakulla High School and GSML's 1300 customer based scientific and educational institutions.

Robins McIntosh, Vice President of CP Foods, Inc. the largest shrimp farms in Thailand will consult on the design of the facilities and the development of curricula. Florida Aquaculture, Inc. which grows native shrimp for bait, will also participate. Dr. Brian LaPointe, of the FAU's Harbor Branch Institute will assist in the construction of algae tumble tanks,

REQUIRED EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In a maximum of three (3) pages, please describe the proposed project or program, including (i) the amount of funds being sought from Triumph Gulf Coast; (ii) the amount and identity of other sources of funds for the proposed project or program; (iii) the location of the project or program; (iv) summary description of the proposed program, including how the program will be transformational and promote economic recovery, diversification, and enhancement of the disproportionately affected counties, and (v) a summary timeline for the proposed project or program.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This pre-application process will not result in an award of funding by Triumph Gulf Coast. Rather, this process is designed to facilitate submission of ideas for potential projects or programs before the Applicant expends time and/or resources to complete a full Application. All Applicants for funding are required to complete an Application, which will be scored, and then considered for award in the discretion of Triumph Gulf Coast Board.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Amount of Funds Requested: \$3.922 million

\$2,512,000 for upgrading and expanding existing aquarium, aquaculture and dock facilities, and classrooms. This is based on a plan produced for us by Joe Chormanski, former vice president of Ripley's Aquariums.

Vessels: One 36' offshore collecting vessel with two 250 hp motors, electronics and aluminum rigging at \$180,000.

One 40' aluminum commercial pontoon boat Coast Guard certified for 30 passengers with two 250 hp motors, custom rigging and video cameras for teaching at \$210,000.

Salaries and Benefits: \$950,000 (\$475,000 per year for two years) for 11 new positions.

2. Amount and identity of other sources of funds and revenue sources:

More than half our revenue now comes from ecotourism and education. Income is derived from our specimen sales, aquarium memberships, donations, SeaMobile, school field trips and other tourism, gift shop, research contracts, grants, and crowd funding drives and events. School field trips are conducted on our 23 acres of private inholdings within the St. Mark's Wildlife Refuge, which enables us to demonstrate fresh water ecosystems in addition to the boardwalk on our salt marsh property. We highlight marine life from Wakulla, Franklin and Gulf Counties using artwork, graphics, an interactive kiosk and educational videos throughout the campus. For our environmental outreach program, we take our 20-foot SeaMobile traveling touch tank system to schools and festivals throughout North Florida, South Georgia and Southern Alabama.

Existing facilities include over three acres of land with aquarium buildings, gardens, and tanks that hold 80,000 gallons of sea water supported by state-of-the-art sea water systems, displaying a wide variety of marine life from the Florida panhandle. A 324-foot fixed dock with floating stalls, and a greenhouse used to culture phytoplankton, mysid shrimp and brine shrimp for aquarium food, both in house and for sale.

We own three boats, ranging from 16 to 26 feet, and three trucks. All are used for aquaculture, specimen collection and education. Our staff of eight paid employees are assisted by numerous volunteers, and interns from FSU, FAMU and TCC.

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we take our 20-foot SeaMobile traveling touch tank system to schools and festivals throughout North Florida, South Georgia and Southern Alabama.

Location of project or program: Panacea, Wakulla County, Florida

3. Summary Description of proposed program including how the program will be transformational and promote economic recovery, diversification, and enhancement of the disproportionately affected counties

The requested funds will provide for the expansion of GSML infrastructure and operations in ecotourism and aquaculture. We plan to expand our established successful, award winning education and internship programs adding courses that will lead to technical certificates in 1) aquaculture, 2) aquarist certification and 3) aquarium design and management. GSML will offer courses and apprenticeships in non-oyster commercial marine biology, providing knowledge and skills for growing and harvesting marine life for the burgeoning salt water hobbyist aquarium trade. We also will teach students to develop and market new products from local marine resources.

Our proposed programs will give a substantial boost to the regional economy. GSML has been highly successful in developing new markets for Florida seafood, and will continue to promote economic recovery and diversification in the disproportionately affected counties.

If funded, our new program will create 11 new paid staff positions totaling more than \$450,000 a year in salaries and benefits in the impoverished town of Panacea in Wakulla County.

GSML has become a highly popular tourist destination drawing 20,000 visitors to Wakulla County. We have over 30,000 followers on Facebook and 800 members with extensive media coverage on local television, radio stations and new media. With the expansion of the GSML facilities and new exhibits, we expect up to 40,000 more tourists annually. This will increase revenues to the local restaurants, marinas and other businesses and will greatly improve the business opportunities and employment prospects for the local economy, including displaced oystermen and seafood industry workers.

4. Program Detail:

We will offer three courses conducted twice a year, which we will produce up to 72 graduates per year earning certificates qualifying them for higher paying jobs in the growing aquarium and aquaculture industries. The project involves research by aquarium staff to improve aquaculture methods and develop curriculum. Interns from FSU, FAMU and other educational institutions will learn to test water quality and operate and maintain life support systems. Our interns and volunteers have consistently been able to get jobs with public aquariums, state government, educational institutions and laboratories due to the extensive training and hands on experiment that GSML provides.

We have a proven record of developing new markets in the seafood industry. In the 1970's we pioneered the market for previously discarded rock shrimp and bulldozer lobsters. Jack

Rudloe's visit to Malaysia, Thailand and China for the Apalachee Regional Planning Commission to learn how to harvest and process jellyfish for the Asian market in the 1990's resulted in a multi-million dollar cannonball jellyfish market for the Florida panhandle.

In the same way, we plan to help establish the culture, processing and marketing of the locally abundant sea weeds and red algae, *Gracilaria* sp, which is made into a popular "sea moss" drink in the Caribbean and Ireland where it is sold as a health food and a powerful aphrodisiac. We would like to see this drink produced and marketed locally. Dr. Brian LaPointe, of the FAU's Harbor Branch Institute will assist in the construction of algae tumble tanks. Robbins McIntosh, Vice President of CP Foods, Inc. who manages some of the world's largest shrimp farms in Thailand, will consult on the design of the facilities and the development of curricula.

We have also developed proprietary technology to culture sea worms, lugworms and bloodworms which are much in demand as bait and as food for brood stock in the shrimp farming industry. We will teach this technology as part of our aquaculture course. Our 2 acre aquarium rock lease off Alligator Point in Franklin County will enable us to culture Lion's Paw scallops.

5 Summary timeline for the proposed program.

This is a 3-year proposal. It will take approximately 1 year to build the new facilities, during which time we will develop the curricula, and recruit the necessary staff. At the beginning of the second year, we will open our first courses. By the end of the third year the program will be self-sustaining.