

**Eriko Arai**, Manager of Curriculum Programs, Vancouver Aquarium

## **Outline**

### BCTC AquaVan Program

The BCTC AquaVan is an award-winning mobile classroom, a 32-foot cube truck with live marine and freshwater animals, simulated seashores, aquatic artifacts, puppets, props and pictures. It travels to schools and communities throughout BC and Alberta, and is the Vancouver Aquarium's main outreach education program. The overall goal is to bring the success of Aquarium programs to classrooms and communities that otherwise would not have the opportunity to see, touch and experience aquatic animals in person. In partnership with LearnNowBC and as part of the Vancouver Aquarium's online strategy, BCTC AquaVan has posted all of their resources online.

This presentation will give an overview of the BCTC AquaVan program, new directions for the program, including opportunities to have the AquaVan at a school for a 5-day program, online resources available, and a brief discussion about the Vancouver Aquarium's overall online strategy. We strive to bring learning to life - both in person and online.

## **Bio**

Eriko joined the Vancouver Aquarium in 2003 and has over 10 years of experience working with children, youth, families and teachers in a variety of contexts. Throughout her career, she has been involved with developing and implementing environmental education both in formal and informal settings and she values both venues as educational opportunities for learners of all ages. A certified teacher and a prominent member of the science, conservation and museum educators' communities, she aims to contribute to efforts that benefit all educators in incorporating conservation education into their curriculum.

She currently oversees and manages all aspects of school programming at the Aquarium, including field trip programs, outreach, professional development for in-service teachers, pre-service teacher training and special education projects. As part of the Conservation, Research and Education department, she works collaboratively with her team to ensure that the Aquarium is an engaging environment for learners that incorporates current research, establishes a conservation ethic and uses best practices in education.