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**CULPEPPER**<sup>TM</sup>

and



**Job Architecture and Benchmarking at the Georgia Aquarium**

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October 17, 2023

# Introductions



## Natalie Croy Vice President, Compensation

Natalie has nearly 20 years of compensation experience in which she has helped a broad range of organizations in the review and design of compensation programs, including privately owned companies, government organizations and large publicly traded organizations.

Prior to joining Culpepper and Associates as their Director of Compensation Consulting, Natalie served as the Director, Global Compensation for a \$4.5B publicly traded Technology company. Prior to that, Natalie worked at Mercer, gaining deep expertise in job evaluation, compensation analysis, and project management.

Natalie earned a BS in Business Administration from University of Phoenix. She is a member of the Atlanta Area Compensation Association (AACA) and received her CCP designation from WorldatWork in 2007.



## Camille Hannans Vice President, Human Resources

Camille Hannans is an accomplished HR Leader with corporate, legal, non-profit and start-up experience. Over the course of her almost 20 year professional career she has developed an acumen in Human Resources and has in turn received multiple promotions and increasing levels of responsibility to develop, recruit and lead high performing teams that meet organizational objectives and revenue.

Hannans has directed the creation and implementation of new recruiting processes, leveraged human capital technology investment and organization learning/development over the course of her 12 years with Georgia Aquarium. Prior to working at the Aquarium, she was the retirement and disability assistant for Wilmer, Cutler, Hale & Dorr, LLP, and an information technology recruiter for Intech, Inc.

She has been the leader in garnering greater employee/manager satisfaction positively impacting retention, trust and intra/interdepartmental team effectiveness. **She oversaw the planning, development and implementation of a highly visible and impactful compensation plan which is tethered to our strategic plan and reinforces Georgia Aquarium Inc.'s position from a talent acquisition and retention perspective as a key business entity within the Atlanta and Association of Zoo and Aquarium community.**

Hannans is a graduate of James Madison University with a B.B.A. in Marketing.

# About Culpepper

Culpepper and Associates is a leading provider and trusted source for compensation survey market data and consulting services.



## Proven Experience

For over 40 years, organizations have relied on Culpepper to help benchmark and design competitive and effective compensation programs.



## A Partner Who Works With You

We work closely with you at every step in the process to assess, design, and implement solutions customized for your organization. We are flexible, responsive, and within reach to help you address your compensation program needs.



## Passionate

We are passionate about providing exceptional compensation solutions for our customers. We do not use a “one-size-fits-all” approach; we tailor solutions to fit the unique mission, operating model, and culture of your organization.



## Independent and Focused

We are privately owned and focus exclusively on providing compensation survey data, analytics, and consulting services.

# About Georgia Aquarium

Georgia Aquarium is a nonprofit committed to inspiring awareness and preservation of our ocean and aquatic animals worldwide. We are one of the largest aquariums in the western hemisphere.



## Conservationists

We are a scientific institution that entertains and educates, features exhibits and programs of the highest standards, and offers engaging and exciting guest experiences that promote the conservation of aquatic biodiversity throughout the world.



## Educators

Georgia Aquarium's school programs provide opportunities for students to discover the aquatic realm in an immersive, standards-based learning environment. Students discover conservation efforts and connect with nature through one of our onsite programs or through bring Georgia Aquarium to your school through in person programs.



## Entertainers

We provide education through entertainment. We offer live Dolphin and California sea lion interactions. Their dedicated trainers will show you how they work together — and why this is such an important part of animal care at Georgia Aquarium — in a live training session.

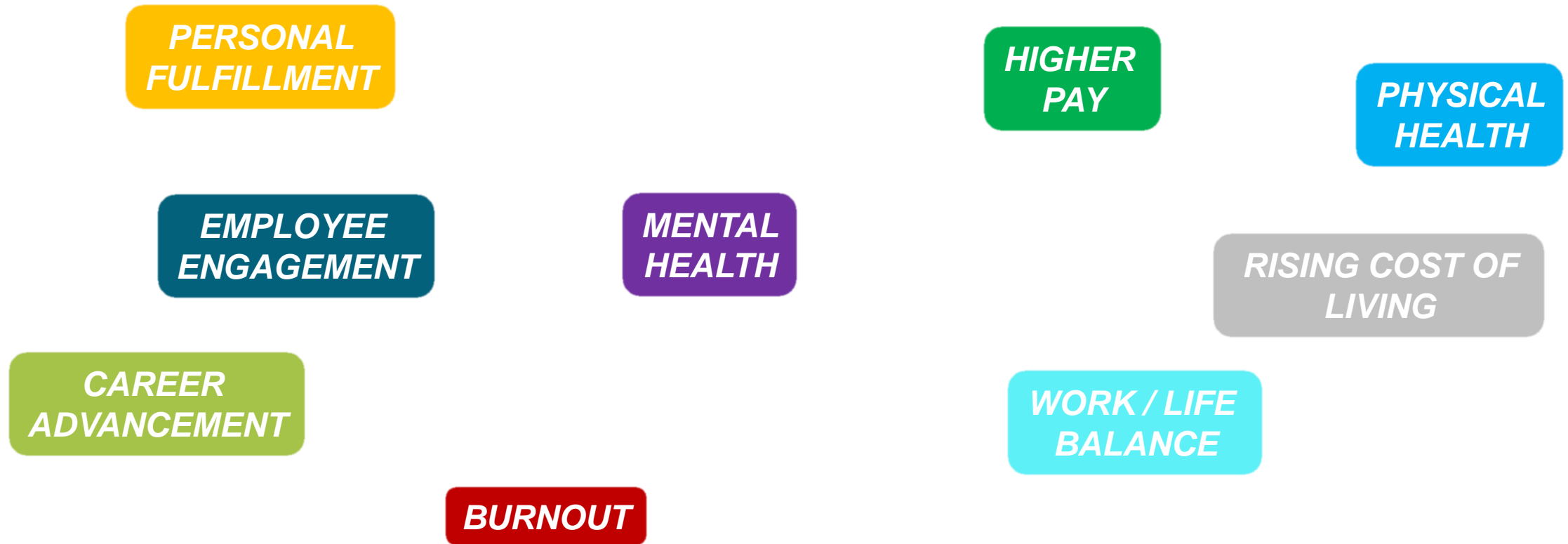


## Special Events

Georgia Aquarium offers memorable venues for fundraisers, black-tie galas, corporate dinners, as well as formal and informal events. Enjoy an immersive living environment as we offer private viewing windows of Oceans Voyager and Cold Water Quest. With a variety of space options, your event will be one to remember!

# Background

Since the pandemic, the labor market has been significantly disrupted with a record number of employees leaving companies for a variety of reasons...



# Background

**Though the Georgia Aquarium has partnered with Culpepper over the last ten years to ensure they were paying market competitive rates, they had not performed a full market analysis since before the pandemic. The pandemic coupled with the Great Resignation left employers in a war for talent...**

- Companies offering a living wage vs the state-mandated minimum wage.
- The talent pool expanding from historical talent competitors to local organizations outside the industry.
- HR needing to increase candidate offers to meet the market, causing internal compression and equity issues.

**The labor market remains highly competitive, even 3 years after the pandemic. Over 50% of our employee base is considered onsite essential and does not have the option to work remotely. The remainder of the staff is tied to Operations and also needs to be onsite for guest interaction and education programming, so it is critical to pay a competitive market wage.**

- Not your typical office worker – they have fish to feed!

**Without a strong job architecture and leveling methodology, there was inconsistency in titling and compensation across departments, which led to employees leaving one department to work for another. Budgeting exercises excluded HR in the past, which contributed to the title inconsistency and inflation.**

# Project Overview

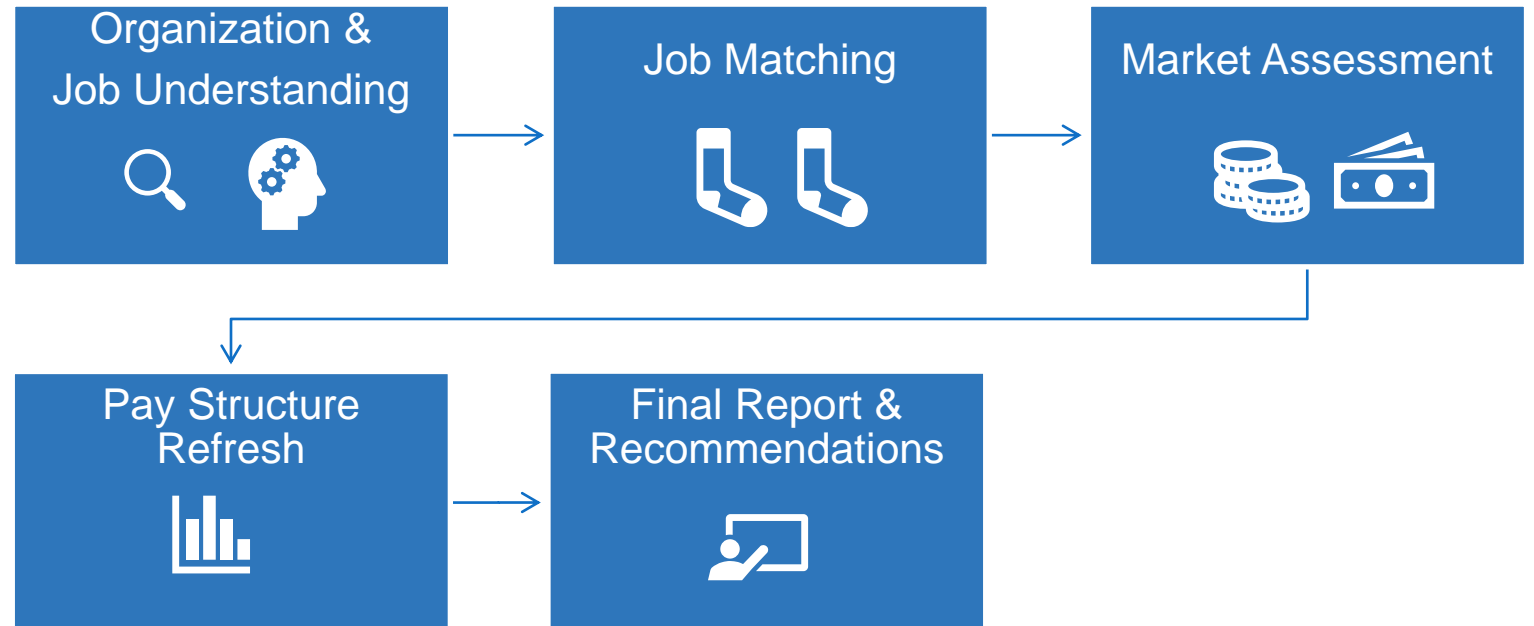
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# Project Overview

The Georgia Aquarium engaged Culpepper to better understand their position in a highly competitive labor market and to ensure they are attracting the best talent in the world to achieve their long-term business strategy.

## Project Goals:

- Validate work being performed by employees
- Validate job architecture foundation by identifying the correct job levels across the organization
- Assess pay relative to the “new” competitive market
- Refresh the pay structure to align with the market





# Organization Understanding & Job Matching

To kickoff the project, we conducted approximately 20 leadership meetings to understand each position and to identify survey job matches for each role based on job content and level. We educated the leaders on Culpepper's leveling methodology and best practices to ensure consistency across the organization.

The job level we identified serves as a foundational job architecture element, by:



Facilitating accurate survey benchmark selection



Distinguishing People Managers from Process Managers (ICs)



Identifying preliminary career paths



Breaking the link between **employee** performance / skills and the **role** requirements



Identifying compression issues within an Organization or Department

# Benchmarking Process

**Benchmarking jobs at a world class Aquarium is **easier said than done!****

**For this benchmarking project, we used many different data sources to ensure our assessment represented the appropriate talent competitors for the Georgia Aquarium.**

- Culpepper Surveys have over 1,700 participating organizations and cover approximately 4,000 jobs. Data is refreshed on a monthly basis and was primarily used for back-office positions.
- Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Compensation Survey.
- Theme Park, Zoological Park, and Aquarium (TZA) Survey compiled by Total Rewards Strategies.
- Form 990s were used, where appropriate.
- Current job postings – Market data was used from various zoos and aquariums for specific roles pertaining to industry. We also pulled in salaries from job postings at other local talent competitors, when appropriate.

**When benchmarking jobs and assessing pay, it is **critical** to identify the correct talent market to ensure the assessment is a valid indicator of pay position.**

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## Market Competitiveness Assessment & Structure Refresh

Once the benchmarking process was completed, Culpepper compared the Georgia Aquarium salaries to the external market to identify any employees that were below the market competitive rate.

The market data then informed the necessary pay structure adjustments to ensure alignment going forward.

New jobs were added to the pay structure to differentiate the levels of work required as identified through the leader discussions.

Culpepper performed a person by person cost impact analysis to show how each person compares to their new pay range, and the cost to get them to the targeted position in the range based on time in role.

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## Project Outcomes

**One of the main outcomes of the project was identifying areas where employees were below the competitive level within the market, confirming what turnover rates and employee engagement scores were indicating.**

**Going into the process, some of the Executive leaders were skeptical about needing to adjust employee compensation. By the end, all leaders were aligned and understood the importance of paying market competitive rates. In addition to paying market competitive, we educated them on the importance of differentiating pay for performance and they have now adopted a new merit philosophy, mitigating the overinflation of performance indicators.**

**Assessed who was below the minimum of the pay grades and adjusted them first as the top priority. Now they are focusing on those that are within the range, but not appropriately compensated based on their time in role.**

**The firm understanding of leveling has led to many employees receiving title changes and promotions to accurately reflect the work they are expected to perform. This sends a clear message that aligns with our pay for performance culture.**

**After implementing the recommended pay changes, we were able to eliminate the cross-departmental inconsistencies in compensation that were not market driven. This was especially important because employees would leave one department to go to another that paid higher for starting wages.**