

September 27, 2023

It's O-fish-al! FSC Opens New Bioscience Aquarium Lab

New Lab Will Offer New Exciting Course and Research Opportunities for Campus Community

On September 26, 2023, Farmingdale State College (FSC) proudly unveiled its state-of-the-art new Bioscience Aquarium Laboratory after an intensive two-year construction process. Located in Gleeson Hall's lower level in room L104, the newly renovated space boasts an array of advanced equipment provided by some of the region's top vendors.

The \$45,000 lab renovation was funded by the Farmingdale College Foundation with the generous support of the Broadhollow Bioscience Park.

"This investment will enhance the FSC student experience and advance faculty research capabilities" said Matthew Colson, vice president of development and alumni engagement. "We are thrilled to make this wonderful asset available to the campus community."

"The Aquarium facility is an outstanding new resource for the [Biology Department](#) and the greater Farmingdale campus community, and will serve as a phenomenal research, teaching, and learning tool for our faculty and students," said Sarah Gross, chair of biology. "I am so excited to see it up and running after all of the months of planning and hard work."

The nearly 500 square-foot lab offers:

- 32 five-gallon Shelving Unit tanks
- Eighteen 15-gallon Freshwater tanks
- One 45-gallon Saltwater Frag (for handling sponge and coral specimens)
- One 200-gallon Saltwater Vat (for mixing saltwater)
- One 75-gallon Teaching Touch Tank (Lobster Tank): 75-gallon

In addition, the new lab includes photosynthetic lighting, a unique textured floor for extra traction, new cabinetry, mobile lab benches, an industrial sink, state-of-the-art electronics including auto-top offs, water alarms, and in-lab cameras, specialized equipment "windows," and even a unique textured floor for extra traction.

"Often, all the mechanisms in any type of aquarium are hidden from view in models sold for fish markets and supermarkets for aesthetic reasons," said Biology Professor Peter Park. "However, because teaching was the central focus of this tank, it was custom-built-top-to-bottom so that every working component, such as the protein skimmer, filtration unit, pump, chiller, and UV sterilizer, has its own window or access space such that each part can be viewed by students separately for teaching purposes. Now, students will be able to see this process in real-time."

Several local vendors played a huge part in the new lab as well, including Chris Downs and his team at Island Fish & Reef in Bohemia, who installed the freshwater flow-through system, saltwater aquarium system, and frag tank; Tom Olsen and his team at Lobster Life Systems, Inc. in Lodi, NJ, who service the lobster tanks at many Long Island supermarkets and who installed the customized teaching marine touch tank; and Captain Gregory Peter Lauda, “Captain Pete,” of Target Rock Charters, who provided two live lobsters he had just caught in the Long Island Sound near Huntington Bay.

The lab will be available to various research interns and undergraduate students enrolled in Bio131 (Biological Principles II), Bio135 (Marine Science), and Bio310 (Ichthyology).

“We think that the aquarium will bring to light just how lucky we are to live on Long Island,” said Biology Professor Amanda Shore. “We firmly believe that there is no better place in the world to teach marine biology, freshwater biology, and fish biology. We are surrounded by water--estuaries, rivers and streams, lakes and ponds, and the Atlantic Ocean. This room will allow us to bring some of that nature back to the FSC campus.”

“This room sets the stage for various research projects that will involve marine and freshwater animals,” agreed Park. “It will be at the center of studies that aim to answer questions and solve real problems that face us here in Long Island. It will open doors to conversations about local wildlife and it will allow students to empathize with the nature that already and immensely surrounds Long Island.”

View more photos from the Bioscience Aquarium Laboratory grand opening event on our [Flickr Gallery](#).

Link to story on News & Media Center:

<https://www.farmingdale.edu/news/news-room/2023/2023-09-27-bioscience-aquarium-lab.shtml>

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