

Bridget C. Coughlin, PhD

Bridget C. Coughlin, PhD serves as President & CEO of Shedd Aquarium providing strategic oversight and direction to all activities and initiatives for the world-class institution. Her experience and expertise is dedicated to long-term planning that advances the aquarium's mission of enhancing public understanding and appreciation of the aquatic world and continues its long tradition of excellence.

Dr. Coughlin has been at the forefront of developing innovative experiences that educate, entertain and enhance the guest experience, and her many accomplishments have established her as one of the brightest leaders in the field. Her commitment to learning extends well beyond the walls of Shedd. Dr. Coughlin is a devoted advocate of public education and expanding STEM programs, and children's interest in science, across the U.S.

Before joining Shedd, Dr. Coughlin served as Vice President of Strategic Partnerships & Programs and Adjunct Curator at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science (DMNS). In that role, she was responsible for education, membership, fundraising and strategic partnership activities for the 115-year-old institution, which saw 2 million visitors in 2015.

Nationally recognized for her efforts, Dr. Coughlin led the creation of the DMNS Health exhibit, a recipient of the Association of Science-Technology Center's 2010 Leading Edge Award for Visitor Experience. She also established the acclaimed National Institute of Health-funded Genetics of Taste Lab, a community-based laboratory that gives guests the opportunity to participate in scientific research.

Prior to DMNS, Dr. Coughlin spent 5 years with the National Academy of Sciences, where she served as Managing Editor of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. She has also led research teams funded by the National Institutes of Health, Howard Hughes Medical Institute and Woods Hole Marine Biological Laboratory.

Dr. Coughlin holds a bachelor of arts from Knox College, a doctorate in biochemistry from the University of Iowa, and an executive MBA certificate from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. She enjoys outdoor activities, cooking and spending time with her husband and three sons.