47th Our World Underwater Dive & Travel Expo Silent Auction

Supporting the Ralph Erickson Educational Foundation

February 24 – February 26, 2017

Dear Dive Industry Professional:

The 2017 Our World-Underwater (OW-U) Dive & Travel Expo is being held on February 24, 2017 through February 26, 2017 at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, Rosemont, IL. For 2017, the exhibit hall will feature hundreds of booths on dive travel, equipment, training, and retailers, as well as a booth for the OW-U Silent Auction.

The proceeds from the Silent Auction support the nonprofit 501(c)(3), Ralph Erickson Educational Foundation, which assists underprivileged divemasters in realizing their dream of becoming instructors. To read more about the foundation go to <http://www.reefoundation.org/>.

We ask that you show your support for diving by donating some of your products/services to this year’s Silent Auction. Your contribution will be listed on the Ralph Erickson Educational Foundation website and silent auction brochure recognizing your support and giving you full credit for your generosity.

Please send your donation to the address listed below, along with the attached donation form showing your product description, quantity, and retail value. We need this information in order to determine the minimum bid.

Our World-Underwater Silent Auction c/o

Ralph Erickson Educational Foundation

16336 104th Ave

Orland Park, IL 60467

Donations must be received by February 12, 2017 in order to be listed in the silent auction brochure but, of course, we will accept them up until February 23, 2017 at the above address.

Please consider donating products/services to the silent auction for the Ralph Erickson Educational Foundation. All donations are greatly appreciated and are tax deductible. Our tax exempt number is 26-1528977. Should you require a copy of our Federal Tax Group Exemption letter, which establishes that we are a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization please feel free to contact me at [RalphEricksonEduFoundation@gmail.com](mailto:RalphEricksonEduFoundation@gmail.com).

Best regards,

Karina Erickson

Communications Director

Ralph Erickson Educational Foundation

Ralph Erickson Educational Foundation Silent Auction (OWU)

February 24, 2017 – February 26, 2017

Silent Auction Donation Form

Thank you for your decision to donate products/services to this year’s Silent Auction. Please fill out the information below and send a copy of this form with your donation:

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Website: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Assigned Booth No. if you are exhibiting at the Show: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Item(s) to be donated (indicate quantity) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Retail Value of Each Item \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Send items to:

Our World-Underwater Silent Auction c/o

Ralph Erickson Educational Foundation

16336 104th Ave

Orland Park, IL 60467

**Ralph Erickson Educational Foundation Background**

The Ralph Erickson Educational Foundation strives to provide an opportunity for those divers whose economic status prohibits them from continuing their education to the Instructor ranks of the scuba diving industry. Our goals are to (1) grow the Professional levels of the Scuba Diving Industry (2) create and infuse new energy into the dive industry (3) help divers fulfill their dream of obtaining Instructor rating (4) provide assistance to those who will make a difference in the diving community.

Ralph Erickson was the Co-Founder and President of the Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI), today’s largest scuba diving certification agency in the world. He successfully used his background in education to develop changes in the way scuba diving was being taught. Ralph was committed to the idea that anyone who had the drive and passion for the underwater world should not be denied the chance of sharing that energy with others. He was instrumental in developing instructors in the early years of diving on islands throughout the Caribbean, determined to make a difference in the lives of others who shared his love of the water.

Ralph remained an active diver, Instructor, and Course Director until his passing in 2006. His wife Karen and daughter Karina along with close friends Patrick and Sherry Hammer formed the Ralph Erickson Educational Foundation in honor of him and to carry on Ralphs’ belief that others who share his passion should not be held back due to financial constraints. As Instructors and Course Directors, we are committed to keeping his dream alive by touching lives and securing futures.

When people like you support the Ralph Erickson Educational Foundation you make a difference in the lives of those whose desire it is to become involved in the professional realm of the diving industry. Many local islanders cannot afford the cost of an Instructor Course, the materials required, or the time to take off work unpaid to enroll in one. Beyond the expense of the course itself, Instructor candidates must also pay for the Instructor Examination and associated fees.

Like Ralph - Make a difference – Your support will change the lives of those to whom we can offer assistance in the world. Once again, thank you for supporting the Ralph Erickson Educational Foundation and its mission. It is because of supporters like you that we are slowly on our way to reaching our goal of raising $30,000.00 which will enable us to organize and conduct Instructor programs for local residents in the islands.

For more information on the Ralph Erickson Educational Foundation, programs and activities and how you can make a difference visit [REEFoundation.org](http://reefoundation.org/)