

# together



**2019 ANNUAL REPORT**  
Nashville Zoo





**Harlequin Racerunner**

These lizards are found in northern South America. They press their bodies flat against rock walls and tree branches to remain unseen.

**3** ZOO LEADERSHIP

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# together

with Julie W. Walker and Rick Schwartz



**Dear Friends,**

Looking back on 2019, we are so proud of what we have accomplished together as a community, thanks to your commitment to Nashville Zoo and its mission. Detailed in this annual report is a success story of what your involvement and generous support helped the Zoo achieve last year, serving Middle Tennessee as a leading resource for conservation, education, and recreation. In 2019, we welcomed a record 1,266,764 guests to Nashville Zoo - a twenty percent increase over 2018. Our hope is that each of them left the Zoo with a better understanding of and connection with the natural world, inspired and empowered to affect positive change for our planet.

In addition to our gratitude, we would also like to share our congratulations with you, because your Zoo earned a number of significant awards in 2019. Expedition Peru: Trek of the Andean Bear was awarded Top Honors from the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, distinguishing it as the best exhibit in the country. And on a lighter note, the women’s restroom within this exhibit, featuring a cotton-top tamarin habitat, was deemed by popular vote as the best restroom in America. Additionally, the HCA Healthcare Veterinary Center was recognized for Excellence in Construction from the Greater Tennessee Chapter of the Associated Builders and Contractors. As you will read in this report, Nashville Zoo also received accolades for excellence in education and fiscal responsibility. While this recognition is sincerely appreciated, we are also thrilled that it gives us a platform to share the meaningful work we are doing through our Wild Works Global Conservation efforts.

As you will see in the following pages, Nashville Zoo staff members have traveled around the globe to assist in saving species in the wild. Additionally, here at the Zoo, we are making great strides in the reproduction of a number of species for release into their native habitats. Saving Puerto Rican crested toads and loggerhead shrikes in Canada are just two examples of the international partnerships in which we participate. When Zoo staff cannot be actively involved in conservation work, we contribute to a number of worthwhile programs around the globe. In 2019, with your financial support, we are proud to have contributed \$530,000 to global conservation initiatives saving gorillas, Amazonian manatees, lions, white rhinos, and a multitude of other species. In response to the devastating brushfires in Australia, Nashville Zoo sent \$30,000 in immediate aid to help rescue and protect affected wildlife, and we have committed all funds raised through our 2020 Round-up for Conservation Program to assist in the ongoing relief efforts.

We also know that saving species around the world begins with education here in Middle Tennessee. In 2019, Nashville Zoo opened Tiger Crossroads, which was designed with that objective in mind. In addition to giving visitors a close-up view of the critically endangered Sumatran tiger, this exhibit features thought-provoking graphics and interactive displays, which educate guests on the role they each play in the survival of the tiger species. With the importance of education at the forefront, Nashville Zoo also opened the HCA Healthcare Veterinary Center last year. This state-of-the-art facility features an outdoor observation deck, offering Zoo visitors a front-row view of medical procedures and nursery care. We believe that providing transparency in our animal welfare practices will give the public a better appreciation of the excellent level of care we offer all our animals.

Looking to the future, Nashville Zoo will continue to create immersive exhibits and experiences designed to ensure the highest quality of animal welfare, while transporting guests to the homelands and habitats of our animals. Komodo dragon and Javan peafowl habitats will be the next additions to our growing Zoo. Then we will embark on our biggest project to date – a 40-acre African savanna. This multi-species exhibit will provide visitors with a remarkable opportunity to experience an African safari without ever leaving Nashville. We are excited about the possibilities as we continue to partner with you to develop one of the top zoos in the country. As we move toward this goal, working together to enrich the Middle Tennessee community, we appreciate your tremendous dedication to Nashville Zoo and its mission.

We were glad to have seen so many of you at the Zoo in 2019 on visits, tours, or attending one of our donor events. Hopefully, you had a chance to experience our newest offering – Zoolumination: Chinese Festival of Lights. We value your commitment to Nashville Zoo and are proud of all that we have accomplished together.

We hope to see you at the Zoo in 2020 and look forward to many more shared successes!

**Sincerely,**

**Julie W. Walker**  
Nashville Zoo Board Chairman

**Rick Schwartz**  
Nashville Zoo President & CEO

*P.S. From Julie – On behalf of Nashville Zoo’s Board of Directors and staff, I would like to recognize and congratulate our President and CEO. Rick was recently honored by the Metro Council with a Resolution acknowledging his 30 years of service to the Zoo and his contributions to Nashville.*

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**Caribbean Flamingo**  
Caribbean flamingos are one of six species of flamingos. Flamingos can be found on every continent except Australia and Antarctica.







# TAKING HOME top honors

Nashville Zoo's Expedition Peru: Trek of the Andean Bear received the 2019 Exhibit Award Top Honors by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums at the AZA Annual Conference in September. The award is the highest achievement for exhibit design given by AZA and is judged by 18 seasoned zoo and aquarium professionals on exhibit design, contribution to conservation, interpretive programming and how the exhibit fits in the Zoo's long-term strategic goals.

"This is an outstanding accomplishment that not only signifies a new, elevated time for the Zoo, but also recognizes our goal to create the best possible exhibit for the species that call Nashville Zoo home," said Rick Schwartz, Nashville Zoo President and CEO. "It's incredible to be given top honors and we will continue creating exhibits of this caliber as we expand in the future."



## donors make a difference

"The Zoo is an important asset for Nashville, and we, along with our fellow Nashvillians, love it. We have long admired Rick Schwartz, and his enthusiasm for the Andean Bear exhibit was infectious. We were extremely proud that this habitat was awarded AZA's Exhibit of the Year. Nashville Zoo continues to grow in stature – nationally and internationally, and Stephanie and I appreciate having the chance to help make this growth possible."

– John Ingram





# WE'RE AT A crossroads

## Sumatran Tiger

Over the last 35 years Sumatran tiger populations have fallen by 60%.

Tiger Crossroads opened on April 12 featuring the critically endangered Sumatran tiger. "We are very excited to have Sumatran tigers here at Nashville Zoo and to share their conservation story," said David Oehler, Nashville Zoo Vice President.

The new viewing building features reinforced glass panels for the closest possible view of these majestic cats, a training wall where guests can see training demonstrations and interactive displays to engage and educate visitors about tiger conservation.



**"With less than 400 Sumatran tigers left in the wild, it is extremely important to have our guests see these magnificent animals up close and to provide information on how to protect the tigers' remaining habitat."**

**– David Oehler, Nashville Zoo Vice President**



## donors make a difference

"We are delighted to support the Zoo and Rick in the efforts that have been implemented to develop and improve the Nashville Zoo. Not only is it creating a fun and wholesome experience for Nashville families, but it also increases awareness of the importance of animal and plant conservation."

**– Richard and Judith Braken**



# TOGETHER WE ARE saving species

## Species Survival Plans® & New Additions

Our animal family expanded in 2019 thanks to new additions and offspring from Species Survival Plans® (SSP). Each SSP carefully manages the breeding of a species in order to maintain a healthy and self-sustaining captive population that is both genetically diverse and demographically stable.

This year, we bred one or more individuals as part of these SSPs: cotton-top tamarin, clouded leopard, red kangaroo, Palawan binturong and Puerto Rican crested toad. We added several new animals to our collection based on the recommendation of SSPs, including a male white rhinoceros, a female cape porcupine and a male Baird’s tapir to be paired with animals already at the Zoo. Our ambassador animal program also received Winsol the aardvark and a flock of Chilean flamingos, who are tremendous ambassadors for their species.

## Headstart Programs

As part of our continued collaboration with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, we produced 2,300 critically endangered Puerto Rican crested toad tadpoles and sent them to Puerto Rico for release to increase wild populations. We also hatched two loggerhead shrikes as part of the cooperative Loggerhead Shrike Recovery Program with Wildlife Preservation Canada. After hatching, the chicks were transferred to Canada and released at the Carden, Ontario field area.

## Funding Forever

Each year, Nashville Zoo contributes proceeds gained from our supporters to a wide array of conservation efforts. In 2019, more than \$530,000 was given to help fund conservation efforts around the globe.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Acobia   | Rainforest Awareness Rescue Education Center |
| Andean Bear Conservation Alliance                        | Red Panda Network                            |
| Borneo Nature Foundation                                 | Save Vietnam’s Wildlife Center               |
| Cheetah Conservation Fund                                | Sia  |
| Coral Conservation                                       | Tarangire Lion Research Initiative           |
| Duke Lemur Center  | VulPro                                       |
| Gorilla Rehabilitation and Conservation Education Center | Wildlife Conservation Network                |
| Instituto de Conservação de Animais Silvestres           | Wildlife Preservation Canada                 |
| Instituto de Pesquisas Ecologicas                        | Wildlife Tracking Alliance                   |
| International Rhino Foundation                           |  |
| Minnesota Zoo Foundation                                 |  |
| Nebraska Wildlife Rehab, Inc                             |  |
| North of England Zoological Society                      |  |
| Point Defiance Zoo Society                               |  |



## donors make a difference

“Nashville Zoo is a leader in conservation locally, nationally and globally. One example is their work with the endangered clouded leopard. When my wife, Lisa, and I learned about their collaborative research and breeding practices related to this species, we were inspired to support Nashville Zoo’s conservation efforts. Recently, we were fortunate to have an opportunity to interact with a clouded leopard. Holding one of these magnificent cats is an indescribable experience!”

– Tony Giarratana





# TOGETHER WE ARE supporting research

## banding *in Bolivia*

Lead Avian Keeper Kristi Watkins traveled to the Laguna Colorada Wildlife Sanctuary in Bolivia to assist a team from Centro de Estudios en Biología Teórica y Aplicada (BIOTA) who are researching the Andean flamingo, St. James flamingo and Chilean flamingo species in hopes of better understanding ways to protect them. Watkins helped band flamingos, which will benefit future teams in identifying individual flamingos, weigh newly-hatched chicks and assess the overall health of the populations.

Upon arriving at the nesting areas, which are located in a mostly dry, barren landscape near the Andes Mountains, the team discovered a recent period of heavy rainfall had decimated the entire local Andean flamingo egg population. Approximately 8,000 Andean flamingo eggs were lost because of the high water levels, which could be due, in part, to climate change.

"There are only three areas in South America where these birds breed, so it's really important to maintain this environment," Watkins said.

**Flamingos have long been interwoven into the local culture of this region's indigenous people. Collecting flamingo eggs for consumption and trade has been a long-standing tradition. However, harvesting flamingo eggs can have a devastating impact on an already declining population.**

The research team included staff members from Nashville Zoo, Fort Worth Zoo and La Paz Zoo, along with National Park Rangers and the BIOTA leaders. Additionally, the group has been working with high school students from the surrounding region of Potosi to get them involved in researching these birds.



## Cheetah

With acceleration that would leave most automobiles in the dust, a cheetah can go from 0 to 60 miles per hour in only three seconds.



## a helping hand *in Somaliland*

It is estimated that every year more than 300 young cheetahs are illegally snatched from Ethiopia, northern Kenya, Somalia and Somaliland, then smuggled out of Somaliland to be sold online to the wealthy. Less than 25% of these captured cheetah survive during travel to reach the buyers, and those that do survive are often in poor health.

With less than 7,500 cheetahs surviving in the wild, coupled with the low reproductive rates, their numbers are unsustainable. Experts estimate that in less than 10 years, the cheetah could be extinct in Northern Africa.

The Cheetah Conservation Fund has been working since 2011 to help rescue confiscated cheetah cubs. Confiscated cubs are moved to a safe house in Somaliland. Most of the confiscated cubs come into the safe house in critical condition and require intensive care.

Dr. Margarita Woc Colburn, Nashville Zoo's Associate Veterinarian, has been assisting with the care of these confiscated cheetahs by acting as one of the veterinary consultants, utilizing her cheetah expertise.



In September, she traveled to Somaliland to assist with the health assessment of 30 cheetahs. During her time there, they fully examined the cheetahs at the safe house, developed preventative care protocols and assisted in the training of local veterinarians. Based on the findings of the exams, improved nutrition and preventative medicine protocols were set in place.

Nashville Zoo continues to support these efforts by ongoing donations of medications and medical equipment, as well as Dr. Woc Colburn's telecommunication veterinary consults.



TOGETHER WE ARE

# engaging our community



Nashville Zoo’s education initiatives go far beyond our property, reaching into Middle Tennessee and beyond through our Wildlife on Wheels programs, curriculum partnerships with local middle schools and conservation calls to action that help Zoo guests make an impact beyond their visit.

**gold star moment**

The Zoo received AZA’s Innovation in Education Award in 2019 for our partnership program with Croft Middle Design Center. The project is a collaboration between Nashville Zoo, Vanderbilt University and Croft Middle Design Center to enhance the teaching and learning of science at Croft Middle. Various in-school and field experiences increase student engagement, connect students directly to the conservation work of Nashville Zoo and motivate students to be stewards of wildlife and wild places throughout their lives.

**donors make a difference**

“We know that our support as members of the Claws, Paws and Jaws Donor Society allows the Zoo to provide important and uniquely supplemental educational, cultural and recreational opportunities to hundreds of thousands of Nashville area residents and tourists each year. We hope that every Zoo visitor appreciates the Zoo’s role in local and international wildlife and ecological conservation efforts, and, even more importantly, our individual responsibility to appreciate, respect and preserve our delicate environment.”

– Elizabeth and Larry Papel



269,698 128,247

guests reached through interpretive programs, a 67% increase from last year. individuals reached through onsite animal programs, shows and encounters.

66,092 31,858

students reached through field trips and school programs. individuals reached through 366 outreach programs

4,417 1,195

individuals reached through camps, overnights, Zoo Tots and scout programs. home school students reached through our monthly Home School Days.





## zoolumination

More than 149,000 individuals saw the Zoo in a whole new light this winter at Zoolumination: Chinese Festival of Lights. The event celebrated Chinese culture with 500+ custom-made silk lanterns in dazzling scenes throughout the Zoo, nightly entertainment from Chinese acrobats and performers and much more. This 63-night festival drew a new audience to the Zoo, saw a higher rate of adults visiting without children and attracted many older adults who had not visited in several years.







NATIONAL  
GEOGRAPHIC

# PHOTOARK

JOEL SARTORE

Special thanks to Joel Sartore for his photos of the beautiful species here at Nashville Zoo.



## Palawan Binturong

Binturongs are also called bearcats, but that name is rather misleading since these animals are related to neither bears nor cats.

# call of the wild

Jamie Granbery and Lisa Manning / *Luncheon Co-Chairs*  
Karen Moore and Robin Patton / *Dinner Co-Chairs*

The Call of the Wild luncheon and patron dinner took place on April 3 and 4. This exclusive experience featured presentations by Joel Sartore, award-winning *National Geographic* photographer and author of *National Geographic The Photo Ark*. *The Photo Ark* is an ambitious 11-year project documenting every species living in the world's zoos and wildlife sanctuaries — inspiring people to help protect these animals for future generations.





# sunset safari

Allison DeMarcus, Julie Dretler, Karly Hart and Jennie Garth Lowe  
Event Co-Chairs

Named one of Nfocus's "Best Parties," wildlife meets nightlife at Sunset Safari, presented by UBS. The event features food and drinks from more than 50 of Nashville's best restaurants, plus live entertainment and special animal hosts.





# together we give

Thank you to the following donors who contributed \$1,000 or more in 2019 toward the Zoo’s operating and conservation funds.

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† indicates donors who are deceased

Claws, Paws and Jaws Society is our most dedicated group of supporters, contributing \$1,500+ annually towards Zoo operations.

Sunset Safari Benefactors contributed \$1,000+ toward the success of the event, which helps fund Zoo operations.

Call of the Wild Dinner Patrons contributed \$2,500+ toward the success of the event, which helps fund Zoo operations.

Donors to Nashville Zoo’s Wild Works Global Conservation program support research, habitat protection, breeding programs and education initiatives both at the Zoo and around the globe.

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## Experience Partners



## Middle Tennessee Honda Dealers





# croft society

The Croft Society is a planned giving recognition group for individuals who include the Zoo in their estate plans, enabling the Zoo to thrive for generations to come.

- Mr. Howard Armstrong†

Mr. Daryl Brown†

Mr. Kerry Foth

Mr. Donald C. Gipson

Mrs. Landis B. Gullett†

Ms. Suzanne Iler

Mr. John Lewis

Mrs. Barbara Mathieson

Mr. Mark McCollow†
- Ms. Stella Marie Smock†

Mr. D. Breck Walker

Mrs. Julie W. Walker

Mr. James A. Webb III†

Ms. K. Janelle Wilson
- † indicates donors who are deceased



## donors make a difference

“Through both my volunteer efforts and through future contributions, I hope that I can make this a better world by giving our guests a reason to care about their surroundings, both near and far.”

– Kerry Foth

**Malpelo Island Galliwasp**  
Galliwasps are burrowing, skink-like lizards found in the Americas and the Caribbean.

# financial highlights

## Your Generosity in Action

- **1,266,548** individuals visited the Zoo (a 20% increase from 2018!), supporting Zoo operations and conservation through their visit
- **38,846** households became Zoo members, helping to fund Zoo operations with their membership purchase
- **\$653,767** were raised toward Zoo operations from individual donors
- The Zoo collected **\$28,852** for conservation with the help of visitors who chose to “round up” their retail, food and beverage purchases.
- **281** people showed their pride for the Zoo as Claws, Paws & Jaws Donor Society members



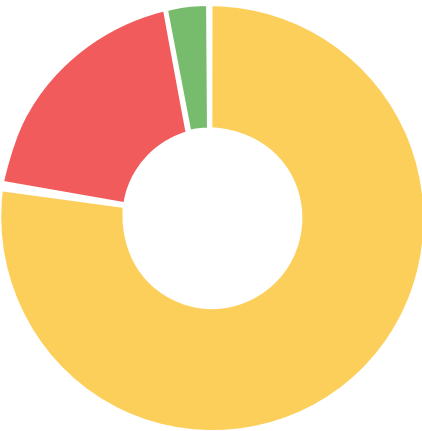
### Attendance Increase

2018 **1,053,725** visitors  
2019 **1,266,548** visitors  
Increase: **20%**



### Public Support & Revenue

- Park Income **51%**
  - Membership Income **20%**
  - Events & Rentals **15%**
  - Donations & Grants **8%**
  - Education Programs **6%**
- Total: **\$21,156.057**



### Expenses

- Program Expenses **76%**
  - Management & General **21%**
  - Fundraising & Membership **3%**
- Total: **\$21,967,706**



### Capital Campaign & Investments

- Capital Grants **15%**
  - Capital Campaign **57%**
  - Investment Income **28%**
- Total: **\$11,327,532**  
*Capital campaign income is restricted for use toward development of future exhibits.*

## GETTING THE perfect score

In 2019, we received a perfect score of 100 from Charity Navigator, the nation’s largest and most utilized evaluator of charities. Charity Navigator assesses more than 9,000 non-profits and Nashville Zoo is one of only 67 charities in the United States to receive this flawless mark. No other zoo, aquarium or Middle Tennessee charity received a rating of this caliber. A perfect score shows that we are executing our mission in a fiscally responsible manner, while providing the highest level of accountability and transparency to our stakeholders.



TOGETHER WE CAN  
grow wild

With the opening of Tiger Crossroads and the HCA Healthcare Veterinary Center in 2019, Phase I of the Grow Wild campaign is now complete! As we begin to finalize plans for Phase II, including a 40-acre African savanna and village, we need your help to fund this innovative new habitat that will showcase lions, hippos and a variety of other African species. Contact [growwild@nashvillezoo.org](mailto:growwild@nashvillezoo.org) to learn more about how you can be involved in the growth of Nashville Zoo.

campaign commitments

<b>\$5,000,000+</b>	Jeff Jacobs	Pilot Flying J	Dorothy Cate & Thomas F. Frist Foundation
The Frist Foundation	Adrienne and Richard McRae, The Selby and Richard McRae Foundation	Scott and Lyn Sohr	Daryl R. Brown† and John T. Lewis
HCA Healthcare	The Memorial Foundation	Julie Stadler	John O. Colton, The John and Julia Colton Family Advised Fund*
Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County	Leah and Jim Sohr Family Foundation	Barbara and Rick Turner, Jr.	Agneta and Brownlee Currey
<b>\$3,000,000+</b>	Speer Foundation	Julie and Breck Walker	Lauren and Spence Curry
Richard and Judith Bracken, The Bracken Foundation	State of Tennessee	<b>\$25,000 - \$99,999</b>	Missy and John Eason
Stephanie and John Ingram, The John R. Ingram Advised Fund*	Jim† and Becky Webb	Bass Pro	Ergon Foundation Inc.
Robin and Richard Patton, The Patton Advised Fund*	<b>\$100,000 - \$249,999</b>	Earl Bentz and Family	Kerry Foth
<b>\$1,000,000+</b>	Anonymous	Samantha and Chris Boyd	Terri and Bob Hensley
Kathryn and David Brown	Cynthia and David Arnholt	Sally and Neely Coble III and Family	Angie and Christopher Howard
Dugas Family Foundation	The Lee Beaman Family	Charles, Kim and Charlie Crews	Kris and Alex Marks
Earl Swensson Associates	Janie and Brandon Busbee	Laurie and Steve Eskind	Martin Family Foundation
Dottie Frist, The Dorothy Cate & Thomas F. Frist Foundation	Drew Crawford	Ford Motor Company	Mary and Tim Schoettle
Patricia and Rodes Hart	Kelly Crockett	Bernice and Joel Gordon	Faith and Arnold Shertz
Sarah and David Ingram, The David B. Ingram Advised Fund*	Kevin and Katie Crumbo	Julie and Bob Gordon	Shirley and Stuart Speyer
Cal Turner Family Foundation	Anne Davis and Karl Dean	Connie and Carl Haley	Frances and Jimmy Spradley
<b>\$250,000 - \$999,999</b>	Babs and Bill Freeman	Denice and Milton Johnson	The Sol and Rose Stern Charitable Trust
Andrea Waitt Carlton Family Foundation	H.G. Hill Realty Company	Kent, Nora and Emme Kirby	The Taylor Family Charitable Fund
EBS Foundation	The Hagood Family	Thomas Lovenenthal and Family	Thomas and Mamie Houser Charitable Foundation, Norris Nielson Family, Trustees
Jim and Sally Hunt and The Hunt Family Foundation	Haslam 3 Foundation	Nashville Convention and Visitors Corporation	UBS Financial Services Inc.
Gail Jacobs	Haslam Family Foundation	Elizabeth and Larry Papel	Waterscapes Backyard Resorts, LLC
	Institute of Museum and Library Services	Patti and Brian Smallwood	Julia and Chris Whitson
	Joe C. Davis Foundation	<b>\$5,000 - \$24,999</b>	Irene and Ridley Wills
	Lisa and David L. Manning	Anonymous (2)	
	Ellen Harrison Martin	All About Animals LLC	
	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	Cindy and Dave Baier	
		Mary and H. Lee Barfield II, The	

**African Lion**  
We support efforts in Tanzania to monitor lion populations and implement human-lion conflict mitigation. This not only protects the African lions but also the ecosystem that is dependant on these predators.



donors make a difference

“We have the fastest growing major zoo in America. With strong leadership, stunning exhibits and room to expand, we believe the Nashville Zoo can become one of the best in the country. That’s why we continue to invest, and why we’re thrilled with plans for a spectacular new exhibit featuring the animals of Africa.”

– Dr. Tommy Frist

TOGETHER WE CAN  
create a better world

Nashville Zoo is dedicated to inspiring a culture of understanding and discovery of our natural world through conservation, innovation and leadership. We cannot do it without you. You can support the work being done at Nashville Zoo, as well as around the globe, through a tax-deductible contribution. Your help is vital to the success of our mission and vision.

**You Can Help!**  
Contact Development at [development@nashvillezoo.org](mailto:development@nashvillezoo.org) or call **615-833-1534 x106**





### Clown Tree Frog

Found throughout the Amazon River Basin, the clown tree frog has a large distribution in South America. They live in rainforests and are found in vegetation around ponds and open flooded areas.

ACCREDITED BY THE  
**ASSOCIATION  
OF ZOOS &  
AQUARIUMS**

3777 Nolensville Pike  
Nashville, TN 37211  
[nashvillezoo.org](http://nashvillezoo.org)

Photos by: Nate Brown, Caitlin Harris, Kate Johns, Byron Jorjorian,  
Chad Mellon, Joel Sartore, Warner Tidwell, Kristi Watkins,  
Dr. Margarita Woc Colburn, Kelsey White and Nathan Zucker.