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Building a New Veterinary Medical Center at the Phoenix Zoo *Care Meets Conservation*

PHOENIX (September 15, 2024) – The Arizona Center for Nature Conservation (ACNC)/Phoenix Zoo is embarking on a significant public fundraising campaign to build a new 27,000 square foot veterinary medical center. The new Center is scheduled to break ground in February of 2025, with an expected completion date in late 2026. The public’s help is needed to raise the remaining \$6.2 million.

“We have a unique opportunity to come together as a community and make a lasting impact on the future of wildlife care,” says Derrick Hall, President and CEO of the Arizona Diamondbacks, and Campaign Cabinet Chair for the Phoenix Zoo’s Veterinary Medical Center. “This new facility will not only enhance the health and well-being of the animals we all cherish, but it will also serve as a hub for education and innovation. Every contribution, no matter the size, brings us one step closer to making this vision a reality.”

Among the notable features of the expanded facility are indoor viewing windows and digital screens that will allow guests to observe veterinary exams and animal health procedures in real time, providing an immersive educational experience. Additionally, the Center will include classrooms and collaborative workspaces to train the next generation of wildlife veterinarians, fostering a culture of excellence and innovation.

“The new Veterinary Medical Center will be transformative and add capacity that will truly elevate what we can do day to day.” says Dr. Gary West, Senior Vice President of Animal Health and Living Collections at the Phoenix Zoo. “We will expand our training of tomorrow’s veterinarians, and this hospital will significantly increase the amount of practical hands-on training for veterinary students in zoological medicine.”

Bert Castro, President and CEO of the Phoenix Zoo, has been impressed with the community support that has already been shown for this project. “We have been very fortunate with our fundraising efforts thus far and have already raised nearly \$19 million of the needed \$25 million from incredibly generous foundations, philanthropic gifts and individual gifts. In addition, Sundt Construction is supporting this endeavor through building the project at cost – which is an enormous savings to the overall cost of the new Center. As a non-profit, we rely solely on donations to make these exciting projects come to fruition. We are hoping with the public’s help now, we will be able to complete the goal for this amazing Center and will break ground in January.”

The Veterinary Medical Center will be built along what is known as the Zoo's outer Africa Trail, next to the current Arthur L. and Elaine V. Johnson Conservation Center, linking these two major facilities into what will be known as the Animal Care and Conservation Campus. The building will be two stories, accommodating staff, along with public and student spaces.

Donations can be made in multiple forms including on the Zoo's website, through "rounding up" at numerous points of sale venues throughout the Zoo, in the Desert Marketplace gift shop, and through this direct donation link: <https://iqfn.us/form/lx4VVQ>

For more information about this significant project, you are invited to watch this video outlining the need for the Veterinary Medical Center.

LINK: <https://www.phoenixzoo.org/vmc/>

About the Arizona Center for Nature Conservation

The Arizona Center for Nature Conservation operates the Phoenix Zoo. The ACNC advances the stewardship and conservation of animals and their habitats while providing experiences that inspire people and motivate them to care for the natural world.

The Phoenix Zoo is the only zoo in the Valley accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and is a non-profit zoological park, serving 1.4 million guests annually. The Zoo is home to more than 3,000 animals, many of which are endangered and threatened species. For information on upcoming events, exhibits and activities at the Phoenix Zoo, visit www.phoenixzoo.org.