



PITTSBURGH ZOO  
& PPG AQUARIUM

2021

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ANNUAL REPORT



# FROM THE PRESIDENT



African elephant

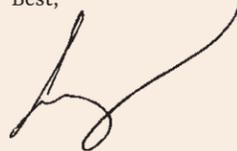
Dear Zoo Friends,

For nearly 125 years, the Zoological Society of Pittsburgh has been dedicated to promoting the well-being of animals in the wild and here in our care. When we look back in history years from now, 2021 will be seen as a turning point in the Zoo's history: a time when the Zoo went from the brink of closure and rebounded to have one of its best years ever. Thanks to the tenacity of the Zoo's leader, Dr. Barbara Baker, who refused to let her institution fail and the unwavering perseverance of staff, the Zoo survived and is now poised to further accomplish great things. Barbara's retirement after 31 years at the helm is a significant moment in our Zoo's long and storied history, and the entire region benefited from her vision.

As the sun sets on my first few months here in Pittsburgh, I am both honored and humbled by the opportunity to lead this cultural gem of western Pennsylvania into the next chapter. Animals need our help now more than ever, and our Zoo can't fulfill our mission without you. In fact, donor support fuels critical conservation worldwide, cares for countless animals and plant life at the Pittsburgh Zoo, and offers hope to the world's most extraordinary wildlife relying on us to survive — and thrive — each and every day.

Together, we must tackle the world's most pressing conservation challenges for the next 125 years: the ongoing zoonotic pandemic, climate change, and the massive decline in the world's biodiversity. Our community's steadfast dedication to our Zoo is truly life-sustaining. From our tiny endangered Australian Rainbow fish, to our iconic African elephants, your support sustains every Zoo resident, no matter how big or small. Simply put, we can't do it without you! Together, we're making a real and tangible difference for wildlife.

Best,



Dr. Jeremy Goodman  
President & CEO



Australian rainbow fish



## WHAT WE DO

Whether through our exhibits, educational programs, or our many conservation projects, our goal is to make certain the Earth remains a suitable home for all life by our discovery of the interconnectedness of the natural world.

When visitors come to the Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium, they see animals whose wild cousins are walking across frozen sea ice at the top of the world, congregating on rocky islands off the African coast, chilling at the bottom of fast-running streams in western Pennsylvania, prowling the open savanna, and adapting to life everywhere in between. These animals inspire visitors to think beyond the streets of Pittsburgh, imagine a vast and varied world, and wonder at the Earth itself, the only planet known to

sustain life. The Zoo's mission is not only to inspire wonder, but also to inspire action on behalf of wildlife and wild places. Every day, Zoo staff members provide the best possible care to all animals at the Zoo, educate hundreds of thousands of people annually about issues that affect wildlife and the environment, and work harder than ever to advance conservation efforts around the globe. Guided by the Zoo's Conservation Education Department, we tie exceptional in-house husbandry, medical care, research, and education programs to conservation action in the field through our summer camps, Sea Turtle Second Chance program, Junior Conservationists, and more. This annual report highlights the work of the Zoo over a 12-month period from January 31, 2021 through December 31, 2021. During that time, 970,661 guests visited the Zoo and nearly 25,000 Member families supported the Zoo.



## NOT SO TINY MIRACLE

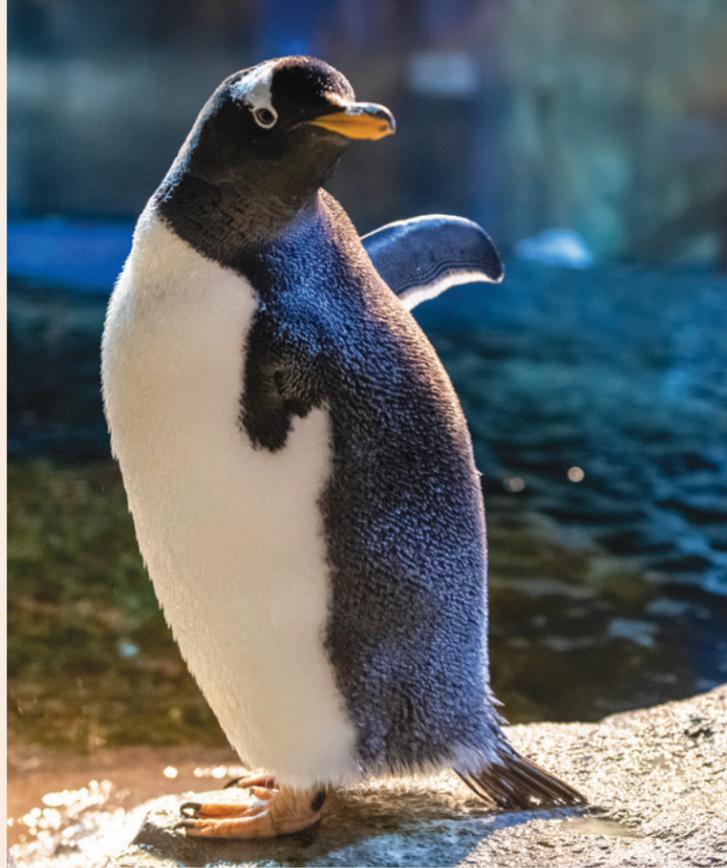
In the early pre-dawn hours of July 18, 2021, a miracle arrived at the Pittsburgh Zoo's International Conservation Center in Somerset County. Born to first-time mother Sukuri, a 218-pound African elephant calf took her first breaths. But in the coming days, joy turned to concern as the Zoo's newborn pachyderm struggled to thrive. Understanding the elephant calf infant mortality rate is 30% in their first year of life, our team quickly sprang in to action.

The Zoo team flew in elephant experts from around the country to provide months of around-the-clock care, intensive medical treatments, and four plasma transfusions – absolutely no expense has been spared to save the life of this little fighter. Aptly named Tsuni by her caregivers (the diminutive form of Tsunami, after the power of her personality and her whirlwind entrance to the world), she finally began to gain weight last fall. While we celebrate the turning tide, we understand the first several years of life for an elephant calf can be very precarious.

## CRITICAL CARE

Late in 2021, aquarists at the PPG Aquarium noticed swelling near a young penguin's shoulder. Floppy, a gentoo penguin, was given an X-ray, which confirmed that he had broken a wing bone. The Zoo's vets and aquarists provided care and monitored the injury for signs of natural healing for several weeks, but it became apparent that the bone was not healing properly. Surgical repair was ruled out due to the location of the break, so the Pittsburgh Zoo's Animal Care staff diligently consulted with other institutions before it was decided that the best avenue of recovery was to have the wing amputated. While amputation was the best option for Floppy, he had to re-learn how to swim, dive, float, navigate his habitat, and exit the water.

The Animal Care team has closely monitored his progress and has been pleased every step of the way. He is able to perform most activities fairly well, and the staff of the PPG Aquarium has installed a ramp so that he can better enter and exit the water. The life expectancy of penguins in the wild is 10-15 years, but living in aquariums, they can reach over 30 years of age. Floppy and his fellow penguins can be seen in their habitat at the PPG Aquarium year-round.



Floppy, Gentoo penguin



## CATS + COVID

Like the rest of the world, COVID affected the lives of our staff members, and we adapted to provide the best service to the animals in our care. Unfortunately, our lions, tigers, and lynx tested positive for SARS-COV-2 virus, which was confirmed through cooperation of both state and federal labs.



How does one test a big cat for COVID? With a rapid antigen test! Thanks to the bonds forged between keepers and animals, the regular training our animals receive allowed us to collect voluntary nasal swabs to quickly confirm the results.

## THE GLOW OF LIGHTS

After 3 years of planning, the Zoo hosted our first Asian Lantern Festival in the fall. Tianyu Arts & Culture brought lanterns and staff from China and installed the entire display throughout Zoo grounds in just three weeks. In partnership with the Organization of Chinese Americans, the Zoo provided a glimpse of a 2,000-year-old festival, featuring local dance groups, martial artists, and culturally-rich musicians. Over twelve weeks, more than 120,000 guests were immersed in this amazing experience, and the reviews were fantastic. In 2022, we plan to dazzle Pittsburgh once again with larger, even more awe-inspiring lanterns.

Rounding out a year of lights, we welcomed nearly 40,000 visitors to our second annual holiday-themed Zoo Lights. Holiday revelers enjoyed a slow drive through the Zoo from the comfort of their cozy vehicles, gazing at the entrancing light show, listening to holiday music on the Zoo's podcast, and sipping a warm hot chocolate along the way.



# NEW FACES

The Zoo was delighted to welcome new faces to our Zoo family in 2021.



New members of External Relations team

- |                    |                    |                     |                      |
|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Alexandria Babilon | Stephanie Fisher   | Scott Kasperowski   | Dr. Justin Rosenberg |
| Scott Balian       | Kaitlyn Gibson     | Herman Kirk         | Marissa Ross         |
| Heather Berkey     | Dr. Jeremy Goodman | Katelyn Labos       | Shelly Titmus        |
| Mark Camerota      | Dunya Hassim       | Brad Lang           | Katherine Vandegrift |
| Alexandra Cauley   | Megan Houck        | Samantha Jo Loverde | Jonathan Walborn     |
| Madison Clark      | Katherine Hughes   | Nicholas Mantia     | Jason Waugaman       |
| Colton Cooper      | Ian Hunter         | Gretchen McCormick  | Noah Zaken           |
| Shawn Felsing Jr.  | Dr. Lauren Kane    | Kendra Roetman      |                      |



Dr. Lauren Kane and Dr. Rosenberg, sea otter procedure



Dr. Jeremy Goodman



Dr. Lauren Kane



Dr. Justin Rosenberg

## RETIREMENT UPDATES

The Zoo recognizes and thanks the following employees who retired in 2021:

**Jeanne Burek**  
Volunteer Coordinator  
45 years of service

**Andrew O'Lear**  
Custodian  
26 years of service

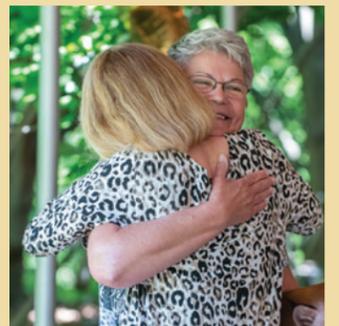
**David Pater**  
HVAC  
18 years of service

**Susan Pierce**  
Gardener  
26 years of service

**Glenn Zugehar**  
Gardener  
25 years of service

**Dr. Barbara Baker** ▶  
President & CEO  
31 years of service

**Jackie Vincunas** ▶  
Chief Financial Officer  
20 years of service



# BY THE NUMBERS

**6**  
MILLION PEOPLE  
engaged with our Zoo Facebook page in 2021.



**\$371,000+**  
was spent in the first few months caring for Tsuni, our newest African elephant calf.



**6**  
SEA TURTLES  
were rehabilitated and released back into the wild through the Sea Turtle Second Chance program.

**833**  
GIFT MEMBERSHIPS  
were purchased over a four-day period from Black Friday through Cyber Monday.

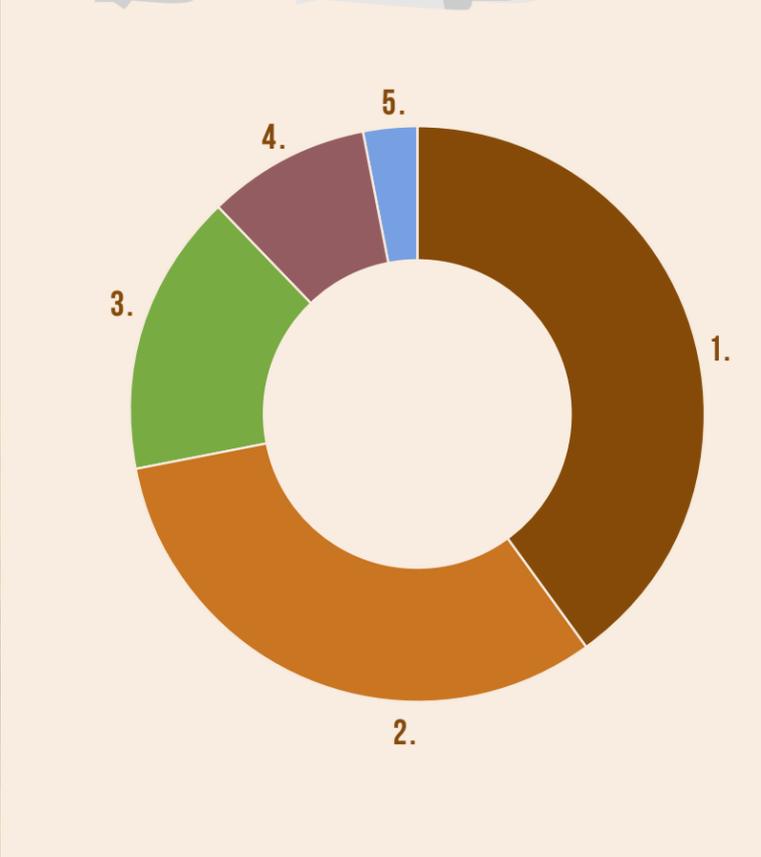
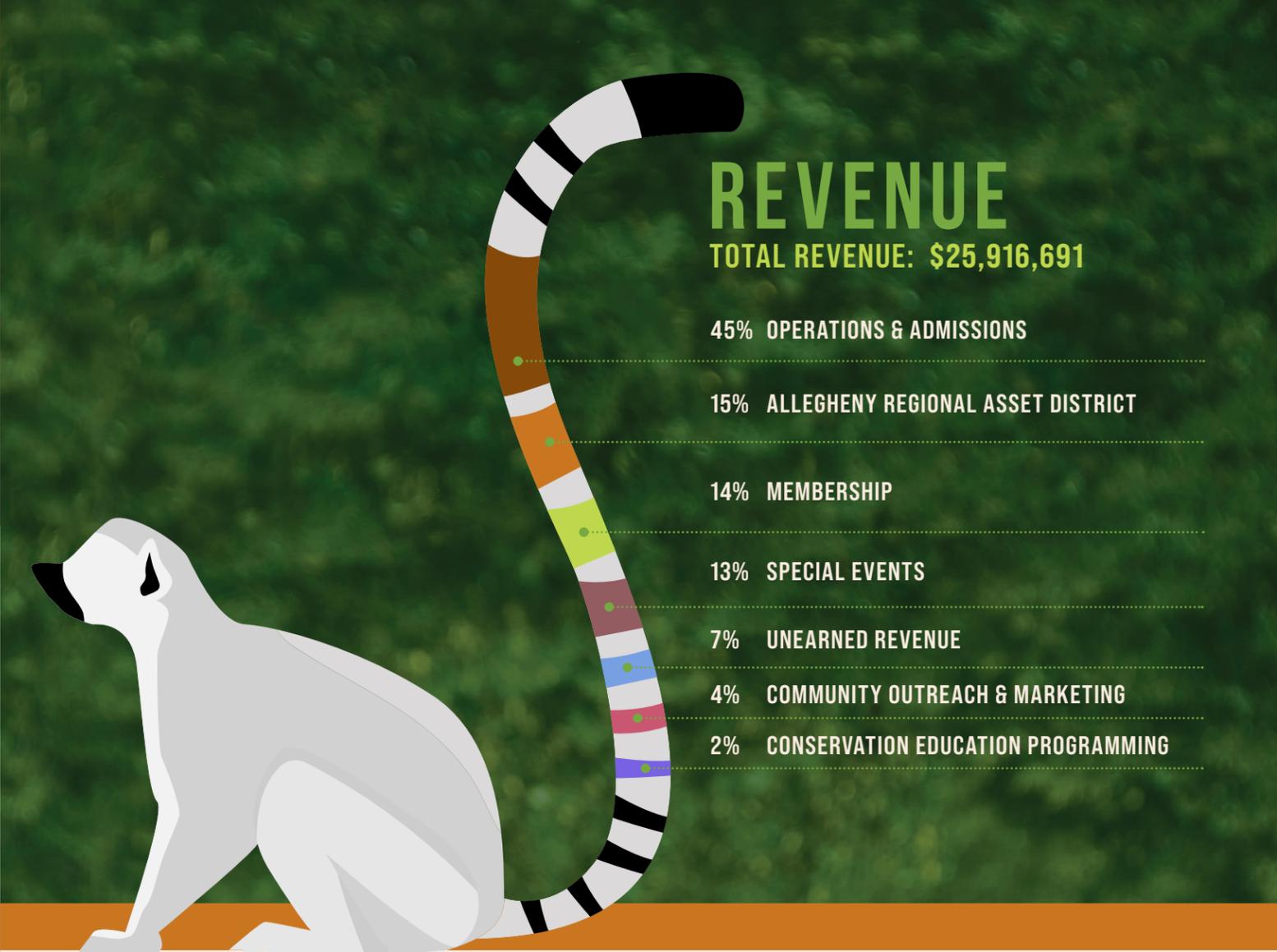
**4,600**  
PEOPLE DONATED  
**10,000**  
POUNDS OF FOOD  
for Donation Day, a partnership with the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank.



**250**  
POUNDS  
is the year-end weight of our male lion cubs, Daniel and Chadwick. At full size, they'll tip the scales at more than 400 pounds.

**35**  
NEW AQUARIUM  
ID SIGNS  
were written and designed, including a staff favorite, Atlantic Lumpfish.

**1,200**  
HOMESCHOOLERS  
FROM 5 STATES  
participated in the Zoo's on-site homeschool conservation education events.





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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT**

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