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BREVARD ZOO RECEIVES \$5 MILLION GIFT FROM DSF CHARITABLE FOUNDATION TO HELP BUILD WORLD-CLASS AQUARIUM AND CONSERVATION CENTER AT PORT CANAVERAL

MELBOURNE, FL – Brevard Zoo announced today that it received a transformative \$5 million gift from the DSF Charitable Foundation that will play a pivotal role in funding the Sea Turtle Care Complex at the future Aquarium and Conservation Center at Port Canaveral, Florida. The Aquarium and Conservation Center is a once-in-a-generation endeavor by Brevard Zoo to revolutionize coastal conservation, environmental education, and the rehabilitation of imperiled marine species throughout Central Florida. Following a \$25 million commitment from an anonymous donor in 2021, this gift is the second-largest private donation to Brevard Zoo's [Our Legacy Campaign](#), a \$100 million community fundraising effort to build the future Aquarium.

In recognition of the DSF Charitable Foundation's exceptional support, the new sea turtle rehabilitation facility will be named the Scaife Family Sea Turtle Care Complex. Designed to elevate and expand the essential work of the Zoo's Sea Turtle Healing Center, which opened in 2014, the Scaife Family Sea Turtle Care Complex will serve as a cornerstone of the future Aquarium. This 13,000-square-foot, cutting-edge complex will feature a state-of-the-art hospital facility equipped with advanced rehabilitation and veterinary clinical capabilities and an outdoor lagoon habitat that will provide long-term sanctuary for rehabilitated turtles that cannot be released due to permanent health conditions.

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“The generosity of the Scaife Family is fundamental to the successful completion of this Aquarium and the thousands of sea turtles our veterinary team will continue to help and save each year,” said Chief Executive Officer Keith Winsten. “We are grateful beyond measure for the family’s philanthropic leadership and look forward to realizing their profound impact on our community and environment.”

This gift was made after David Scaife and his wife, Sara, visited Brevard Zoo while spending time at their home in Vero Beach, Florida. Inspired by the world-class standards of animal wellness on display, the pair were delighted to see a sign describing the future Aquarium and immediately reached out for more information.

“Our family has a tradition of supporting zoos throughout the United States,” shared Sara Scaife, a member of the Pittsburg Zoo Board of Directors for over 20 years and self-proclaimed animal lover. “This project will only enhance Brevard Zoo’s reputation as a must-see destination. In addition to being a source of fun for families, the new aquarium will also serve as a major driver for regional economic development.”

As the first major experience for visitors entering the Aquarium, the Scaife Family’s namesake rehabilitation facility will allow guests of all ages to experience conservation in action. Featuring large viewing windows into a working treatment center and rehabilitation area, the Sea Turtle Care Complex will give guests a unique opportunity to observe turtles’ care in real time, from the nutrition and enrichment provided by trained volunteers to life-saving exams, blood and toxicology tests, and treatments conducted by the Zoo’s board-certified veterinary staff. This experience will foster empathy for sea turtles, encourage a deeper understanding of the critical conservation efforts being undertaken to protect them, and promote actions and consumer choices people can take to protect this endangered species.

The Atlantic coast of Brevard County is one of the most important areas for sea turtles globally. Five of the world’s seven sea turtle species—green, loggerhead, leatherback, hawksbill, and Kemp’s ridley—utilize the county’s ocean and waterways, and its beaches are the world’s largest hotspot for loggerhead nesting. All sea turtles are considered endangered under the Endangered Species Act. The Scaife Family Sea Turtle Care Complex will provide a second Brevard Zoo facility capable of caring for sick, injured, and washback turtles in this area of critical importance, nearly doubling the Zoo’s capacity to undertake this lifesaving work.

Dr. Trevor Zachariah, Director of Veterinary Programs and Wildlife Rehabilitation Programs, emphasizes the significance of the DSF Charitable Foundation’s contribution, stating, “The new facility will empower our team to respond swiftly and decisively to the urgent needs of endangered sea turtles suffering from pollution-related ailments. The public visibility of this work will educate and inspire people to care for our environment and consider the consequences of actions that could contribute to pollution in our waterways.”

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Groundbreaking for the Aquarium is expected in the fall of 2024, with a planned opening in early 2027. The future Aquarium will span 14 acres of shoreline along the Banana River at Port Canaveral, reflect the distinctive aesthetic of Brevard Zoo, and facilitate meaningful connections between visitors and Florida's marine life and coastal ecosystems through a joyful, accessible, and relaxed experience. The project is expected to create more than 900 jobs and attract over 300,000 tourists annually, engaging at least 525,000 visitors each year.

The DSF Charitable Foundation's support brings the future Aquarium closer to reality, not only through its direct contribution but also by setting an inspiring example. Dr. Ellen Winter, Chief Philanthropy Officer, acknowledges the significance of this gift, sharing, "The Scaife Family has created a legacy of philanthropy committed to education, health, and conservation. We are immensely grateful for this donation, which we believe will inspire our community and region to join us in building another pioneering institution, creating a healthier Indian River Lagoon and surrounding environment. Together, we will leave a lasting legacy for our grandchildren's grandchildren and ensure a thriving habitat for our marine life."

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About DSF Charitable Foundation

The DSF Charitable Foundation is the charitable-giving organization of the David Scaife family. The Foundation seeks to promote excellence in three program areas: health, human services, and education. The grant program focuses primarily on Pittsburgh and Southwestern Pennsylvania. More information is available at <http://www.dsfcf.org/about/>.

About Brevard Zoo

Recently named the No. 3 Zoo in North America, Brevard Zoo is home to more than 800 animals representing 170 species from all over the world. Brevard Zoo is an independent, nonprofit organization that receives no recurring government funding for operating costs. Generous public support enables the Zoo to continue serving its communities and maintain its leadership in vital animal wellness, education, and conservation programs. More information is available at www.brevardzoo.org.