

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EAST COAST ZOOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

Brevard Zoo | Future Bowen Aquarium

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East Coast Zoological Foundation Welcomes New Chief Philanthropy Officer, Chief Operations Officer

MELBOURNE, Fla., March 10, 2025 — The East Coast Zoological Foundation (EZCF) is pleased to announce the additions of Robyn Ducharme as Chief Philanthropy Officer for EZCF and Anthony Rivera as Chief Operations Officer of the two campuses overseen by EZCF: Brevard Zoo and the future Bowen Aquarium.

Robyn Ducharme brings more than 25 years of experience with nonprofits, offering strategic leadership for mission-driven organizations. Most recently at the National MS Society, she led her team to surpass the nonprofit's fiscal year 2024 fundraising goal, raising over \$78 million. Ducharme's professional background also includes advancing fundraising goals at the American Red Cross, as well as development roles at the YMCA and Easter Seals.

"This opportunity aligns deeply with my passion for conservation, education and community impact, and I couldn't be more excited to help drive philanthropic growth for Brevard Zoo and the future Bowen Aquarium and Conservation Center," Ducharme said.

At ECZF, Ducharme will lead the nonprofit's development strategy, focused on advancing its \$100 million Our Legacy Campaign to support the future Bowen Aquarium campus as well as its sister campus and community fixture, Brevard Zoo. Ducharme will direct all philanthropic efforts, including major, planned and digital giving, corporate partnerships, and government grants, ensuring a sustainable foundation for the Zoo and Aquarium's growth and outreach initiatives.

Anthony Rivera joins ECZF with a background of over 30 years of organizational leadership in the hospitality, attraction and aquarium industries. At his most recent role at the Clearwater Marine Aquarium, Rivera led the development and construction of a \$7.6-million manatee rehabilitation and critical care center, established new revenue streams, and expanded outreach programs to local schools. Rivera's professional background also

includes operations roles at the Georgia Aquarium, Rockefeller Center and Madame Tussaud's in New York.

"Aquariums and zoos serve not only as a place of wonder and education but also as a vital resource for research, conservation, entertainment and inspiration," Rivera said. "The Foundation is an organization rooted in educating, engaging and inspiring. These values lay at my own core."

As ECZF's chief operating officer, Rivera will oversee the organization's operational efficiency across its multiple campuses, ensuring strategic alignment with ECZF's mission and operational goals. Rivera will be responsible for enhancing revenue through innovative guest experiences, overseeing facilities and operational standards, and leading collaboration to support the Zoo's ongoing development as well as the establishment of Bowen Aquarium.

Ducharme and Rivera's selections follow extensive nationwide searches led by Cooper Coleman LLC, a nationally recognized executive search firm specializing in nonprofits, higher education and research institutions, museums, zoos, and aquariums.

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About East Coast Zoological Foundation (ECZF)

Driven by a mission to answer the call, East Coast Zoological Foundation (ECZF) is focused on educating, engaging and empowering the community to take action for conservation. The 501(c)(3) nonprofit located in Melbourne, Fla., includes Brevard Zoo and the future Aquarium and Conservation Center campuses that will work collaboratively to ensure the best results for wildlife. ECZF works directly with Florida species and the community to develop programs and workshops to make a difference locally and around the world. From sea turtle rehabilitations and releases, building living shorelines along the Indian River Lagoon and providing scholarships and grants to the community, the Foundation creates opportunities for guests to connect with nature and make an impact in conservation and education. Founded in 1986, ECZF is governed by a volunteer board of directors and receives no recurring operating funds from any city, county or state government, relying on donations from individuals, foundations, and corporations to continue answering the call for wildlife and the environment along Florida's Space Coast and beyond. To learn more, visit ourlegacycampaign.org.