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Audubon Aquarium First in the Nation to be Certified as Sensory Inclusive
Audubon Aquarium of the Americas and Audubon Zoo
Certified by KultureCity as Sensory Inclusive

(New Orleans, La.) – Audubon Aquarium of the Americas became the first aquarium in the country to be certified a sensory inclusive aquarium on Sunday, February 25. Along with the Aquarium, Audubon Zoo was certified by KultureCity, making it one of the first of ten zoos in the country to be recognized. KultureCity, a non-profit organization, is dedicated to rethinking accessibility to create acceptance and inclusion for all individuals.

The comprehensive sensory initiative includes training for Audubon staff and volunteers on how to respond to visitors with sensory processing needs, branded signage on grounds, and designating quiet areas for guests. Sensory bags available for check-out during a visit that include fidget toys, noise cancelling headphones and more. Weighted lap blankets also are available.

Former professional football player and KultureCity Board Member Tiki Barber joined Audubon President and CEO Ron Forman at a sensory event held yesterday at the Aquarium.

“We want to make Audubon accessible to everyone,” said Forman. “By partnering with KultureCity, we are able to provide an inclusive and seamless experience for guests of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.”

Audubon’s website will feature “Social Stories” to help guests plan their visits and anticipate what to expect. Signage at the Zoo and Aquarium designates “Quiet Zones” and “Headphone Zones” for guests who may experience sensory dysregulation, or “meltdowns.” Weighted lap pads and sensory bags with fidget toys and other sensory aids are available for guests to check out at the attractions’ information booths.

“KultureCity is honored to partner with Audubon Aquarium on the sensory inclusion initiative,” said Barber. “By becoming sensory inclusive, Audubon Nature Institute is helping to create acceptance and inclusion for so many individuals that feel isolated from the community and have been afraid to venture out to aquariums and zoos.”

In addition to this initiative, Audubon is presenting free “Sensory Sunday” events at the Zoo, Aquarium, and Nature Center. Each “Sensory Sunday” event has a different theme, so families can attend multiple events throughout the year and enjoy a unique experience each time. [Click here for the full schedule and more details \(advanced registration online is recommended\).](#)

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