



Audubon Nature Institute  
*Celebrating the Wonders of Nature*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

September 20, 2019

### **Audubon Nature Institute Receives National Marketing Award**

(New Orleans, La.) - Nearly 3,000 zoo and aquarium experts arrived in New Orleans last week for the largest, most comprehensive industry conference in the country — the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and International Marine Animal Trainer’s Association’s 2019 Annual Conference, hosted by Audubon Nature Institute. During the Conference, Audubon Nature Institute was recognized with the 2019 Excellence in Marketing Award for its "Audubon Zoo Lights presented by Children's Hospital 2018" campaign. This award recognizes excellence in marketing campaigns developed and executed by AZA member facilities.

“Powerful, engaging messaging is critical to advancing public understanding of the role AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums play in animal welfare and conservation,” said AZA President and CEO Dan Ashe. “This honor recognizes the creativity and expertise of the marketing team at Audubon for developing engaging, imaginative ways to share our mission and our stories.”

Audubon Nature Institute’s campaign was designed to intrigue the public about the 2018 inaugural year of Audubon Zoo Lights presented by Children’s Hospital. The multi-night event transported guests to a winter wonderland filled with sparkling lights, light-up silk animals from across the globe, fun activities and tasty treats, and of course, lots of opportunities for selfies. The campaign created an unprecedented amount of buzz and excitement for the new event, generating 70.5 million impressions with an earned media value of \$1.6 million, 229 news stories, and more than 1,000 social media mentions in November and December.

“The campaign for the inaugural Audubon Zoo Lights presented by Children’s Hospital offered an extraordinary opportunity to connect young minds to the wonders of nature in one of our community’s most beloved destinations, Audubon Zoo, during the most magical time of the year,” said Audubon Zoo Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer Kyle Burks. “We leapt at the chance to work with our partner, Children’s Hospital, to bring this unforgettable experience to the families of New Orleans, and, in less than one calendar year, the Audubon team did an incredible job of bringing the vision to life and sharing the story with our community. I look forward to continuing to offer this one-of-a-kind holiday experience for years to come.”

While receiving the prestigious Marketing Excellence award was an honor, the real win for Audubon was leading by example by keeping its Conference events eco-friendly. Food and drinks were offered in recyclable and compostable serving ware and waste bins for recycling and composting were available throughout the events.

Audubon partnered with Schmelly’s a local composting business, to make this initiative a success, and together, they kept over 5000 pounds of waste out of landfills, making this one of the largest known composting hauls ever in New Orleans. Audubon looks forward to forging innovative partnerships with Schmelly’s and other community organizations on waste reduction and other green initiatives in the future.

**Media Contact:**

Lauren Conrad

Director of Public Relations

(504) 222-8014

[lmessinaconrad@auduboninstitute.org](mailto:lmessinaconrad@auduboninstitute.org)

###