

The LA Zoo and the students they serve need your help

While some recent indicators suggest that our economy has begun to improve, our schools and public institutions are in an ever-deepening financial crisis. Both LAUSD and the City of Los Angeles are facing severe budget shortfalls and cuts are affecting everyone. Directly impacting us: Mayor Villaraigosa and the LA City Council are exploring the privatization of the Los Angeles Zoo and Botanical Gardens. This comes on the heels of drastic budget cuts and a hiring freeze at the Zoo that will soon threaten the health and well-being of the animals under their care.

As the Zoo struggles to maintain staff and services, **the Zoo Magnet Animal Husbandry program—the crowning jewel of the North Hollywood High School Zoo Magnet Center’s curriculum—has already fallen victim to the Zoo’s fiscal crisis. This outstanding instructional resource has been suspended since the beginning of the 09/10 academic year.**

For each of the past 25 years, Zoo Magnet students have worked diligently to win coveted placement in our Animal Husbandry course. Admission to the class is competitive and open to fewer than 20 Zoo Magnet seniors. Successful applicants must demonstrate the character, maturity, work habits and academic achievement necessary to earn them the opportunity to work four hours each week close at hand with the Los Angeles Zoo’s animal care professionals. For many of our students, the chance to participate in Animal Husbandry course was the very reason they applied to the Zoo Magnet in the first place.

Continued reductions in animal care staff and their increased workload make it unlikely that the Animal Husbandry course will be revived this school year. This leaves the Class of 2010 no opportunity to participate in the program for which they worked so hard to achieve. If we **act now** something may be done for them. If we don’t work fast enough, the class of 2011 and the students who follow will lose this unique opportunity.

What can you do to help?

You can join with the NHHS Zoo Magnet school community, supported by the Greater Los Angeles Zoo Association, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Councilman Tom LaBonge and LAUSD Superintendent Ramon Cortines, **in our effort to raise \$50,000 to support the LA Zoo Animal Care staff at levels that will permit them to once again mentor Zoo Magnet students enrolled in Animal Husbandry.** Our goal is as ambitious as it is vital to our students. In addition to reaching out to you—our school family—we are also seeking larger supporters and foundations, and your help in that effort is needed, too.

Donations are tax-deductible and will be administered under the auspices of the Zoo Magnet Parent Council, a 501 c3 non-profit corporation, tax ID # 95-4093971

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I, _____ parent of _____, wish to donate: \$ 25 ___ \$ 50 ___ \$ 75 ___ \$ 100 ___ or, \$ _____

Please make checks payable to the Zoo Magnet Parent Council and note: *Animal Husbandry*

Mailing address: Zoo Magnet Parent Council 5336 Crystal Springs Dr. Los Angeles, CA 90027