



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Friends of the Zoo President Janet Agostini Among Those To Be Honored At Sixth Annual Nonprofit Awards

Syracuse, N.Y. (March 24, 2014) – Janet Agostini, president of the Friends of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo at Burnet Park, will be honored as an executive of the year at the Sixth Annual Nonprofit Awards on Tuesday, March 25, at the Oncenter. The awards recognize nonprofit programs, leaders and volunteers who make the community stronger. Agostini, who joined the Friends organization in 2006, will be recognized for her exceptional accomplishments, leadership ability and community impact as a local nonprofit executive.

“I am pleased for this recognition of Janet’s efforts and performance as president of the Friends and the outstanding leadership and results she has consistently brought to our organization,” says Carl Austin Jr., chair of the Friends of the Zoo board of directors.



Under Agostini’s leadership, the Friends organization’s operations have shown consistent growth in all areas, including membership, retail activities, catering and development. She recently spearheaded a successful capital campaign, exceeding the fundraising goal by eight percent and raising \$1,730,771 for the cause.

“The Friends organization continues to be fiscally sound, despite challenging economic conditions. Janet has shown excellent stewardship over the financial affairs of an organization which provides significant and critical support to one of our area’s greatest assets and most visited attractions in the region. In addition, Janet can also be credited with shifting the organizational dynamic; the Friends has an outstanding culture, staff that is a high-functioning team, and consistently attracts high-caliber people, helping the organization get to the ‘next level,’” adds Austin.

The Sixth Annual Nonprofit Awards are sponsored by M&T Bank, BizEventz and the Business Journal News Network.

Founded in 1970, the Friends of the Rosamond Gifford Zoo at Burnet Park is a non-profit, 501 (c) (3) support organization to the Rosamond Gifford Zoo, which is operated by Onondaga County Parks. Friends of the Zoo supports the mission of the zoo by providing educational programming to zoo visitors and the surrounding community. The Friends organization supports the zoo with marketing efforts, as well as fundraising and development activities such as Brew at the Zoo, Penguin Palooza and Snow Leopard Soireé. Friends of the Zoo operates the gift shop, catering department and Jungle Café. Over the years, the Friends organization has helped build new exhibits, improve existing habitats and upgrade facilities. Membership offers discounts on programs and in the gift shop, a quarterly magazine and free admission to the zoo.

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The Rosamond Gifford Zoo at Burnet Park is **among the top 10 percent of zoos in the country** as an accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and is focused on conserving, exhibiting and interpreting a living animal collection in order to promote public recreation, understanding of the relationships between animals and people, and action to sustain the environment we share.

Committed to conservation, the zoo actively collaborates with Friends of the Zoo to save endangered Asian elephants, Amur tigers, golden lion tamarins and amphibians, which are facing a global crisis due to the Chytrid fungus. Other projects include studies on Chittenango ovate amber snails, Turkmenian markhors and Humboldt penguins.

The Rosamond Gifford Zoo is open daily from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Admission is \$8 for adults (19-61), \$4 for youth (3-18) and \$5 for seniors (62+). Children two and under are free. For more information, call the zoo at (315) 435-8511 or visit the zoo's website at www.RosamondGiffordZoo.org.

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www.rosamondgiffordzoo.org

County Executive, Joanne M. Mahoney • Commissioner of Parks & Recreation, Bill Lansley
Rosamond Gifford Zoo Director, Ted Fox • Friends of the Zoo President, Janet Agostini

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