



News Release

POLAR BEARS INTERNATIONAL®

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

International Arctic Ambassador Centers Focus on Improving Polar Bears' Existence

Polar Bears International allies with The Zoological Society of San Diego to offer guidance

Sebastopol, CA – Millions of zoo visitors in North America, Europe, and Australia are learning more about polar bears and climate change thanks to a network of Arctic Ambassador Centers established by Polar Bears International (PBI) in alliance with the Zoological Society of San Diego. To date, there are nearly 30 centers are up and running, with another 10 scheduled to open their doors this fall. In addition to offering educational programs, the centers focus on animal well-being issues and actively support research that will help wild polar bears. Each center will also play an integral role in PBI's *project thermo-STAT!* program, a "turn down the heat" effort that will culminate in events in Churchill, Manitoba, in November 2008. Detailed information on each of the programs can be found online at <http://www.polarbearsinternational.org/>.

According to PBI President Robert Buchanan "Each of these conservation centers will provide leadership in their communities for reducing carbon emissions—a scientifically proven, contributing factor to the rising temperatures on our planet. Scientists believe that we may still have a 10-year window before we reach the tipping point with global climate change, although it will take 30 to 40 years for significant changes to show. By working closely with zoos, we can reach millions of people and inspire change."

Arctic Ambassador Centers programs include:

Leadership Camps where selected teens travel to Churchill, Manitoba, to view, research, and learn about polar bears and become inspired and confident enough to return to their communities and motivate change in fun and creative ways

Distance Learning Classrooms designed to connect students with scientists involved in Arctic and polar bear research

Project Polar Bear, a contest of sorts to educate, inspire, and empower youth to make a difference with their own programs and activities to address carbon emissions and global warming

Interpretive Carts for each zoo consisting of a polar bear skull and claw replica, a polar bear pelt, a sample satellite collar, and images of polar bears in the wild

Photo Galleries of scientists working in the field to educate youth about scientific research activities involving the Arctic and polar bears

Special VIP Tours that offer travelers a chance to see polar bears in the wild and learn about the Arctic from some of the world's top zoologists, scientists, and conservationists.

In-depth Articles on polar bears and the problems they face, published and available from the top polar bear scientists now working in the field.

A Scientific Lecture Series featuring top polar bear scientists.

Committees at zoological institutions to handle animal well-being issues, research, and educational planning.

Participation in PBI's Polar Population Project, a far-reaching research effort to gain information on each of the world's 19 polar bear subpopulations, to see how they and their habitats are faring

Participants include (select list):

Alaska Zoo; Chicago Zoological Society; Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden; Cleveland Metroparks Zoo AAZK; Columbus Zoo and Aquarium; The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore ; Memphis Zoo; Milwaukee County Zoo; Oregon Zoo; The Philadelphia Zoo; Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium; Roger Williams Park Zoo; Saint Louis AAZK; San Diego Zoo; Scandinavian Wildlife Park; Smithsonian Institution's National Zoological Park; Toledo Zoological Gardens; Toronto Zoo; Tulsa Zoo and Living Museum; Utah's Hogle Zoo; Vienna Zoo; Seneca Park Zoo.

Arctic Ambassador Associates include:

Frontiers North Adventures; Future Farmers of America; Gault, Inc.; Manitoba Conservation; National Museum Wildlife Art; Parks Canada/Wapusk National Park; PBI Australia

About PBI

Polar Bears International is a non-profit organization devoted to worldwide conservation of the polar bear through support of research and education. World headquarters are in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, at 550-5 Donald Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3L-2T4, Canada. U.S. headquarters are in Sebastopol, California. One hundred percent of donations go to support PBI initiatives. For more information, visit

www.polarbearsinternational.org.