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Zoo Comes to Life at Golisano Children's Hospital Thanks to Local Partnership

Collaboration between the Seneca Park Zoo, Ricoh USA, and Golisano Children's Hospital brings exciting new virtual book for kids being treated at GCH

Rochester, NY (January 18, 2024): This new year, children staying at UR Medicine Golisano Children's Hospital (GCH) will have the opportunity to interact with some new friends.

Thanks to a collaboration between Ricoh USA – a provider of integrated digital services and print and imaging solutions – GCH, and the Seneca Park Zoo in Rochester, patient families receiving care at the hospital have access to new “augmented reality” zoo books that produce life-like virtual images and sounds of animals from their phone or table screen through the usage of QR code technology. These animals include several species that live in the Seneca Park Zoo in Rochester, allowing children to take a remote trip from their own hospital room and learn more about each animal in a unique and engaging way.

The book, titled “Sandy and Friends’ Virtual Zoo Adventure,” is first of its kind to be produced, with a wider rollout of books tailored to other children’s hospitals expected in the near future.

“Staying at the hospital is never an easy time for families, so we’re excited that Ricoh USA and the Seneca Park Zoo have worked together to provide GCH early access to this fun, interactive reading experience that provides extra joy and education to our children while they are receiving long-term treatment,” said Wendy Lane, director of child life at GCH.

“This project epitomizes the spirit of co-innovation as well as Ricoh’s ongoing commitment to accessibility and making an impact in our local communities,” said Joe Ferrara, Director of Customer Implementation and Service Delivery at Ricoh. “It has been a delight working hand-in-hand with GCH, as well as local printer ImageNow, to expand access for children and their families to experience the sights and sounds of the Seneca Park Zoo from the hospital.”

Each page from the book includes illustrations of animals such as elephants, penguins, and red pandas alongside a short description, and includes activity pages like animal crosswords and mazes. QR codes throughout the book produce virtual interactive animals which include expanded descriptions and information provided by staff at the Seneca Park Zoo. Children and parents staying at GCH helped contribute to the production of the book by working with Child Life to select the cover.

“We are thrilled to partner with Ricoh, Golisano Children's Hospital, and the Fairport Music Festival to bring the Zoo's animals to children who may not be able to visit. We believe we are the first Zoo to provide this kind of augmented reality experience, and we hope our virtual animals provide as much joy to children who may be in the hospital as their counterparts at the Zoo do for all guests,” said Pamela Reed Sanchez, President and CEO of the Seneca Park Zoo Society.

The creation of “Sandy and Friends’ Virtual Zoo Adventure” was partially funded by the Fairport Music Festival (FMF) – a two-day event held annually in the village of Fairport, NY, featuring a lineup of local,



regional and national bands. Since 2005, the Fairport Music Festival has raised more than \$2.6 million in support of GCH, with \$291,824 donated in 2023.

“It’s been an honor to support children in our region through the Fairport Music Festival for almost two decades,” said Andy McDermott, FMF co-founder, “to be able to collaborate with Ricoh and the Seneca Park Zoo to create these books is a fantastic way to utilize a portion of the proceeds from the festival in a unique and innovative way.”

Of the books produced for the hospital, more than 250 books were delivered on December 22 in time for the holiday season. Each pediatric unit was given copies available for every child staying at the inpatient units at the hospital.

“The books are a hit with our patients,” said Lane, “they provide a perfect opportunity to transport them to another world which helps take their minds off of the challenges associated with receiving care.”

About Ricoh

Ricoh is a leading provider of integrated digital services and print and imaging solutions designed to support digital transformation of workplaces, workspaces and optimize business performance.

Headquartered in Tokyo, Ricoh’s global operation reaches customers in approximately 200 countries and regions, supported by cultivated knowledge, technologies, and organizational capabilities nurtured over its 85-year history. In the financial year ended March 2023, Ricoh Group had worldwide sales of 2,134 billion yen (approx. 16.0 billion USD).

It is Ricoh’s mission and vision to empower individuals to find Fulfillment through Work by understanding and transforming how people work so we can unleash their potential and creativity to realize a sustainable future.

For further information, please visit www.ricoh.com

About Golisano Children’s Hospital

Golisano Children’s Hospital employs more than 200 pediatric specialists and provides a spectrum of care that spans more than 40 specialty areas, serving the more than 85,000 children and their families each year. It serves as the referral center for all seriously ill or injured children from the 17-county Finger Lakes region and beyond. Our missions are to provide comprehensive care for children and their families, educate future pediatricians and pediatric specialists, and perform progressive research that will lead to the medical breakthroughs of tomorrow.

About Seneca Park Zoo

Internationally, and in our own backyard, Seneca Park Zoo plays a key role in species survival. Chartered as an educational institution in 1957 by New York State, the Seneca Park Zoo Society plays an integral role in supporting Monroe County, the owners and operators of the Zoo. Together, we are working to bring animals back from the brink of extinction.

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