

NEWS RELEASE



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FIRST RESIDENTS SETTLE IN AT THE ZOO WELLNESS CAMPUS

NORFOLK, Va. – Though not yet open to the public, the Virginia Zoo’s Animal Wellness Campus is open for business, and now its first residents have moved in!

Alicyn Cross, a veterinary student from Virginia Tech’s Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine, started an externship at the Zoo Monday, and is staying in the campus visitor apartment, sharing the building with Merrill, a female Asian small-clawed otter from Zoo Atlanta who is in quarantine prior to joining the Asia – Trail of the Tiger exhibit, and the Zoo’s five squirrel monkeys, who are crashing in the facility while their habitat is being refurbished.

The Zoo’s first veterinary extern in the new Animal Wellness Campus, Cross met Dr. Amanda Guthrie, the Zoo’s veterinarian on VIN, the veterinary information network, a veterinary forum, and inquired about internship opportunities. “I saw the Zoo was building a new veterinary hospital and I thought that would be a really cool opportunity,” Cross said.

Cross said she was interested in the externship at the Zoo because she wants to work with exotic animals. She remembers always wanting to work with animals. “I had chinchillas and it was hard to find veterinary care for them, so that’s why I wanted to go into exotics,” said Cross.

How does Cross feel about having a bunch of animals as roommates? “It’s fine, I can’t hear them in the apartment,” Cross said. “It’s a really nice facility.”

The Zoo’s Animal Wellness Campus is scheduled to open to the public in the spring, when it will provide visitors with an educational experience in addition to delivering the highest level of animal care. Zoo veterinary services have been operating out of the facility since January.

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FIRST RESIDENTS AT ZOO WELLNESS CAMPUS, 2 OF 2



Alicyn Cross, a Virginia Zoo extern and veterinary student from Virginia Tech's Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine, observes as Dr. Amanda Guthrie, the Zoo's veterinarian, checks for glaucoma in the eyes of Erroll, an eastern screech owl who's been squinting lately, while he perches on veterinary technician Leah Rooker's hand in the new Animal Wellness Campus' veterinary hospital Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2014. Though not yet open to the public, Guthrie and Rooker have been operating out of the Wellness Campus since January. (Virginia Zoo photo by Winfield Danielson.)

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As an accredited Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) facility, the Virginia Zoo exhibits more than 400 animals on 53 beautifully landscaped acres. For more than a century, the Virginia Zoo has demonstrated a commitment to education and conservation, and offered a fun-filled day for visitors of any age. Open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and located at 3500 Granby Street in Norfolk. Daily admission prices are \$11 for adults, \$10 for seniors (age 62 and over) and \$9 for children ages 2-11. Children under 2 admitted free! Visit www.virginiazoo.org or call (757) 441-2374 for more information.