

Title

Conexión con Conservación: An Animal Encounter with a Wider Reach

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Abstract

Creating meaningful experiences that connect guests to animals and their conservation is a primary goal of the Animal Encounters Village at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium. This year we began work in a new area of guest engagement that aims to reach Spanish speakers. The result was a dual language animal encounter that weaves together English and Spanish.

The “Rainforest Encounter” features Latin American species, sharing fascinating facts, and exploring the conservation efforts being made to protect them and their habitat. The building’s hallway comes to life as animals make their way to the central tree, where visitors experience them up close. The two speakers bounce back and forth in dialogue with one person speaking Spanish and one speaking English. The result is an engaging encounter that aims to inspire people to take action and feel personally connected to the animals they meet. This presentation style bridges the gap to reach people who may not otherwise get this kind of experience in a zoo setting. In the future we hope to develop more guest engagement opportunities like this, because of positive feedback from both Spanish and English speaking guests.