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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Zoo Atlanta Celebrates Georgia's Pre-K Week

Celebration, observed October 5-9, 2015, includes discount admission for Pre-K Classes and Special Shows and Activities

ATLANTA, Ga., (September 21, 2015) – Zoo Atlanta is joining Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) again this year to honor Georgia's nationally recognized Pre-K program during Georgia's Pre-K Week **October 5-9, 2015** presented by PNC Bank.

During this year's celebration Zoo Atlanta will offer a Self-Guided Field Trip at the discounted rate of \$9 per person and special activities that include costumed characters welcoming teachers and students as they arrive in Flamingo Plaza; Animal Tales storybook readings in Amy's Tree Theater; and a private World of Wild Theater bird show geared toward the Pre-K audience.

"DECAL continues to appreciate our committed partnership with Zoo Atlanta. In addition to this special celebration of Georgia's Pre-K Week, the zoo offers an Educator Appreciation Day in the fall and spring of each year on which teachers receive free admission and discounted admission for their guests," said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. "We encourage all Georgia's Pre-K classes to take advantage of this exciting week at Zoo Atlanta."

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Georgia's Pre-K Program is recognized as one of the most extensive and effective early childhood education programs in the country. This year's Pre-K enrollment is nearly 84,000. Sixty-six percent of all four year olds in Georgia are served by Georgia's Pre-K Program and Head Start.

To register for Zoo Atlanta's Pre-K Week, please go to

http://www.zooatlanta.org/home/article_content/prek_week?ff_s=h-Wvu.

About Zoo Atlanta

Viewed as one of the finest zoological institutions in the U.S. and a proud accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), Zoo Atlanta has a mission to inspire value and preservation of wildlife through a unique mix of education and outdoor family experiences. From well-known native wildlife to critically endangered species on the brink of extinction, the Zoo offers memorable close encounters with nearly 1,400 animals from around the world. The Zoo's newest destination, Scaly Slimy Spectacular: The Amphibian and Reptile Experience, featuring 60 species in an 111,000 square-foot complex, opened in April 2015.

Zoo collection highlights include Mei Lun and Mei Huan, the only giant panda twins in the U.S.; North America's largest zoological collections of gorillas and orangutans; and a global center of excellence for the care and study of reptiles and amphibians. Up-close-and-personal animal experiences include behind-the-scenes Wild Encounters with African elephants, giant pandas, lemurs and Aldabra giant tortoises. Zoo Atlanta is open daily with the exceptions of Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. Keeper talks, interactive wildlife shows, education programs and special events run year-round. For more information, visit zooatlanta.org or call 404.624.WILD.

About Bright from the Start

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia's children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia's Pre-K Program, licenses child care centers and home-based child care, administers Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program, federal nutrition programs, and manages *Quality Rated*, Georgia's community powered child care rating system.

The department also houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office, distributes federal funding to enhance the quality and availability of child care, and works collaboratively with Georgia child care resource and referral agencies and organizations throughout the state to enhance early care and education. For more information, go to www.decal.ga.gov.