

# MARYLAND ZOO

## NEWS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **HEAVY HEARTS AT THE MARYLAND ZOO AS WE SAY GOODBYE TO JULIUS**

**BALTIMORE** – He had a very challenging start to life, and it is with heavy hearts that The Maryland Zoo announces the death of young giraffe calf, Julius. “It’s hard to put our emotions into words right now,” said Don Hutchinson, president and CEO of the Zoo. “Our veterinary staff and our animal care team put their lives on hold to try and nurse Julius back to health, and every avenue was explored. Sadly, he was unable to survive in spite of their Herculean efforts.”

Julius was born to first time mother Kesi during the early morning hours of Thursday, June 15, 2017. In spite of the wonderful maternal care provided by Kesi, Julius was never able to learn to nurse effectively. Staff began to supplement him with a special colostrum formula within 24-hours and attempted to teach him to bottle feed. In order to boost his immune system, he was given two transfusions of giraffe plasma, from the Columbus and Cheyenne Mountain Zoos, as well as multiple courses of antibiotics, IV fluids, and other intensive care in order to provide nutritional support and to stabilize his condition. Mount Washington Pediatric Hospital also provided clinical support for the implementation of a Total Parenteral Nutrition (TPN) IV formula, as well as generously donating the TPN to the Zoo.

“Despite intensive medical interventions, tube feeding and around the clock care, Julius remained a critical patient,” stated Dr. Samantha Sander, associate veterinarian at the Zoo. “His condition took a sharp turn downward overnight, and we had to make the difficult decision to humanely euthanize him. This is certainly not the outcome we were hoping for, but we rest assured that we did everything we possibly could medically to prevent him from any distress.”

“There are dozens of people who have provided assistance along this journey with Julius,” said Mike McClure, general curator at the Zoo. “From zoo giraffe experts to veterinarians to nutritionists and human doctors and pediatric specialists, we utilized every resource available to us. We are incredibly grateful to each and every one, including the exceptional assistance of the staff and giraffe herds at The Columbus Zoo & Aquarium and the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo. Without them, we would have run out of options far sooner.”

“A necropsy will be done to try and determine what put Julius at this health deficit from the beginning,” continued Sander. “Sometimes there are underlying issues that are not able to be identified or solved by even the best science and skill. Julius’ short life will help gain vast knowledge not only for us, but for other facilities as we all continue to face similar issues in our efforts to save and safeguard the species.”

“We would like to thank the thousands of people from around the world who have sent positive thoughts and prayers to Julius and the staff here at the Zoo,” concluded Hutchinson. “The outpouring of support has indeed bolstered everyone at the Zoo, and most especially the people who have been working directly with Julius and the rest of the giraffe herd through this very trying time.”

### **About The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore**

Founded in 1876, The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore is the third oldest zoo in the United States and is internationally known for its contributions in conservation and research. More than 1,500 animals are represented in the Zoo's varied natural habitat exhibits such as the award-winning Penguin Coast, Polar Bear Watch, the Maryland Wilderness, African Journey and the Children's Zoo. Situated in Druid Hill Park near downtown Baltimore, the Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums. For more information, visit [www.marylandzoo.org](http://www.marylandzoo.org).

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