

CORAL GABLES, Fla., Sept. 19, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- [Mercantil Commercebank](#), one of the largest banks headquartered in Florida

, today announced the 2013 launch of its

**Zoolens**  
SM

**Photography Project.**

Developed in partnership with

[Zoo Miami](#)

and the Zoological Society of Florida

, the Bank's month-long contest encourages middle school students of both public and private schools in

Miami-Dade County

to visit Zoo Miami, creatively photograph their favorite animal and enter the photo for a chance to win prizes.

Started in 2010, the Zoolens<sup>SM</sup> Photography Project was designed to foster awareness of wildlife among students through the art of photography. The project has since garnered the participation of hundreds of students and in 2012, was opened up to all middle school students.

This year, the contest will run from Oct. 1 through Oct. 31. Midway through the project, on Oct. 12

, the Bank will host a free event for students at Zoo Miami, where attendees will enjoy the exclusive experience of collecting photography tips from Zoo Miami's Director of Communications and Nikon® Ambassador

Ron Magill

, a noted photographer and wildlife expert.

## Mercantil Commercebank Announces Launch Of 2013 Zoolens(SM) Photography Project At Zoo Miami

Written by Australian Business

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Students interested in participating in the 2013 Zoolens<sup>SM</sup> Photography Project will be asked to submit an original, artistic photograph of a Zoo Miami animal, before

Nov. 1

, through their schools or by bringing their entry to any

[Mercantil Commercebank banking center](#)

. Once the contest is over, a panel of distinguished judges will choose three grand prize winners and 10 honorable mention winners. The first place winner will receive a

\$2,000

savings account, second place will receive a

\$1,500

savings account, and third place, a

\$1,000

savings account. The top three winners will also receive a professional camera and student

membership to the North American Nature Photography Association and their respective

schools will receive a donation from Mercantil Commercebank. The 10 honorable mentions will receive a

\$100

Visa Gift Card.

"Mercantil Commercebank is delighted to once again launch our Zoolens<sup>SM</sup> Photography

Project for

Miami-Da

de County

middle school students," said Mercantil Commercebank Vice-Chairman and CEO

Millar Wilson

. "We are proud of our original program, which engages students, allows them to showcase their creativity, and unites the community through education and art."

"It truly is inspiring for me to see students develop connections to the animals and be

encouraged by wildlife education," said Zoo Miami's Director of Communications and Nikon®

Ambassador Ron Magill, who serves as a contest judge. "The images they submit display both the beauty of wildlife and the extraordinary talent of

Miami-Dade's

young photographers."

In 2012, Albert Parson, a student from South Miami K-8 Center (Expressive Arts Magnet) took home the first place prize. His photograph, "Butting Heads," was among nearly 300 submissions.

The 2013 Zoolens<sup>SM</sup> Photography Project's panel of judges includes Zoological Society of Flori

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da  
board member  
Grizzel Gonzalez  
; Pulitzer Prize-winning photojournalist  
Patrick Farrell  
; internationally acclaimed photo-artist  
Maria Martinez-Canas  
;  
New World School of the Arts  
visual arts professor and curator Rosario Martínez-Canas; and Nikon® Ambassador, wildlife  
expert and Zoo Miami's Director of Communications,  
Ron Magill  
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To learn more about the 2013 Zoolens<sup>SM</sup> Photography Project and how to enter, visit [zoolens.com](http://zoolens.com)  
or [fa](http://facebook.com/Zoolens)  
[cebook.com/Zoolens](http://facebook.com/Zoolens)  
. For more information on Mercantil Commercebank, visit  
[mercantilcb.com](http://mercantilcb.com).

**ABOUT MERCANTIL COMMERCEBANK:** Mercantil Commercebank N.A. is one of the largest  
banks in South Florida serving its community for  
over 30 years. Mercantil Servicios Financieros (MSF), a Venezuelan company, beneficially  
owns the Bank through U.S. bank holding companies. MSF is the largest provider of financial  
services in Venezuela with  
more than 85 years of experience. Mercantil Commercebank has assets of  
\$7.0 billion  
. The Bank is headquartered in  
Coral Gables, Florida  
and has 19 Banking Centers - 15 located in  
South Florida  
; three in  
Houston, Texas  
; and one in  
Manhattan, New York  
. The Bank offers a wide variety of domestic, international, personal and commercial banking  
services, including investment, trust, and estate planning through its subsidiaries, Mercantil  
Commercebank Investment Services, Inc. and Mercantil Commercebank Trust Company, N.A.  
For more information, please visit  
[www.mercantilcb.com](http://www.mercantilcb.com)  
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**ABOUT THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF FLORIDA AND ZOO MIAMI** The Zoological Society of Florida is a non-profit 501(c)(3) that supports Zoo Miami through education, conservation and outreach programs; marketing and public relations; volunteer services and financial support for the construction of new exhibits. Visit

[www.zsf.org](http://www.zsf.org)

for additional information. Zoo Miami is located at 12400 SW 152 street; Miami, FL 33177. General Zoo Admission is: \$15.95 per Adult and \$11.95 per Child (3-12), plus tax. Children under two, Zoo members and parking are free. Zoo Miami's hours are 9:30 am – 5:30 pm; ticket booths close at 4 pm. For more information please visit

[www.zoomiami.org](http://www.zoomiami.org)

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