

ALICE SEYFRIED
Fred Saigh Curator of the Children's Zoo
Saint Louis Zoo

At the Saint Louis Zoo, Alice Seyfried heads the Emerson Children's Zoo, where 300,000 visitors each year experience friendly animals, enjoy special shows and programs, and learn an appreciation for nature which hopefully will last a lifetime.

With a bachelor's degree in agriculture from the University of Missouri-Columbia, Alice began her work at the Zoo in 1980 as a keeper of hoofed stock and later a keeper of primates. In 1986 she became Zoological Manager of the Children's Zoo and in 1998 was named Curator there.

"It was exciting to be a part of the major renovation of the Children's Zoo in 1998," says Alice. "We were able to add some important features – an amphitheater for interactive animal presentations, underwater viewing of otters and the "Just Like Me" play area, to name just a few. "But what's most important," she adds, "is that we kept what's always been best about the Children's Zoo – up close and personal encounters with gentle animals."

Alice credits a great team effort for the Children's Zoo's success. There are 12 full-time employees, eight part-time employees and four seasonal employees. In addition, there are 33 volunteers, five interns and a pool of over 100 active docents which work together. And there are 332 mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians which interact with visitors.

"Children today have little opportunity to experience nature and interact with animals," Alice explains. "Recent research shows this lack of interaction is negatively impacting children. At the Children's Zoo, we work at making memories for our young visitors by giving them an opportunity to play and learn in a safe environment with gentle animals."

Alice actively participates in wildlife conservation programs with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and manages the Saint Louis Zoo's Center for Conservation in Papua New Guinea as part of the Saint Louis Zoo's WildCare Institute.