

**AMERANT**



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**AMERANT BANK TOGETHER WITH RON MAGILL VIRTUALLY ANNOUNCE  
2020 ZOOLENS PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT WINNERS**

**1<sup>st</sup> Place**



**RULER OF THE UNDERWORLD**  
By: Maria Grant

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place**



**HUNGRY HUNGRY TIGER**  
By: Rae Myers

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place**



**LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE**  
By: Julieta Ojeda

***Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, Amerant's Zoolens Photography Project for Miami-Dade middle school students is celebrated with surprise virtual calls by Ron Magill from Zoo Miami***

**CORAL GABLES, FL. (May 12, 2020)** – [Amerant](#) (NASDAQ: AMTB and AMTBB), one of the largest banks headquartered in Florida, virtually announced the winners of its renowned 2020 **Zoolens<sup>SM</sup> Photography Project** on social media beginning Earth Day to May 6<sup>th</sup>. Ron Magill made daily announcements on Amerant and Zoolens' social media channels including: [Zoolens Instagram](#), [Zoolens Facebook](#), [Amerant Instagram](#), and [Amerant Facebook](#).

Founded in 2010 and developed in partnership with [Zoo Miami](#) and the Zoo Miami Foundation, the Bank's photography contest was created to encourage and increase appreciation for photography and wildlife amongst middle school students throughout Miami-Dade County.

Due to COVID-19 and social distancing efforts, this year's annual event called for social media and surprise virtual announcements of winners and honorable mentions, which were viewed by thousands of followers on social media. Students, teachers, judges, sponsors, friends and family anxiously awaiting

daily announcements made by South Florida's favorite personality, Ron Magill, Zoo Miami's Director of Communications and Nikon® Ambassador.

"Over the past 10 years, the Zoolens Photography Project has become one of our most important community initiatives. Despite the fact that we could not host an event in person this year, we felt we needed to ensure we let the whole world know how much we appreciate and honor our students and teachers for their talents, dedication, and hard work. They are the ones that truly inspire our commitment and passion for the Zoolens project year after year and I must say this year's submissions were extraordinary," said Millar Wilson, Vice-Chairman and CEO of Amerant.

"We were all beyond impressed with the talent that we have in our schools in our Miami-Dade community, which made judging all the more challenging for us, but our students, parents, teachers, sponsors and partners have all risen to the occasions and we are humbled and truly proud of how far we have gone with the Zoolens project despite the challenges we faced with the coronavirus," said Ron Magill. "We are grateful for everyone's role in the Zoolens project as well as our partners at Amerant and our generous sponsors for their commitment, we are looking forward on what's to come in 2021."

Submissions were reviewed by a distinguished panel of judges based on composition, artistic merit, technical ability and clever title. The panel of judges included Ron Magill, Pulitzer Prize-winning photojournalist Patrick Farrell, internationally-acclaimed photo artist María Martínez-Cañas, as well as New World School of the Arts visual arts professor and curator Rosario Martínez-Cañas.

The 2020 photography contest held a kick-off event on February 15<sup>th</sup> at Zoo Miami in celebration of the project, where students joined noted wildlife photographer Ron Magill for an exciting behind-the-scenes tour and wildlife photography tips. Pitman Photo Supply representatives provided access to loaner digital Nikon® camera equipment for up to 30 students.

With a deep commitment to supporting the community and the arts, Amerant invited students to visit Zoo Miami earlier this year to creatively photograph wildlife and submit their favorite animal photo during the month-long contest that ran from February 15<sup>th</sup> through March 15<sup>th</sup>. Hundreds of submissions were received from students across the county for a chance to win a range of prizes and up to \$2,000 in an Amerant Savings Account.

On April 22<sup>nd</sup>, Ron Magill began announcing honorable mentions, winners, as well as Top Teacher award via social media which is given to the teacher with the most student submissions, Facebook Fans' Choice for the photo with the most likes. Honorable mentions and winners are:

- **First Place:** Maria Grant from Southwood Middle School -- her photo titled, “Ruler of the Underworld,” winning the grand prize of a \$2,000 Amerant savings account, Nikon camera and a North American Nature Photography Association membership
- **Second Place:** Rae Myers from Palmetto Middle School -- her photo titled, “Hungry Hungry Tiger,” winning a \$1,500 Amerant savings account, Nikon camera as well as the North American Nature Photography Association membership
- **Third Place:** Julieta Ojeda from Just Arts & Management Middle School -- her photo titled, “Looking into The Future,” winning a \$1,000 Amerant savings account, a professional Nikon camera and a student membership to the North American Nature Photography Association

**10 Honorable Mentions:** Each of these students won a \$100 Visa gift card

- *Mild Mannered Marsupial* - Katherine Rivas from South Miami K-8 Center
- *Lady in Red* - Leandro Ornelas from Southwood Middle School
- *Good Hair Day* - Claudio Ferrer from Lamar Louise Curry Middle School
- *Every Drop Counts* - Sarah Cohen from Doral Academy Prep
- *We Are Brave* - Caleb Jimenez at Bridge Prep Academy of Village Green
- *It's Not Easy Being Me* - Annette Perez from South Miami K-8 Center
- *Silent Pursuit* - Alex Perodin from Southwood Middle School
- *The Test is Today!* - Kate Perez from Southwood Middle School
- *The Eyes of Mahala* - Arianna Brueggert from Southwood Middle School.
- *Tongue Tied and Twisted* - Emily Castillo from Just Arts & Management Middle School

**Facebook “Fan’s Choice” Award:** Maria Grant, from Southwood Middle School, with her photo “Ruler of the Underworld.” Maria is also the Zoolens 2020 grand prize winner. **Top Teacher Award:** Ms. G. Artamendi from Southwood Middle school, with the most school submissions. Schools of the first, second and third place winners will also each receive a donation, courtesy of Amerant.

Amerant and Zoolens is grateful to its strategic partners, including Zoo Miami, Zoo Miami Foundation of Florida, Nikon, the North American Nature Photography Association (NANPA) and Pitman Photo Supply.

For more information on the Zoolens<sup>SM</sup> Photography Project, visit [www.Zoolens.com](http://www.Zoolens.com). To learn more about Amerant, visit [www.amerantbank.com](http://www.amerantbank.com). Follow Amerant Bank on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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**About Amerant Bancorp Inc.**

Amerant Bancorp Inc. is a bank holding company headquartered in Coral Gables, Florida. The Company operates through its subsidiaries, Amerant Bank, N.A. (the “Bank”), Amerant Investments, Inc., Amerant Trust, N.A, and Elant Bank and Trust Ltd. The Company provides individuals and businesses in the U.S., as well as select international

clients, with deposit, credit and wealth management services. The Bank, which has operated for over 40 years, is the largest community bank headquartered in Florida. The Bank operates 27 banking centers – 19 in South Florida, 8 in the Houston, Texas area, and loan production offices in Dallas, Texas and New York, New York. For more information, please visit [www.amerantbank.com](http://www.amerantbank.com) or <https://investor.amerantbank.com>.

**ABOUT THE ZOO MIAMI FOUNDATION AND ZOO MIAMI:**

The Zoo Miami Foundation 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. As of October 1, 2015, the Zoo Miami Foundation will officially change its name to Zoo Miami Foundation to better state its mission. Visit [www.zoomiami.org](http://www.zoomiami.org) for additional information. Zoo Miami is located at 12400 SW 152 Street, Miami, FL 33177. General Zoo Admission is: \$17.95/adult and \$13.95/child (3-12), plus tax. Also as of October 1, 2015, admission prices will change to \$19.95/adult and \$15.95/child, plus tax. Children under two, Zoo members and parking are free. Zoo Miami's hours are 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. on weekdays and 9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. on weekends and holidays; ticket booths close at 4 p.m. For more information please visit [www.zoomiami.org](http://www.zoomiami.org).