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Carl Safina Named a Finalist for 2014 Indianapolis Prize **Six Heroes Now Vie for Quarter of a Million Dollars in World's Leading** **Award for Animal Conservation**

INDIANAPOLIS — Carl Safina, Ph.D., is one of six exceptional conservationists advancing as a finalist for the 2014 Indianapolis Prize, the world's leading award for animal conservation. Selected from a group of 39 nominees, Safina is in the running for \$250,000 along with Joel Berger, Ph.D.; Gerardo Ceballos, Ph.D.; Carl Jones, Ph.D.; Russell A. Mittermeier, Ph.D.; and Patricia C. Wright, Ph.D. These heroes were nominated and named finalists for their outstanding achievements on behalf of the world's most endangered species.

“Carl and the other finalists are among the most important wildlife conservationists working in the field today,” said Michael Crowther, president and CEO of the Indianapolis Zoo, which initiated the Indianapolis Prize as part of its core mission. “Carl and the other finalists are achieving real victories in saving animal species, creating hope and outlining a path for generations of conservationists around the world to follow. We are delighted that they are finalists for the Indianapolis Prize, the world's leading award for animal conservation.”

The winner of the Prize will receive an unrestricted \$250,000 cash award and the Lilly Medal, an original work of art that signifies the winner's contributions to conserving some of the world's most threatened animals. The remaining five finalists will each receive \$10,000. The Indianapolis Prize jury, made up of distinguished conservation leaders, will determine the winner of the 2014 Indianapolis Prize, who will be announced in mid-2014 and honored at the next Indianapolis Prize Gala presented by Cummins Inc., to be held September 27, 2014, in Indianapolis.

Carl Safina — Conservation Hero

Called a “Thoreau for the 21st century,” Carl Safina uses his talents as both a skilled conservationist and communicator to sound the alarm for the preservation of marine animals and habitats. The result is compelling, lyrical storytelling that inspires a wide audience to action. Safina's contribution to ocean conservation — not just scientifically, but also culturally — is why he has advanced as a finalist for the 2014 Indianapolis Prize.

1st add
2014 Indianapolis Prize Finalists

Though Safina humbly describes himself as “a guy who likes to go fishing,” his experience shows otherwise. Safina is the most prominent voice for the protection of marine life in conservation today. He has written six critically acclaimed books on the threats facing the world’s marine habitats, received several prestigious conservation awards — most notably the MacArthur Fellowship — and can be seen on PBS’s “Saving the Ocean with Carl Safina.”

Risking his science career, he’s led campaigns to ban high-seas drift nets, rewritten and overhauled U.S. federal fisheries law, applied international agreements to help restore depleted populations of tunas, swordfish and sharks, and helped achieve passage of a United Nations Global Fisheries Treaty and the U.S. Sustainable Fisheries Act. Safina is also credited with developing the first consumer guides to sustainable seafood, which remain widely imitated today.

In 2010, following the Deepwater Horizon oil spill that discharged an estimated 205.8 million barrels into the Gulf of Mexico, Safina gave an impassioned account of the disaster in his book, “A Sea in Flames: The Deepwater Horizon Oil Blowout.” His tale of industry mismanagement and environmental catastrophe continues to mobilize environmental advocates for the oversight of deepwater wells and stricter regulatory guidelines.

Safina’s heartbreaking characters, like the oil-soaked pelican or the hungry albatross, provide the allegorical framework through which a depth of scientific knowledge is made accessible. His prose, frequently called “poetry in motion,” provides an artistic medium through which Safina deftly demonstrates how the ocean is changing and why it’s significant.

“While Carl Safina was studying seabirds in the 1980s, he noticed that fish, sharks, and sea turtles were all broadly declining. He thought of the passenger pigeon and the American bison, and it seemed to him that the ‘last buffalo hunt’ was occurring in the sea,” said George Archibald, Ph.D., cofounder of the International Crane Foundation and 2006 Indianapolis Prize winner. “Carl was determined to make a global difference. But at that time, no mainstream conservation organization did fisheries work. Fish were just commodities. But Carl has taught us that fish are wildlife, too.”

In 2003, Safina co-founded the Blue Ocean Institute to bring science, art and literature together to inspire a closer bond with nature, especially the sea. In addition to his work as founding president and author, Safina is a professor at Stony Brook University (SBU) in the School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences. Safina also co-chairs the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science at SBU, which works to enhance an understanding of science by helping train the next generation of scientists and science journalists to communicate more effectively with the public.

2nd add

2014 Indianapolis Prize Finalists

Safina joins finalists Joel Berger, Ph.D., senior scientist at the Wildlife Conservation Society; Gerardo Ceballos, Ph.D., professor of ecology and conservation at the National Autonomous University of Mexico; Carl Jones, Ph.D., scientific director of the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation and International Conservation Fellow at the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust; Russell A. Mittermeier, Ph.D., founder and president of Conservation International, and Patricia Wright, Ph.D., founder of Madagascar's Centre ValBio and professor of anthropology at Stony Brook University.

Safina spent his youth in Brooklyn and on Long Island, received his bachelor's degree from the State University of New York at Purchase and his doctorate from Rutgers University. He currently resides in Stony Brook, New York. Among other laurels, he has won a Pew Fellowship, a Guggenheim Fellowship, the John Burroughs Medal, the Rabb Medal, the James Beard Medal, the Lannan Literary Award, the National Academies Communication and a MacArthur Fellowship.

The Indianapolis Prize was first awarded in 2006 to George Archibald, Ph.D., the co-founder of the [International Crane Foundation](#). The 2008 winner was George Schaller, Ph.D., senior conservationist for the [Wildlife Conservation Society](#) and an icon in field conservation around the world. In 2010, the Indianapolis Prize was awarded to Iain Douglas-Hamilton, Ph.D., founder of [Save the Elephants](#), who pioneered research in elephant social behavior and has led the way in fighting poaching of African elephants. Steven Amstrup, Ph.D., of [Polar Bears International](#), received the 2012 Indianapolis Prize for his field work and research that led the United States to declare polar bears as threatened under the U.S. Endangered Species Act.

To learn more about each of the finalists, how you can support their work and the Indianapolis Prize, please visit indianapolisprize.org.

MEDIA NOTE:

Images that accompany this story are available for download from the [Indianapolis Prize Press Room](#).

The [Indianapolis Prize](#) was initiated by the [Indianapolis Zoo](#) as a significant component of its mission to empower people and communities, both locally and globally, to advance animal conservation. This biennial award brings the world's attention to the cause of animal conservation and the brave, talented and dedicated men and women who spend their lives saving the Earth's endangered animal species. The Indianapolis Prize has received support from the Eli Lilly and Company Foundation since its inception in 2006.