



*Editor's Note: Media contact information for each respective organization is listed below*

**Stony Brook University to Host Earth Day Tweet-Up  
Honoring Three Indianapolis Prize Finalists**

*Join the innovative, social media-driven conversation about  
saving wildlife around the planet*

**STONY BROOK, NY, April 11, 2014** – On Earth Day—Tuesday, April 22—the Stony Brook campus community, and the global twitter-verse are invited to meet and tweet – virtually and in person – with Stony Brook University’s three [Indianapolis Prize](#) finalists: Russell A. Mittermeier; Carl Safina; and, Patricia C. Wright, during the University’s first ever “Tweet-Up” – an official event of the [2014 Earthstock celebration](#).

The [#IndyAtSBU Tweet-Up](#) combines short talks by the extraordinary conservationists with the power of social media to connect communities around a common cause. On Earth Day, attendees will hear from Stony Brook’s three Indianapolis Prize finalists and use the hashtag [#IndyAtSBU](#) to contribute to the discussion around issues that most affect our planet. The [#IndyAtSBU Tweet-Up](#) invites attendees and the global conservation community to register and come together at the Stony Brook University Student Activities Center Ballroom A from noon to 1:30 p.m.

Drs. Mittermeier, Safina and Wright are three of the six finalists vying for the 2014 Indianapolis Prize, the world’s leading award for animal conservation. With a purse of \$250,000, the Indianapolis Prize is the largest and most prestigious award of its kind, awarded biennially to the heroic conservationist who has made significant strides in saving a species from extinction. The finalists will be joined at the Tweet-Up by Stony Brook President Samuel L. Stanley Jr., M.D., and Dr. Robert Shumaker, Vice President of Life Sciences at the Indianapolis Zoo, which administers the Indianapolis Prize as a significant component of its mission to empower people and communities, both locally and globally, to advance animal conservation.

“For three Stony Brook University faculty to be selected as finalists for this prestigious award is a great honor,” said Stony Brook University President Samuel L. Stanley Jr., M.D. “Doctors Mittermeier, Safina and Wright have not only advanced wildlife conservation, they have improved the quality of life in the communities and regions in which they work, and they use their work as a springboard by which to teach the world’s next great conservationists, leaving a legacy of commitment, passion and dedication.”

Congressman Timothy H. Bishop (D-NY-1) will also be in attendance to present the three finalists with an official document that he read into the [Congressional Record](#) on March 14, 2014, congratulating Stony Brook's three Indianapolis Prize finalists.

"This is the first time that one university has had three finalists for the award given by the Indianapolis Zoo for 'extraordinary contributions to conservation efforts,'" said Congressman Bishop. "Drs. Mittermeier, Safina, and Wright all hold PhDs and have made major contributions to science. Their selection as finalists for this coveted award reflects the excellence and dedication of Stony Brook's faculty and brings honor to all of Long Island."

Those planning to attend should [register in advance](#), which will allow them to join the conversation virtually and in person. Registration will also automatically enter attendees' Twitter handles into a drawing for a number of amazing prizes from the conservationists and their respective organizations. Prizes include autographed books, posters, a DVD of the PBS TV series Saving the Ocean with Carl Safina and more.

The Indianapolis Prize winner will be announced on May 13 in Indianapolis. The winner will receive \$250,000 and the Lilly medal at the Indianapolis Prize Gala on September 27, 2014.

#### **About Stony Brook University's Indianapolis Prize Finalists**

**Russel A. Mittermeier, PhD** ([@RussMittermeier](#), [@ConservationOrg](#)) is the president of Conservation International and an adjunct professor in the Department of Anatomical Sciences. He has been nominated for his efforts to understand and educate others about the worldwide threats to biodiversity, his global efforts to conserve primates, and his work to create protected areas in some of the world's highest priority hotspots.

**Carl Safina, PhD** ([@carlsafina](#), [@BlueOceanInst](#)) is a research professor in the School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences and a visiting professor and board member of the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science. Founder of Blue Ocean Institute and known as the "voice of ocean conservation," he has been sounding the alarm for the preservation of marine animals and the oceans that house them.

**Patricia C. Wright, PhD** ([@patcwright](#)) is the founding director of Centre ValBio and the Institute for the Conservation of Tropical Environments and a professor of anthropology. She has been recognized for her tireless work with lemurs in Madagascar, including the development of Ranomafana National Park, the home of 12 lemur species, some of which are listed among the world's most endangered animals. Pat also works to empower the people of Madagascar to take an active role in protecting the island's rich biodiversity.

### **Representing the Indianapolis Prize**

**Robert Shumaker, PhD** (@IndplsPrize), is Vice President of Life Sciences at the Indianapolis Zoo, which administers the Indianapolis Prize. He is internationally recognized as a leading expert on orangutan behavior and cognition. He's been a faculty member at George Mason University and Drake University. Dr. Shumaker started his career at the Smithsonian National Zoo and also served as the senior scientist at the Great Ape Trust in Des Moines, Iowa.

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### **About Stony Brook University**

Part of the State University of New York system, Stony Brook University encompasses 200 buildings on 1,450 acres. Since welcoming its first incoming class in 1957, the University has grown tremendously, now with more than 24,000 students and 2,200 faculty. Its membership in the prestigious Association of American Universities (AAU) places Stony Brook among the top 62 research institutions in North America. U.S. News & World Report ranks Stony Brook among the top 40 public universities in the nation and Kiplinger named it the 29<sup>th</sup> best value in public colleges for in-state students and 20<sup>th</sup> for out-of-state students. One of four University Center campuses in the SUNY system, Stony Brook University co-manages Brookhaven National Laboratory, putting it in an elite group of universities that run federal research and development laboratories. Stony Brook is ranked in the top 1 percent of the world's higher education institutions by the [Times Higher Education World University Rankings](#). It is one of the top 100 universities in the nation and one of the top 35 public universities as determined by [U.S. News & World Report](#). It was recently ranked one of the 30 best values in public colleges and universities by [Kiplinger](#) and is one of only 10 universities nationwide recognized by the National Science Foundation for combining research with undergraduate education. As the largest single-site employer on Long Island, Stony Brook is a driving force of the regional economy, with an annual economic impact of \$4.65 billion, generating nearly 60,000 jobs, and accounts for nearly 4 percent of all economic activity in Nassau and Suffolk counties, and roughly 7.5 percent of total jobs in Suffolk County.

### **About the Indianapolis Prize**

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 spent 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.

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