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# Sensory Map of Local Zoo: A Capstone Project

Felicity Elsaesser, Kelle DeBoth Foust, PhD, OTR/L, and Kristen Pataki, OTD, OTR/L, ATRIC

## Purpose

To increase community engagement, participation, and accessibility at The Cleveland Zoo through the creation of a map locating various sensory stimuli throughout the zoo.



\*Photos of African Elephant Crossing and Elephant Care & Visitor Center, two areas labelled on the sensory map under strong smells.

## Background

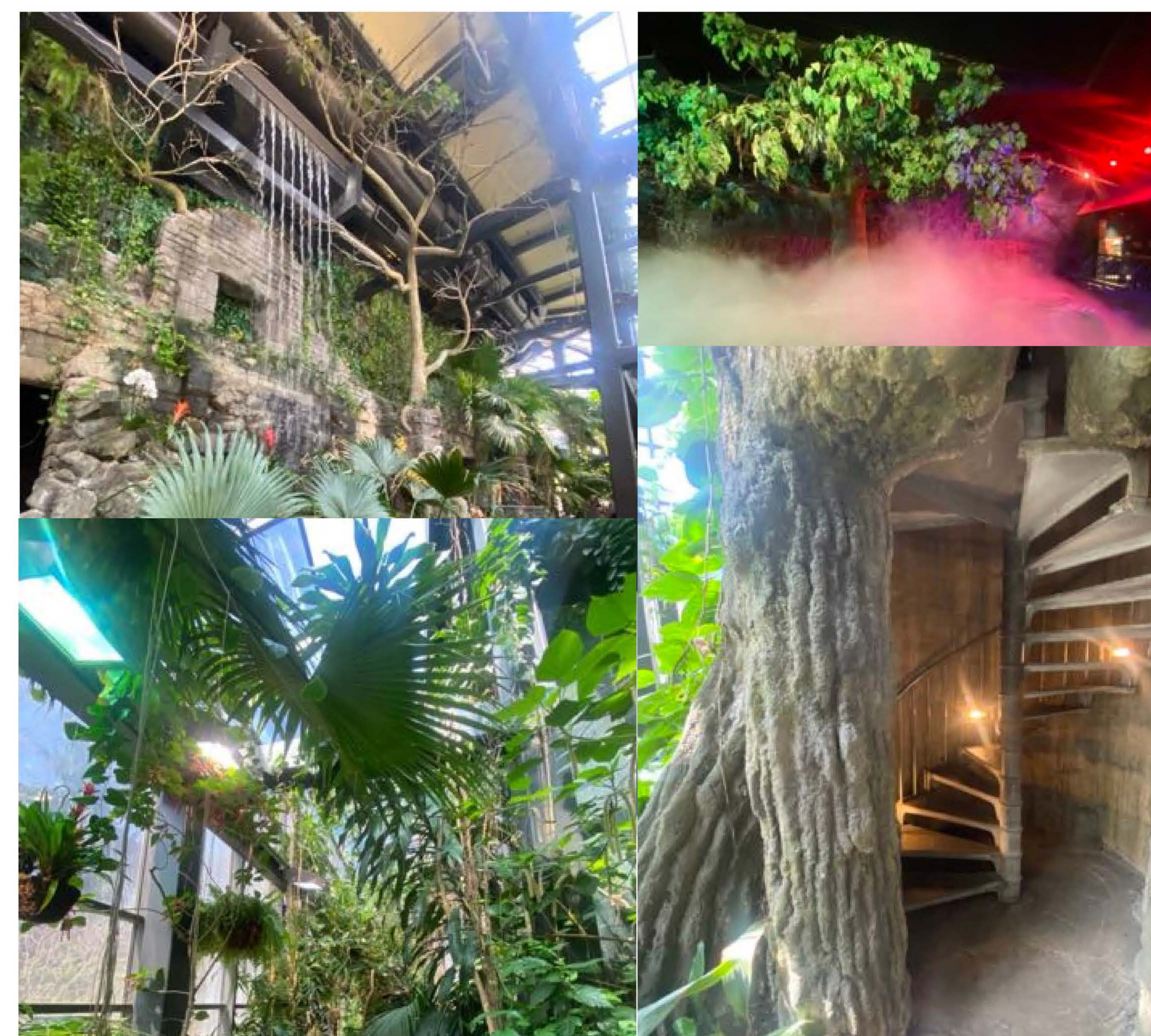
The Cleveland Zoo was lacking a map of sensory stimuli which other zoos and public areas in Ohio have created and implemented. The use of these maps is for individuals with sensory sensitivities, and those accompanying them, to prepare, navigate, and enjoy the zoo by avoiding or preparing for certain sensory stimuli.

- Many public areas lack accommodations specifically for people with sensory sensitivities.
- Environmental factors can place huge constraints on the occupations and engagement of individuals with sensory sensitivities (Zulkanian, et al., n.d.).
- Programs and resources created for public areas can increase public access, engagement, and participation.

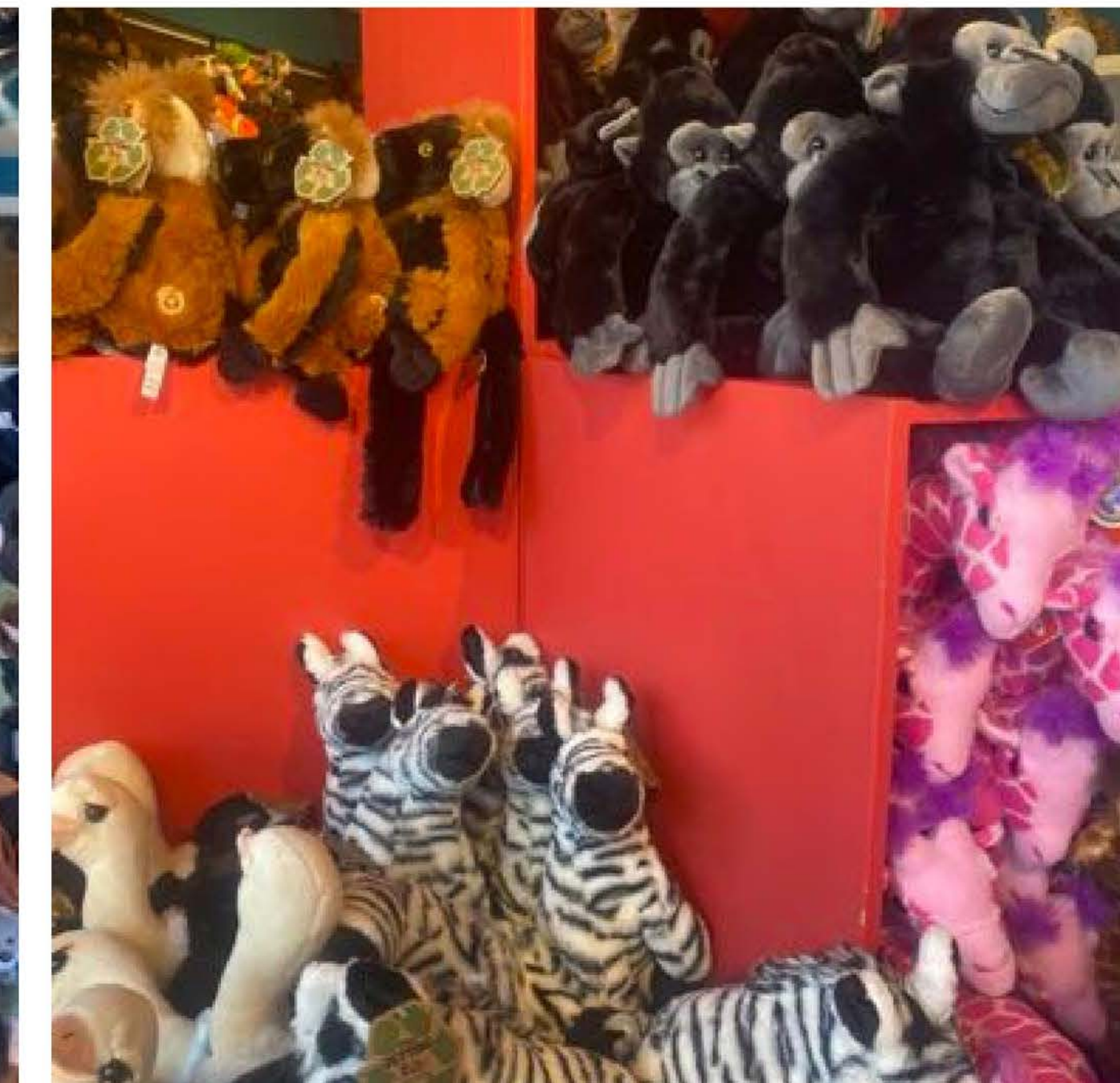
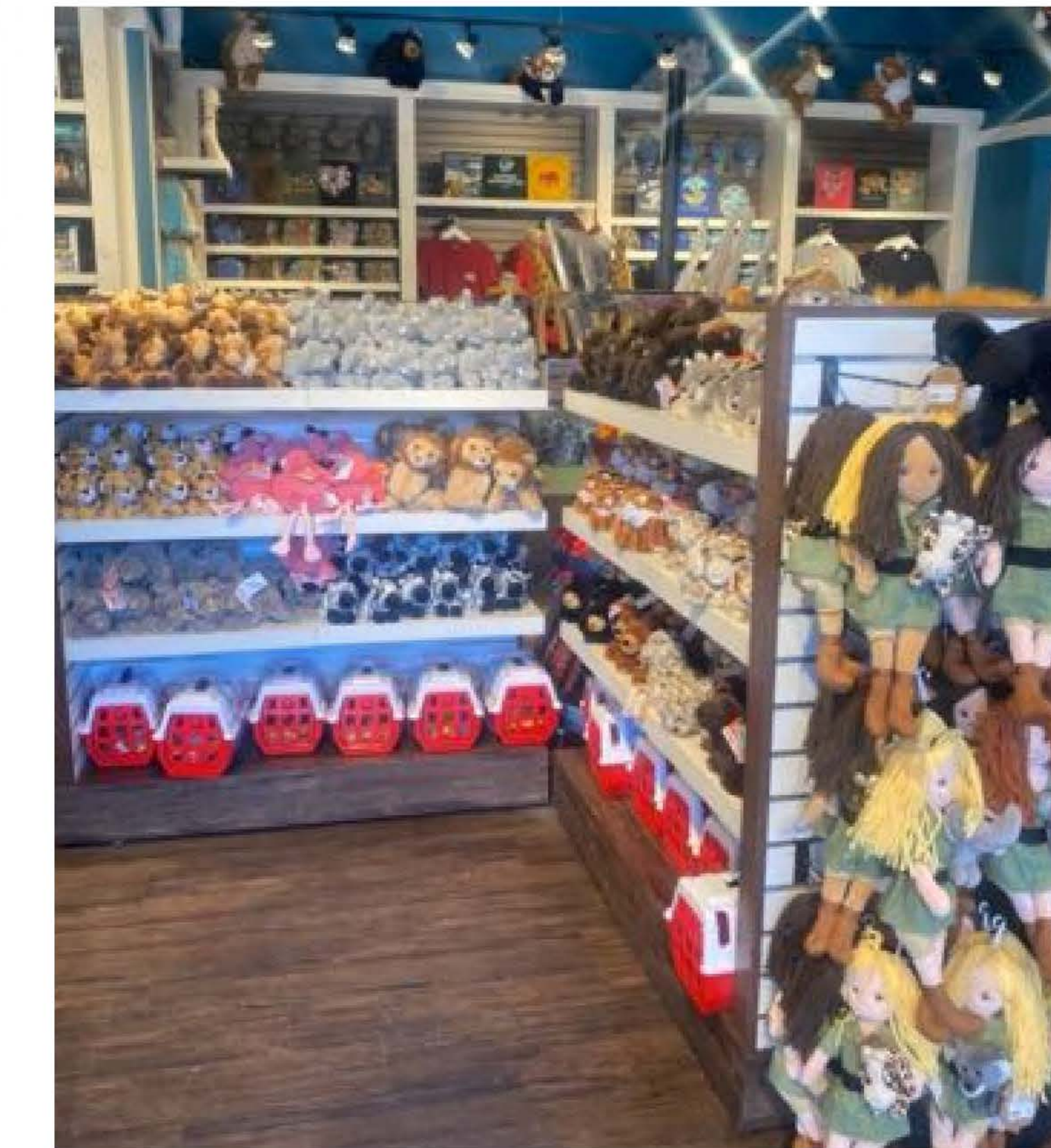
## Capstone activities

During my 14-week capstone experience I used the following steps to create a sensory map of The Cleveland Zoo that is clear and printable.

- Collected sensory data throughout the zoo
- Identified most significant data points from collected information
- Created map key from selected data points
- Learned and utilized novel software to create digital map
- Received feedback on map from various sources
- Revised project using feedback to create final product
- Distributed project throughout local community, schools, peers, and other contacts



\*Photos of various places in the Rainforest, showing why it is labelled as high visual stimulation, tactile, dark, humid, and has confined spaces.



\*Photos showing the gift shop and why it is labeled as high visual stimulation and confined spaces on the sensory map.

## Key references

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The Cleveland Zoo

Ann Griegg

## Brief bio

I am a full-time student in the Occupational Therapy Doctorate Program. I am passionate about promoting individuals' participation in meaningful activities by providing client centered and evidence-based care.

