

AAM, AZA Announce Agreement on Accreditation

WASHINGTON, D.C.(October 20, 2011) – The American Association of Museums (AAM) and the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) have signed an agreement to expedite AAM Accreditation for AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums.

This agreement is integral to the ongoing re-invention of the AAM accreditation program, the sole such program applicable to all types of museums in the U.S. AAM is working to make its accreditation program more accessible to museums of all types and sizes, as well as more valuable, to the institutions and to the public.

“Association of Zoos and Aquariums Accreditation is the gold standard for museums with living collections.” said AZA President and CEO Jim Maddy. “After aquariums and zoos have met the rigorous, comprehensive AZA Standards for animal care, science education, wildlife conservation and more, it is great that they can now benefit from a more streamlined AAM process.”

The AAM-AZA agreement will enable zoos and aquariums to utilize some of the exhaustive work required for AZA accreditation in its application for a similar designation from AAM. Both organizations emphasized the efficiencies to be realized by this partnership, as well as the benefits of sharing information about best practices between institutions with living and nonliving collections. At the outset, AZA-accredited institutions can expect to see approximately a 35% reduction in the amount of data and documents they must submit with their AAM accreditation self-study.

“This is just the first of what we hope will be many such agreements with other discipline-specific associations, all designed to add efficiencies and impact to accreditation,” said AAM board chairman Douglas G. Myers, CEO and Executive Director of the San Diego Zoo. “A widely recognized, credible universal

commitment to high standards and best practices is essential to forging a truly unified, impactful museum field. It will also help us better connect with governments, foundations, corporations and the public.”

The new AAM-AZA Accreditation parameters will go into effect January 1, 2012. Currently, there are 776 museums accredited by AAM, 225 AZA-accredited aquariums and zoos and 13 institutions accredited by both organizations.

For more information on the AAM Accreditation program, visit www.aam-us.org. To learn more about AZA Accreditation, visit www.aza.org.

About AZA

Founded in 1924, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums is an organization dedicated to the advancement of zoos and aquariums in the areas of conservation, education, science, and recreation. Look for the AZA logo whenever you visit a zoo or aquarium as your assurance that you are a facility dedicated to providing excellent care for the animals, a great experience for you, and a better future for all living things. AZA is a leader in global wildlife conservation, and your link to helping animals in their native habitats. To learn more , visit www.aza.org.

About AAM

The American Association of Museums has been bringing museums together since 1906, helping to develop standards and best practices, gathering and sharing knowledge, and providing advocacy on issues of concern to the entire museum community. With more than 18,000 individual, 3,000 institutional and 300 corporate members, AAM is dedicated to ensuring that museums remain a vital part of the American landscape, connecting people with the greatest achievements of the human experience, past, present and future. For more information, visit www.aam-us.org.

Contact:

Dewey Blanton, AAM Communications
202-218-7704
dblanton@aam-us.org

Steve Feldman
Senior Vice President, External Affairs
Association of Zoos and Aquariums
301-562-0777 x252
sfeldman@aza.org

