

American Association of Zoo Keepers (AAZK) Facts

The American Association of Zoo Keepers is a membership association for animal care professionals to exchange information and network with one another.

Mission Statement

The mission of The American Association of Zoo Keepers is to advance excellence in the animal keeping profession, foster effective communication beneficial to animal care, support deserving conservation projects, and promote the preservation of our natural resources and animal life.

Vision Statement

AAZK will be the leader in the zoo and aquarium industry fostering professional development and personal connections that advance animal care, animal welfare and conservation.

Purpose

AAZK's purpose is to foster a professional attitude in animal keepers and aquarists by encouraging them to become active members of professional teams at today's zoos and aquariums. AAZK supports the promotion and implementation of zookeeper education and strives to make the general public aware of our concern for all deserving conservation projects and the need for the preservation of our natural resources and the species that depend on those resources.

Serving as a professional organization for zookeepers, AAZK is a valuable resource for dedicated animal care workers. AAZK is dedicated to advancing animal care, promoting public awareness, enhancing professional development and contributing to local and global conservation through fundraising and stewardship. Our goal is to inspire and motivate through our roles as animal caregivers, educators and conservationists. Through workshops, conferences, newsletters, and internet forums, AAZK helps animal care staff stay current in husbandry, training, nutrition, and conservation. Well educated keepers using modern techniques means the animals in their care benefit tremendously.

History of AAZK

The American Association of Zoo Keepers, Inc. began in 1967 in San Diego, CA with the purpose of promoting professionalism in zoo keeping through education of zoological staff members in the most modern and current techniques of captive exotic animal care. AAZK's mission is to provide a resource and a forum of continuing education for the animal care professional and to support zoo and aquarium personnel in their roles as animal care givers, scientific researchers, public educators and conservationists; to promote zoos and aquariums as cultural establishments dedicated to the enrichment of human and natural resources; to foster the

exchange of research materials, enrichment options and husbandry information through publications and conferences which will lead to a greater understanding of the needs and requirements of all animals. Membership is currently about 2,800 and includes individuals at all levels of zoo staff from directors, curators and veterinarians to zoo keepers, animal health technicians, volunteers and students. Members are from 48 of the 50 States, 5 Canadian Provinces and 24 foreign countries and represent nearly 250 animal-related facilities.

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AAZK publications, conferences, and chapter activities at local zoos provide keepers with a means to exchange ideas and discuss new methods of professional care, observations on animal behavior and other information. Animal Keepers' Forum, the monthly journal of AAZK, is the principal vehicle for communication among keepers. Other AAZK publications include AAZK National Conference Proceedings, Zoo and Aquarium Professionals and The Resource for Crisis Management in Zoos and Other Animal Care Facilities.

AAZK also has a number of committees which provide ways to promote AAZK and the Zoo Keepers' role in conservation education.

AAZK website: <https://aazk.org/>