2018 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Stacey Johnson : Operations
Corporate Director of Conservation and Research, San Diego Zoo Global

Stacey Johnson is Corporate Director of Conservation and Research for San Diego Zoo Global. He leads the Northern White Rhinoceros Initiative, manages the post-doctoral fellowships program, guides strategy for the Global Partnerships and Community Engagement teams, facilitates additional projects and programs and supports the Chief Conservation and Research Officer. He is active in AZA, presently chairing the Wildlife Conservation and Management Committee, serving as Program Leader for the Jaguar SSP, and Studbook Keeper as well as steering committee member for the Felid TAG. He is a past member of the AZA Ethics Board, the AZA Accreditation Commission and past chairman of the AZA Bear TAG.

Stacey has participated as an active accreditation inspector since 1997. He is a 1985 graduate of Colorado State University with a Bachelor of Science in Zoology. He began his career in 1987 as a zookeeper, working his way to progressively higher responsibility in education, animal management and zoo administration. His field conservation experience includes camera trapping jaguars in Yucatán, México; working with Pecos pupfish in Texas; and coordinating a portion of a brown bear study in Alaska. Stacey is passionate about conservation and research and when asked to name the favorite part of his job, his answer is “Whatever I’m working on at the moment.”
2018 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Dale Leeds : Animal Management/Husbandry
Curator of Large Mammals, Denver Zoo

Dale is currently the Curator of Large Mammals at Denver Zoo. He has worked for multiple AZA-accredited facilities in a variety of capacities for more than thirty years. He began as a volunteer and then a keeper at the Toledo Zoo in 1984. In 1989 he accepted the position of Area Supervisor at the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo. He was subsequently promoted to General Curator, a position he held for 6 years. In 1998 Dale became a member of the Denver Zoo animal management team. During his time with Denver Zoo, Dale has filled a variety of roles, ultimately curating all of the mammal areas and the nutrition center at one time or another. He has a strong interest in, and has been very involved with, exhibit design and construction. This includes the design, construction, and management of Predator Ridge at Denver Zoo, which was awarded Exhibit of the Year by AZA. Dale has participated in many AZA animal programs, including the tapir TAG steering committee and the elephant TAG/SSP steering committee, and he currently serves as the husbandry advisor to the lion SSP. He has been an accreditation inspector for many years and has participated on over 20 inspection teams. Dale has a deep appreciation for the contribution zoos make in conservation, animal management, education, and so much more.
2018 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Allison Tuttle, DVM, Dipl. ACZM : Veterinary
Vice President of Biological Programs, Mystic Aquarium

Allison Tuttle is the Vice President of Biological Programs at Mystic Aquarium where she serves on the Aquarium’s Leadership Team and oversees the Aquarium’s veterinary, animal husbandry, and animal rescue operations. She also contributes to a number of research and grant initiatives. Dr. Tuttle earned her BS in Biology and Psychology from Washington College and her DVM from North Carolina State University. After graduation, she completed Mystic Aquarium’s Internship in Aquatic Animal Medicine and Research and then completed a Residency in Zoological Medicine with a focus on Aquatic Health Management at North Carolina State University. Dr. Tuttle is a Diplomate of the American College of Zoological Medicine. She currently serves within the International Association for Aquatic Animal Medicine as Education member on the board and is an Associate Editor for the Journal of Zoo and Wildlife Medicine. Within AZA, Dr. Tuttle sits on the Ethics Board, Aquarium Affairs Committee, Honors and Awards Committee, Animal Health Committee, and she completed the AZA’s Executive Leadership Development Program in 2016. Dr. Tuttle has been an accreditation inspector since 2012 and finds it to be an inspiring and rewarding process. She is passionate about the AZA accreditation process because it continually raises the standards of animal care and zoo/aquarium operations, supporting a personal mission of inspiring the public to care for and conserve wildlife.
2017 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Dwight Lawson, PhD: Operations
Executive Director/CEO, Oklahoma City Zoo

Dwight Lawson is the Executive Director/CEO of the Oklahoma City Zoo and Botanical Garden. Dwight and the OKC Zoo team are currently implementing an exciting new master plan, which includes the expansion of the zoo’s Asian elephant program, a new African savanna exhibit, and upgrades to visitor amenities throughout the park.

Dwight previously served as Chair of the Chelonian Advisory Group, and currently serves as Vice-President of the non-profit Turtle Survival Alliance. Dwight is a current AZA Accreditation Commissioner, and has participated as an accreditation inspector since 2002.

Prior to joining the Oklahoma City Zoo, Dwight worked in several different roles at Zoo Atlanta, including Director, Senior Vice President of Collections, Education and Conservation, and General Curator. Dwight has a bachelor’s degree in biology from the University of Pennsylvania, as well as a master’s degree in biology and a Ph.D. in Quantitative Biology from the University of Texas at Arlington. Dwight specialized in the taxonomy and ecology of African amphibians and reptiles and spent several years living and working in the rainforests of Cameroon.
2017 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Jack Jewell: Animal Management/Husbandry
General Curator, Shark Reef Aquarium at Mandalay Bay

Jack Jewell is General Curator for Shark Reef Aquarium at Mandalay Bay. He oversees the department of Animal Husbandry, which facilitates the care of more than 2,000 animals ranging from sharks and piranhas to crocodilians, sea turtles and Komodo dragons. Jack is responsible for providing a healthy and nurturing environment in the 14 major exhibits that house the aquarium’s aquatic residents.

Prior to joining Shark Reef Aquarium, Jack served as Aquarium Supervisor for MGM Resorts International. In that role, he oversaw marine animal care and filtration operations at The Mirage and Bellagio in Las Vegas, as well as Beau Rivage in Biloxi, Mississippi. Jack’s extensive marine background includes over 20 years of animal care, breeding, transportation, and training. He has served the aquarium community in roles at multiple facilities, including Six Flags’ Discovery Kingdom in Vallejo, California, Steinhart Aquarium in San Francisco, and the Las Vegas Natural History Museum.

Jack has served as an AZA accreditation inspector since 2005, and is the current Vice Program Leader of the Zebra Shark SSP. He is also a member of the Association of Dive Program Administrators (ADPA), the Aquarium Affairs Committee, and the Wildlife Conservation and Management Committee (WCMC).
2017 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Mike Nance, DVM: Veterinary
Veterinarian, Ellen Trout Zoo

Dr. Michael Nance has been practicing zoo medicine for most of his veterinary career, though he has also worked in private, corporate, and animal shelter practices, as well as at dairies and equine breeding farms.

He graduated from Oklahoma State University in 1988. He later served as the first staff veterinarian at Lee Richardson Zoo. He then had the opportunity to serve as Zoo Director for the Heritage Zoo in Nebraska, a non-AZA accredited zoo which had hopes of becoming AZA-accredited but now no longer exists.

Dr. Nance has a unique perspective on both the challenges and privileges of being accredited by our association. He has been serving the Ellen Trout Zoo in Lufkin, Texas as the Staff Veterinarian for 14 years and plans to be doing so for many years to come. Mike also serves as the Veterinary Advisor for the Louisiana Pine Snake SSP, an honor that resonates deeply with him.

Mike has been volunteering on AZA inspection teams since 2005. His philosophy is that any negative experience by animal, staff, or visitor detracts from the reason we are all in this profession: to help conserve species and to introduce, educate and excite visitors in an intimate, attractive environment about the diverse plants and animals that share our planet. Mike believes AZA accreditation exemplifies that philosophy, and being a member of an inspection team serves to put that philosophy into practice.
2016 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

John Walczak: Operations
Director, Louisville Zoological Garden

John Walczak has served as an accreditation inspector for a quarter of a century, and enthusiastically champions the importance of AZA accreditation. His service in AZA has spanned the Ethics Board, Accreditation Commission, and Board of Directors. He is the current Chair of AZA’s Membership Committee, and is also the Director of the Louisville Zoo.

John began his career at the Palm Beach Zoo in 1978 after graduating from Penn State University. He then worked as a supervisor at the Oklahoma City Zoo for several years before accepting a position at the Louisville Zoo in 1985. After overseeing and managing more than $30 million in zoo expansion, John was promoted to Director in 2004.

As Director, John led the successful design and accomplishment of the $26 million Glacier Run Capital Campaign that funded exhibit openings from 2006 to 2013, growing the zoo’s business through the recession with more than 900,000 guests in 2012. That same year Glacier Run earned the highest award of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums: Exhibit of the Year. The Louisville Zoo was likewise awarded the Association’s 2013 Significant Achievement Award for Excellence in Education, earned as a result of the “School at the Zoo” program. John is passionate about pursuing the zoo’s mission in serving the Louisville community. He believes that it is imperative for the zoo to engage people through amazing experiences with animal ambassadors as a way to impart advocacy for living in better balance with our planet’s ecosystem.
Perry Hampton has always had a passion for learning about animals, nurtured from an early age through exposure to the diverse wildlife of his native hometown in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

Perry began his career as a volunteer aquarist at the New England Aquarium in 1981 shortly after graduating from the Southampton College of Long Island University. He then moved to the National Aquarium in Baltimore where he spent 15 years working as an Aquarist, Volunteer Diver Coordinator, and Assistant Curator of Fishes. He is now the Vice President of Husbandry at the Aquarium of the Pacific, where he has worked since 1997. He was heavily involved in the startup of the aquarium and feels that the experience was one of the most rewarding of his career.

Perry has been an AZA member for over 22 years and has served as an accreditation inspector since 2002. He has also served on AZA’s Honors and Awards Committee, and has been a member of the Accreditation Commission since 2014. Perry believes very strongly that AZA’s accreditation process is one of the most important functions that AZA provides, elevating the professionalism of the zoological field and ensuring the highest standards in all aspects of animal care and operations.
2016 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

William Foster, DVM: Veterinary
President & CEO, Birmingham Zoo

Dr. William Foster received a Bachelor of Science in Zoology from the University of South Florida and Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Bachelor of Science degrees from Tuskegee University. He has been the President & CEO of the Birmingham Zoo since 2004. Bill has led the Birmingham Zoo to record attendance and the Zoo was named the number one tourist attraction in the State of Alabama by the Alabama Bureau of Tourism and Travel.

Under Dr. Foster’s tenure, the Zoo is living up to the Association of Zoos & Aquariums’ tough accreditation standards, which only the very best zoos in the United States achieve. Foster, a leading zoo management authority on the national scene, is past Chair of the AZA Board, as well as past chair of the AZA Accreditation Commission. He has also participated as an accreditation inspector on 28 teams since 1985, serving as chair on 13 occasions.

In addition to AZA, Dr. Foster is involved in numerous other efforts, including serving on the Board of Directors of the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International, a worldwide effort to preserve the endangered mountain gorilla of Africa for future generations. He is a past president of the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians, and has published several academic articles on veterinary medicine during his career.
2015 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Gary Geddes: Operations
Director, Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium and Northwest Trek Wildlife Park

Gary is a lifelong leader in the zoological field whose passion for conservation and enjoyment of nature is evident in every aspect of his life. Before beginning his zoological career, Gary earned a Bachelor’s degree in Zoology from Southern Illinois University, followed by a Master’s degree in Executive Non-Profit Leadership from Seattle University. He later guided the planning and construction of a 1,500-acre prairie restoration and wildlife education facility in Peoria, Illinois.

Gary joined Metro Parks Tacoma 34 years ago and currently serves as the Director, Zoological & Environmental Education, of both Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium and Northwest Trek Wildlife Park. He also oversees the Tacoma Nature Center and is an active member of the Morse Wildlife Preserve Task Force.

Gary has served as an AZA accreditation inspector for over 30 years, chairing all but two teams he has participated on. Additionally, Gary was a member of the Accreditation Commission from 2008 to 2014, and served as Chair of the Commission from 2012-2013.

He is recognized by colleagues throughout AZA as a leader who possesses a wealth of knowledge about zoos and how they operate. Gary is a tireless advocate for the conservation of species and the preservation of the natural world.
2015 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Jackson Andrews: Animal Management/Husbandry
Director of Operations and Husbandry, Tennessee Aquarium

With over three decades of experience in the aquarium profession, Jackson Andrews has been involved in myriad facets of operation and animal care necessary to sustaining an AZA-accredited facility.

He began his career at the National Aquarium, Baltimore, where he was involved in the start-up of the aquarium. Jackson spent twelve rewarding years there before accepting a position at the Tennessee Aquarium, where he remains today. As Director of Operations and Husbandry, Jackson especially enjoys playing a role in the development of modern, enriched exhibits for the aquarium’s living collection and discovering new ways for guests to have educational, impactful, and entertaining experiences.

Since 1995, Jackson has participated in over 20 AZA accreditation inspections, serving as Team Chair 15 times. He recently concluded a six-year term on the Accreditation Commission, and has also served as Chair of the Program Committee and member of both AZA’s Ethics Board and Board of Directors. Jackson strongly believes that the peer review process, accountability, and recognition of professional standards afforded by AZA’s accreditation program are valuable tools for all members of the zoological and aquarium profession. AZA is very fortunate to have him as a dedicated member of the aquarium and zoo community.
2015 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Chris Bonar, VMD, Dipl. A.C.Z.M.: Veterinary
Senior Director of Animal Health, Dallas Zoo

Dr. Christopher Bonar discovered his love of wildlife as a student intern at the Pittsburgh Zoo in 1982. His passion for animal welfare inspired him to study biology at Harvard University before receiving his VMD from the University of Pennsylvania in 1991.

Over the last 24 years, Chris has practiced veterinary medicine at the Fort Wayne Children’s Zoo, the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, and the Dallas World Aquarium. In 2013, he accepted a position at the Dallas Zoo, where he is the current Senior Director of Animal Health. Chris is a board-certified specialist in Zoological Medicine, who has participated in field research with black rhinos in Kenya and studied the biomechanics of air breathing in lungfish. Additionally, he helped found the Angiogenesis Foundation in 1994 and has served on its Board of Directors since its inception; presently, he serves as Chairman of the Board.

Chris has participated in over a dozen AZA accreditation inspections, and his thoughtful and thorough methodology has been a valuable asset to the accreditation process.
2014 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Maylon White: Operations
Director, North Carolina Aquarium on Roanoke Island

Maylon White has been involved in AZA’s accreditation program for over ten years. He has participated on eleven inspection teams, serving as Team Chair for five of them.

Maylon’s interest in the marine world first began by watching episodes of “Sea Hunt” which led to a decision to take scuba lessons. After becoming certified in scuba in 1969, he looked for ways to stay underwater as much as possible. Soon after receiving his Master’s Degree in Oceanography, Maylon joined the planning team for the Virginia Marine Science Museum (now the Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center) in Virginia Beach, Virginia. In 2001, he played a large role in helping the aquarium obtain AZA accreditation for the first time, eventually becoming its Director of Exhibits and Husbandry.

In 2010, Maylon joined the staff of the North Carolina Aquarium on Roanoke Island as its Director. In addition to his duties as an aquarium Director and accreditation inspector, he also currently serves as a member of AZA’s Aquarium Affairs Committee. Maylon’s vast knowledge and commitment to the zoo and aquarium profession is recognized and highly valued by colleagues and by AZA.
2014 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Don Moore, PhD: Animal Management/Husbandry
Senior Scientist/Living Collections Sustainability, Smithsonian’s National Zoological Park

Dr. Don Moore is an animal behavior and husbandry expert, Certified Wildlife Biologist, and educator who has helped to renovate and manage several zoos and associated conservation education programs over a span of more than thirty years. He obtained a Master’s Degree in Public Administration from Syracuse University’s Maxwell School, followed by a PhD from the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

Among other institutions, Don worked for the Wildlife Conservation Society for ten years as a curator and later as a zoo director prior to joining the Smithsonian Institution. He previously led the Smithsonian National Zoo’s Animal Care Sciences team, and is currently assisting AZA with species conservation program sustainability. Don has been involved in the accreditation program since 2000 and has participated in twelve inspections in that time, serving as Team Chair for eight of them. He also served as a voting member of the Accreditation Commission from 2006-2012 and served as Chair in 2011-2012. He is presently a non-voting Advisor to the Commission until October 2015.

Don also serves as a member of the Wildlife Conservation and Management Committee (WCMC) as well as an Advisor to AZA’s Animal Welfare Committee and the Bear Taxon Advisory Group. In addition to AZA, Don has also led professional training workshops on zoo safety, design and management in a variety of countries, has been an adjunct professor at several colleges, and has published and co-authored over four dozen papers and manuals on animal husbandry and behavior. Don’s dedication and volunteerism make him an irreplaceable asset to AZA and to the zoo/aquarium community as a whole.
2014 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Jeff Wyatt, DVM: Veterinary

Director of Wildlife Health & Conservation, Seneca Park Zoo

Dr. Jeff Wyatt has been an accreditation inspector since 1990. In that time he has participated an incredible 41 times on inspection teams, serving as Team Chair on 21 of those teams. He frequently serves on multiple teams in a single inspection cycle and has stepped in “at the last minute” on many occasions.

Jeff attributes his high school years as a Cincinnati Zoo Junior Zoologist as being responsible for his career in zoo conservation science. He received a Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine from the Ohio State College of Veterinary Medicine in 1982, obtained a Master of Public Health Degree from the University of Rochester in 1995, and is specialty board certified by the American College of Lab Animal Medicine. He has been with the Seneca Park Zoo for over thirty years and also serves as Professor and Chair of the Department of Comparative Medicine at the University of Rochester School of Medicine & Dentistry.

Jeff has extensive experience in academic laboratory, biomedical agricultural, exotic animal and international wildlife medicine with scholarly publications in areas of public health, exotic & research animal medicine and wildlife biology. He served as a voting member of AZA’s Accreditation Commission from 2007-2013 and now serves the Commission in a non-voting advisory capacity. Jeff is also currently a member of AZA’s Ethics Board. His extensive knowledge, commitment to the zoo and aquarium profession, and long history of volunteerism make Jeff a valuable asset to AZA and its accreditation program.
2013 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Bruce Bohmke: Operations
Chief Operations Officer, Woodland Park Zoo

Bruce joined AZA in 1978 while working as a keeper at the Oakland Zoo, his first position in the zoo community. Since that time Bruce has also worked as Curator of Birds for the Kansas City Zoo and St. Louis Zoo as well as General Curator of the Phoenix Zoo. He has served as the Chief Operations Officer of the Woodland Park Zoo for the last fourteen years.

Bruce has been involved in the accreditation program since 1986 and has participated in seventeen inspections in that time, serving as Team Chair for twelve of them. He also served as a member of the Accreditation Commission from 2004-2013 and was appointed as Chair 2008-2009.

Aside from accreditation Bruce has volunteered as a studbook keeper, SSP Coordinator, TAG Chair and Professional Development Course Instructor. In the past he has also served on the Animal Data Information Systems Committee (ADISC) and Professional Development Committee, and was elected to the AZA Ethics Committee and Board of Directors. He currently serves as the Elephant TAG liaison to the Accreditation Commission as well as Vice-Chair of the Wildlife Conservation and Management Committee (WCMC). As evidenced by his long history of dedication and volunteerism over the years, Bruce has been a major positive component of AZA.
Gary Violetta: Animal Management/Husbandry
Curator of Fishes, SeaWorld Orlando

Gary has been a member of AZA for over thirty years and has been involved in the accreditation program since 1995. In that time he has participated on ten inspection teams.

Gary has spent his entire thirty-seven year career in the zoo and aquarium industry at SeaWorld. His career began in Ohio, where he worked his way up from an entry level aquarist to the Curator of Fishes. He was transferred to SeaWorld of Texas in that same capacity, where he helped design, build and operate the various aquarium components of the new park. From there he was transferred to SeaWorld Orlando, where he continues to oversee the aquarium displays at the SeaWorld and Aquatica parks as well as consult on husbandry at the Discovery Cove park. Gary participates in numerous SSPs and serves on several AZA TAGs, including Marine Fishes and Freshwater Fishes. His knowledge and passion for the zoo and aquarium industry make him a valued part of the AZA community.
2013 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Brent Whitaker, DVM: Veterinary
VP of Biological Programs, National Aquarium

Dr. Whitaker has been involved in AZA’s accreditation program since 1993. As a veterinarian with expertise in aquatic animals he has participated in many inspections in that time. He received a Master of Science degree in Aquatic Toxicology in 1986 and a Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine in 1988 from the University of Florida.

In 1989, he joined the National Aquarium as a staff veterinarian and initiated the aquarium’s Marine Animal Rescue Program, which continues to be operational today. Currently Dr. Whitaker serves as the Vice President of Biological Programs, where he oversees the aquarium’s husbandry, veterinary medical, laboratory, marine animal rescue and biological research programs. His academic appointments include Research Associate Professor/Veterinarian at the Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology, University of Maryland, and Assistant Professor in the Department of Art as Applied to Medicine, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. He has also served on multiple Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees over the last twenty years and currently provides aquatic animal expertise to the University of Maryland’s School of Medicine.

Aside from AZA, he is also an active member of the International Association for Aquatic Animal Medicine (IAAAM), American Association of Fish Veterinarians (AAFV), American Association of Zoological Medicine (AAZV), Association of Reptile and Amphibian Medicine (ARAV) and American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA). Dr. Whitaker remains committed to the education of our future colleagues and the advancement of animal care and welfare, a commitment that is shared fully by the AZA.
2012 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Jim Anderson: Operations
Director, Fort Wayne Children’s Zoo

Jim joined AZA in 1979 and has been involved in the accreditation program since 1992. He has participated in twenty inspections, serving as Team Chair seventeen times. Jim served on the Accreditation Commission from 1996-2002, was reappointed in 2011, and now serves as the Vice-Chair of the Commission.

He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science from Purdue University and a Master’s degree in Public Administration from Indiana University. Thirty-seven years ago Jim began his zoo career as a summer employee at the Fort Wayne Children’s Zoo. He moved through the ranks serving as a train operator, zoo keeper, supervisor, curator, and assistant director. He has served as the zoo’s Director since 1994. Jim has previously served on the AZA Board of Directors, Ethics Board, Honors & Awards Committee, Charter & Bylaws Committee, and Nominating Committee. He has also served on several SSPs and TAGs. His knowledge and passion for the zoo and aquarium industry is evident in every task he undertakes.
2012 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Dan Cassidy: Animal Management/Husbandry
General Curator, Omaha’s Henry Doorly Zoo

Dan has been a member of AZA since 1978 and has been involved in AZA’s accreditation program since 1994. In that time he has participated on seventeen inspection teams, chairing two of them. Dan began his forty year career working part-time in the Animal Department of Omaha’s Henry Doorly Zoo while he obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Prior to being appointed as the General Curator of Omaha’s Henry Doorly Zoo, he worked in the same position at Wildlife Safari Park. Dan has served as a member of numerous SSPs, including addax, white rhino, and black-footed ferret. He has also been part of the Red Panda Propagation Group, has served as a member of both the Rodent TAG and the Pig and Peccary TAG, and has served as Vice-Chair of the Wild Cattle TAG. Dan’s participation in so many AZA activities shows his tremendous support of AZA. His knowledge, dedication and volunteerism make him an asset to AZA and to the zoo/aquarium industry as a whole.
2012 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Joe Flanagan, DVM: Veterinary
Director of Veterinary Services, Houston Zoo, Inc.

Dr. Flanagan has been involved in AZA’s accreditation program for more than twenty years. In that time he has participated in twenty inspections. He graduated from the Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine in 1982. After graduation, Dr. Flanagan trained at Omaha’s Henry Doorly Zoo until he began work as a veterinarian at the Houston Zoo in December 1982. He is currently the Director of Veterinary Services at the Houston Zoo. A member of the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians, Dr. Flanagan served as President of AAZV in 2005. He was the Texas Veterinary Medical Association Exotic Animal Practitioner of the Year in 1998 and received the “Environmental Hero Award” from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in 2000 for volunteer work in the recovery of Kemp’s Ridley sea turtles in the Gulf of Mexico. Aside from AZA, he is also a current member of the American Veterinary Medical Association, Association of Avian Veterinarians, Association of Reptile and Amphibian Veterinarians, Wildlife Disease Association, Turtle Survival Alliance, Texas Veterinary Medical Association, and Harris County Veterinary Medical Association. His passion for his work coupled with his dedication to the zoo/aquarium industry make Dr. Flanagan an irreplaceable asset to AZA.
2011 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Tom Schmid: Operations
President & CEO, Texas State Aquarium

Tom Schmid has been involved in AZA’s accreditation program since 2002, serving on 11 inspections in that time. He joined the Texas State Aquarium in 1996 as Director of Animal Husbandry and Interpretation, and was promoted to Chief Operating Officer in 1998. He has held the position of President and CEO since 1999.

Prior to his days at the aquarium, he served as Director of Operations for NAUTICUS, the National Maritime Center, located in Norfolk, Virginia. Prior to this, he spent six years with Sea World of Florida as a Senior Aquarist and Biologist. Tom received his B.S. degree in Biology from Stetson University in 1980 and his M.S. degree in Biological Sciences from the University of Central Florida in 1984.

He currently serves as the Chair-Elect of AZA’s Board of Directors and also serves on the National Coastal America Learning Center Executive Committee. He has held many other positions outside of AZA, including Chair of the Board of the Corpus Christi Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Texas Tourism Industry Association Attractions Council steering committee, the advisory board of the South Texas Botanical Gardens, and the Executive Committee of FutureBridge, a program affiliated with the Corpus Christi Regional Economic Development Corporation. His dedication and commitment to volunteer activities makes him a true asset to the zoo/aquarium industry, and to AZA.
2011 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Mike Quick: Animal Management/Husbandry
Curator of Mammals, Sedgwick County Zoo

A member for over 25 years, Mike is a strong believer in AZA. He has been involved in AZA’s accreditation program since 1996. He has participated on 17 inspection teams in that time. He started his zoo career at the Sunset Zoo in Kansas after graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree in Wildlife Management from Kansas State University. Mike also worked in the animal care department of the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo in Ohio. He has been the Curator of Mammals at the Sedgwick County Zoo for the last 16 years. In this position he oversees the management of a mammal collection with 390 animals cared for by more than 30 keepers.

Currently, he serves as the SSP Coordinator for African Wild Dogs as well as the studbook keeper for Chacoan peccary. He also serves on the steering committees for the Elephant, Canid and Hyaenid, and Wild Pigs, Peccary and Hippo TAGs. He has also served on a number of other SSP, TAG and CAP committees in the past. Mike’s participation in AZA activities, volunteerism and knowledge make him an irreplaceable part of the zoo/aquarium industry and of AZA.
2011 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Mike Murray, DVM: Veterinary
Staff Veterinarian, Monterey Bay Aquarium

Dr. Murray has long been an advocate of AZA’s accreditation program. Since 1999 he has served on 11 inspections, chairing one team. He graduated from the Purdue University School of Veterinary Medicine in 1977. Upon graduation, he spent 6 years serving in the US Army Veterinary Corps.

Following his tour of duty, Dr. Murray entered private veterinary practice in a traditional companion animal clinic. In 1989, he founded the “Avian and Exotic Clinic of the Monterey Peninsula,” a practice limited to birds, reptiles, and other exotic pets. He started working with the Monterey Bay Aquarium as a contract veterinarian in 1988, and then began a full-time position there in 2004.

Dr. Murray was awarded the Humanitarian of the Year Award from the Monterey County SPCA in 1984 and 2002. He was also selected as the Speaker of the Year for the Avian & Exotic Sessions at NAVC in 2001 and Exotic DVM of the Year in 2002. He has lectured extensively on a variety of avian and exotic veterinary subjects, as well as wildlife and conservation medicine. He has also been involved as an instructor in numerous endoscopy courses worldwide since 1989. He has further been involved in the development of a number of “standards,” having been a member of the California Veterinary Medical Association’s committee working on revision of the state’s veterinary practice act.

Dr. Murray has been a member of the Accreditation Commission since 2008. His passion for his work coupled with his dedication to the accreditation process and veterinary field make Dr. Murray a true asset to the zoo/aquarium industry, veterinary medicine, and to AZA.
Steve McCusker has been a very active member of AZA and its accreditation program for many years. He has participated in 27 inspections, serving as team Chair fifteen times. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Zoology from Michigan State University in 1969, followed by a Master of Science in Biology from Texas Christian University in 1976.

He became the Executive Director of the San Antonio Zoo in 1994. Before that he was the Director of the Reid Park Zoo, where for eight years he spearheaded a significant period of modification and growth. Previous to these positions, he worked at the Oregon Zoo, Fort Worth Zoo and the Harvard Primate Center.

He was a member of AZA’s Board of Directors for seven years, serving as President in 1996. He has served on many other AZA committees, including the Accreditation Commission, Animal Health Committee, Membership Committee, Board of Regents, Ethics Committee, Honors and Awards Committee and the Wildlife Conservation and Management Committee.

Aside from AZA, he has also led a number of safaris to various countries in Africa and Central and South America. As evidenced by his long history of dedication and volunteerism over the years, he has been a major positive component of AZA.
2010 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Steve Wing: Animal Management/Husbandry
General Curator, Louisville Zoo

Steve Wing has been involved in AZA’s accreditation program since 1992. He has participated on eight inspection teams in that time. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from the University of Wisconsin in 1980. Just a few months later he kicked off his zoological profession as a Zookeeper at the Milwaukee County Zoo. Following that position, he worked as the General Curator of the Lincoln Children’s Zoo for seven years and as Curator of Mammals for both the Jacksonville Zoo and Riverbanks Zoo & Gardens for two years and seven years, respectively. He has worked as General Curator of the Louisville Zoo since 2004, and is responsible for the long and short-term management and development of the animal department, among other things.

He currently serves as the Chair of the Bat Taxon Advisory Group, Studbook Keeper for the Rodrigues Fruit Bat and SSP Coordinator for the Black-footed Cat. He was also a member of the Honors & Awards Committee from 1999-2002, serving as Chair for one year. Aside from AZA, he has been a dedicated Kiwanis member since 1991 and currently serves as the Metrobon Club President. He is also a past Lt. Governor of the Carolinas District of Kiwanis. His knowledge and passion for the zoo and aquarium industry is evident in every task he undertakes.
2010 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Kelly Helmick, DVM: Veterinary  
Associate Veterinarian, Woodland Park Zoo

Dr. Kelly Helmick is a strong supporter of AZA’s accreditation program, and finds participation as an inspector to be an enriching and rewarding experience. Since 2003, she has served on eight inspection teams. Always wanting to become a zoo veterinarian, she received her veterinary degree from Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine in 1993 and then completed an internship in small animal medicine and surgery at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Following a specialized internship in aquatic animal medicine at the Mystic Aquarium she completed a clinical residency in wildlife and zoological medicine at the University of Florida in 1999 with a concurrent Master of Science in reptile pharmacology.

In 2005, she became a diplomat of the American College of Zoological Medicine. Dr. Helmick worked at the Pittsburgh Zoo and Aquarium and the El Paso Zoo before joining the Woodland Park Zoo in 2005 in her current position as associate veterinarian. An active member of AZA, AAZV, AVMA, ARAV and IAAM, she has received a Presidential service award for her work on the ACZM Credentials Committee and the AAZV Legislative and Animal Welfare Committee. Her great accomplishments coupled with her dedication and passion for her work make Dr. Helmick an irreplaceable part of the zoo/aquarium industry, veterinary medicine, and the AZA.
2009 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Nancy McToldridge: Operations
Zoo Director, Santa Barbara Zoo

Nancy McToldridge has been involved in AZA’s accreditation program for more than twenty years. She has participated in eighteen inspections, serving as Team Chair sixteen times. She has been a member of the Accreditation Commission since 2002, and served as Chair from 2006-2008. She graduated from Ohio Wesleyan University in 1975 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in pre-professional zoology.

Working initially as an interpretive naturalist for the Ohio State Park system, she discovered the thrill of connecting people with nature and inspiring stewardship of our planet. This led to volunteer work as a docent at the Columbus Zoo, which began her zoo career. She became the Education Curator of the Santa Barbara Zoo in 1982, and was promoted to Assistant Director in 1988. Her title later changed to Chief Operating Officer in 2002 and then received her current title of Zoo Director in 2008. She is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the zoo.

She has served as Chair of AZA’s By-Laws Committee, Ethics Board and National Awareness Committee. She has also served on the Conservation Education Committee, Public Relations Committee, Publications Task Force, Board of Directors, Conference Program Committee and Editorial Board. Her dedication and volunteerism make her an asset to AZA and to the zoo/aquarium industry as a whole.
2009 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Jim Robinett: Animal Management and Husbandry
VP of Legislation and Regulation, John G. Shedd Aquarium

Jim Robinett is a strong believer in the accreditation process, and views it as a valuable learning experience for all involved. He has participated in sixteen inspections, serving as Team Chair thirteen times. He has also been a member of the Accreditation Commission since 2004.

A Master’s degree program, conducted in conjunction with the Shedd Aquarium, brought him to the aquarium where he began his career as an aquarist in 1977. He has been with the Shedd Aquarium his entire career. Currently serving as Vice President of Legislation and Regulation, he has worked his way through the ranks, previously working in the Fish and Marine Mammal Departments, as well as in the Lab and as an administrator. He currently serves as the Marine Mammal TAG Chair, and in the past has served as an advisor to WCMC, as a member of the Animal Welfare Committee and as a member and Vice Chair of the Government Affairs Committee.

Aside from AZA, his strongest interests lie in field work. From working as a cooperating scientist aboard a NMFS research vessel early in his career to more recently serving as a field inspector for the Coastal Ecosystem Learning Center, he has participated in a great deal of valuable field work. His dedication and commitment to volunteer activities makes him a true asset to the zoo/aquarium industry, and to AZA.
2009 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Sandra Wilson, DVM: Veterinary
Veterinarian, Sedgwick County Zoo

Dr. Sandy Wilson is a firm supporter of AZA’s accreditation program, and finds participation as an inspector to be very rewarding and educational. She has served on seventeen inspection teams over the past thirteen years. Never considering a career other than veterinary medicine, Dr. Wilson received her DVM from Iowa State University, and worked for a small animal practice in Minnesota for four years.

In an effort to pursue her interest in wildlife medicine, she spent several months at Omaha’s Henry Doorly Zoo before being accepted into the Zoo, Exotic and Wildlife Medicine internship program at Kansas City University. Following a residency and Master’s degree program at KSU and the Topeka Zoo, she accepted a position as Staff Veterinarian at the Montgomery Zoo in Alabama. Eager to return to the Midwest, Dr. Wilson joined the staff at the Sedgwick County Zoo in 1999, where she continues to work today.

In addition to her duties as veterinarian, she also serves as Chair of the zoo’s Animal Care and Welfare Committee and is a member of Wichita State University’s IACUC. Dr. Wilson served as a member of the AZA Health Committee from 2002-2008, and as a reviewer for the Journal of Zoo and Wildlife Medicine. Dr. Wilson is an asset to the zoo/aquarium industry, veterinary medicine, and the AZA.
Paula Schaedlich has been involved in AZA’s accreditation program for the past nine years. She has participated on eleven inspections, serving as Team Chair for all of them. She served as a member of the Accreditation Commission for nine years. During that time she served as Vice-Chair from 2002-2004 and as Chair from 2004-2005.

Before beginning her aquarium career, she worked with several national and international environmental, social justice and conservation organizations. She has been involved with the National Aquarium in Baltimore since its opening in 1981. She has worked her way through the ranks and now acts as Chief Operating Officer of the aquarium.

Her current management responsibilities include Biological Programs, Education and Visitor Experience, Exhibits and Design, Capital Planning, and Facilities and Visitor Services. Aside from volunteering on accreditation inspection teams, she has also served as an accreditation mentor and as a member of both the Board of Regents and the Conservation Education Committee. Her hard work and volunteerism make her an asset to AZA and to the zoo/aquarium industry as a whole.
2008 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Ed Diebold: Animal Management and Husbandry
Director of Animal Collections, Riverbanks Zoo & Garden

Ed Diebold has been a proud member of AZA for 25 years and is a strong advocate of AZA’s accreditation program. He has participated on fourteen inspections, serving as Team Chair nine times. He has been a member of the Accreditation Commission since September 2005, serving as Vice-Chair since October 2008.

He began his zoo career as an animal keeper at the Saint Louis Zoo in 1979, where he became Head Keeper of Birds in 1983. He then became the Curator of Birds at the Milwaukee County Zoo in 1986, where he worked until moving to Riverbanks in 1995. His service to AZA includes:

- AZA Ethics Board;
- Chair of the Wildlife Conservation and Management Committee (WCMC);
- Chair of the Raptor TAG;
- Cinereous Vulture SSP Coordinator and Studbook Keeper;
- KRA Leader for the North American Zoo and Aquarium Bird Curators Strategic Plan;
- Member of the Raptor, Waterfowl, Penguin and Marsupial and Monotreme TAG;
- Instructor for the AZA Studbook, Institutional Data Management, and Science of Zoo and Aquarium Management (SZAAM) courses;
- Core Committee of the AZA Elephant Planning Initiative;
- Conservation Endowment Fund Scientific Advisory Committee;
- AZA Conference Committee;
- AZA Long-Range Planning Committee; and
- Animal Data Information Systems Committee (ADISC)
Aside from AZA, he has also been involved with a number of conservation initiatives, including the Wisconsin Trumpeter Swan Recovery Program, use of satellite telemetry to track migratory Trumpeter Swans, Piping Plover egg rescue, and research on the ecology of Humboldt Penguins in Chili.

In addition to these responsibilities, he also manages the Riverbanks Conservation Support Fund, which was created to provide financial assistance for conservation-oriented projects that promote preservation of the Earth’s biodiversity. His passion for his work, coupled with a huge commitment to volunteer activities, makes him a true asset to the zoo and aquarium industry, and to AZA.
2008 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Tom Meehan, DVM: Veterinary
VP of Veterinary Services, Chicago Zoological Society

Dr. Tom Meehan has been involved in AZA’s accreditation program for the past nineteen years. During that time, he has participated on nineteen inspections, serving as Team Chair seven times. He also served as a member of the Accreditation Commission from 2000-2006.

Dr. Meehan began his zoo career as a keeper at the Saint Louis Children’s Zoo in 1970. In 1975, Tom received a BS in Agriculture from the University of Missouri, followed by a DVM in 1977. After a residency in Zoological Medicine at the Saint Louis Zoo, Dr. Meehan became the Director of Veterinary Services at the Lincoln Park Zoo. He moved to the Chicago Zoological Society’s Brookfield Zoo in 1993, where he is currently VP of Veterinary Services.

His research interests include emerging infectious diseases, diseases of gorillas, and Vitamin D in primates. He currently serves as the head of the veterinary advisory group to the Gorillas Species Survival Plan (SSP).

Aside from his participation in AZA, Dr. Meehan also currently serves as the President of the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians, a member of the Steering Committee, Chair of the Research Subcommittee of the Conservation Medicine Center of Chicago, and as Adjunct Assistant Professor in Veterinary Clinical Medicine at the University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine. Dr. Meehan is an asset to the zoo and aquarium industry, veterinary medicine, and the AZA.
2007 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Chuck Wikenhauser: Operations
Director, Milwaukee County Zoological Gardens

Chuck Wikenhauser has been a strong advocate of AZA Accreditation since its inception. He has formally participated in the accreditation program for many years serving as both an inspector and as a member of the Accreditation Commission (1983 – 1989). Throughout his twenty-five years of service as an inspector, Chuck has participated on twenty-seven inspections, serving as chair for all but three. Chuck has also served as a mentor for institutions wishing to achieve membership in AZA.

He began his zoo career as a keeper in 1973 at the Niabi Zoo in northern Illinois. He subsequently became the director of Peoria’s Glen Oak Zoo, the John Ball Zoo, and the Pittsburgh Zoo, leading each institution through their initial accreditations.

Chuck has served as the director of the Milwaukee County Zoo since 1990. He has been host committee chairman for two annual and three regional conferences. He has served as past chairman of the Membership Committee and has served on the Charter and Bylaws, Honors and Awards, Animal Health, and Code of Ethics Review Committees. Chuck firmly believes in the importance of volunteer service within the profession and AZA.
John Hewitt: Animal Management/Husbandry

Senior Vice President/Director of Husbandry, Audubon Aquarium of the Americas

John Hewitt has been involved in AZA’s accreditation program for the past fourteen years (1994 – present). During that time, John has participated on twelve inspections, serving as Team Chair for all but three. He served as a member of the Accreditation Commission from 1997 – 2003, serving as Commission Chair from 2000 – 2002. Most recently John served as an Advisor to the Commission from 2005 – 2007.

John is a decorated Vietnam Veteran who served as a Navy Hospital Corpsman with the 1st Marine Division, and SEAL TEAM ONE. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Zoology from San Diego State University in 1972, followed by post-graduate work in marine biology at San Francisco State University (1982 to 1985). Throughout his career John has held curatorial positions at SeaWorld San Diego, SeaWorld Orlando, The SeaWorld Shark Institute in the Florida Keys, and The Steinhart Aquarium at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco.

Currently John is the Senior Vice President and Director of Husbandry for the Audubon Aquarium of the Americas where he has worked since 1987. He has been a Professional Fellow member of the AZA since 1973. John’s 35+ years of experience, coupled with his passion for the zoo and aquarium industry, is evident in every task he undertakes.
2007 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

William J. Boever, DVM: Veterinary
Director Emeritus, Saint Louis Zoo

In his 30 years of volunteer service to AZA’s accreditation program, Bill Boever has participated in 21 inspections, serving as team chair 8 times. Bill has served two terms as a member of the Accreditation Commission, 1979 – 1981 and more recently 2002 – 2007.

After receiving his DVM from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1970, Bill joined the St. Louis Zoo as the zoo’s first full-time staff veterinarian. He later became the Director of Research, which was followed by a promotion to Director of Zoological Operations in 1993. Bill became Assistant Director of the St. Louis Zoo in 1996 and was appointed Director/COO in 2002. Recently, Bill retired as Director Emeritus after 37 years of service.

During his career in St. Louis, Bill established and served as both Director and Major Advisor for the first Veterinary Residency in Zoo Animal Medicine. This cooperative program, with the College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Missouri, was established to provide training in the clinical specialty of zoo animal medicine for veterinarians. He also developed broad-based scientific research at the Zoo and initiated several conservation programs. His research interests include reproduction, anesthesia, and clinical medicine for both free-ranging and captive wildlife.

Bill has authored several books and over 100 articles on scientific literature. He has served as a reviewer for the “American Veterinary Medical Association Journal” and the “Journal for Zoo Animal Medicine.” Bill was instrumental in the design and implementation of the Endangered Species Research Center and Veterinary Hospital, which opened at the St. Louis Zoo in 1993. For the past ten years, he has been intimately involved in the design and implementation of all animal exhibits at the zoo.

Bill has served on AZA’s Board of Directors, the Ethics Committee, and as Chairperson of the Scientific Counsel for AZA’s Elephant SSP. In addition to his active role in the AZA, Bill has also served as past President of the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians, the American College of Zoological Medicine, and the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine Alumni.
Association. Among the many honors that Bill has received throughout his career are Veterinarian of the Year for the State of Missouri (1983) and Charter Diplomat, American College of Zoological Medicine (1984). Bill is a true asset to the zoo/aquarium industry, veterinary medicine, and to AZA.
2006 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Jim Fleshman: Operations/Husbandry
Director, Cameron Park Zoo

Jim Fleshman has been an active participant in AZA’s accreditation program for many years both as an inspector and as an Accreditation Commissioner (1999-2004). He has participated in nineteen inspections, serving as Team Chair for all but four. With his experience as a former Accreditation Commissioner, Jim continues to perform inspections and participate in special assignments to strengthen the Accreditation Standards and raise the bar for all AZA member institutions.

As a former Senior Keeper, and later Supervisor of Mammals at the San Antonio Zoo and Aquarium, Jim proved early on in his 23-year career that the zoo and aquarium industry is where he belonged. Recognizing his talent, the Abilene Zoological Gardens gave Jim the helm when he accepted the role of Zoo Director. Today, Jim is Director of the Cameron Park Zoo in Waco, Texas where he also serves as the Executive Director of the Cameron Park Zoological and Botanical Society.

In addition to his service as an accreditation inspector and member of the Accreditation Commission, Jim also served on the AZA Board of Directors (2003-2006) and several board committees. His knowledge and passion for the zoo and aquarium industry is evident in every task he undertakes.
2006 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Robert L. Jenkins: Operations/Husbandry
Director of Animal Care and Conservation, San Francisco Zoological Gardens

Bob Jenkins has been an active participant in the AZA Accreditation process for the last two decades as both an inspector and as an Accreditation Commissioner. He has been involved in all aspects of the accreditation process, including the recent revision of the Standards and the improvement of the inspection process. In addition, he has also served as a mentor for new institutions desiring to become members of the AZA.

Starting in 1970 at the then SeaWorld of Ohio, Bob began his career in the fish house preparing the daily diets of the facility’s animal collection. Over the next few decades he served as a show trainer, animal keeper, and front line manager for a wide range of animal species. He became the General Curator at Marineland of Florida and then the Director of Operations and Husbandry at the National Aquarium in Baltimore and later the Senior Director for Government Affairs.

Following a successful term as the Director of the Steinhart Aquarium in San Francisco, he became the Director of Animal Care and Conservation at the San Francisco Zoo. In addition to his service on the Accreditation Commission, Bob has served AZA in a variety of other capacities including as a member of AZA’s Board of Directors, Chair of the Government Affairs Committee, many TAGs and other AZA programs, and the Nominations, Program, and Animal Welfare Committees.
2006 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Brian Joseph, DVM: Veterinary
COO, Living Exhibits, Inc.

Brian Joseph, DVM, has been an active participant in AZA’s accreditation program for ten years having participated in fourteen inspections, four of which occurred in the same years.

Brian began his career in the zoo and aquarium industry as a mammal keeper at both the San Diego Zoo and SeaWorld San Diego, returning to the latter after receiving his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine. He has held positions in the following categories at various institutions: Veterinary, Curatorial, Director of Biological Programs, and Vice President/Chief Operation Officer. In addition to those positions, he has served as a consulting veterinarian and program/exhibit consultant to 18 institutions in North America, Japan, Asia, and India; currently he is working with three institutions in this respect.

Today Brian is Chief Operating Officer and co-owner of Living Exhibits, Inc., and AZA Commercial Members that specializes in the development, construction, and operation of seasonal interactive animal exhibits at aquariums, zoos, and museums. Not only is Dr. Joseph a member of the Chula Vista Nature Center’s Board, he also finds time to provide volunteer veterinary services to the Center which is located in Chula Vista, California.

Brian’s involvement in AZA is not limited to accreditation, he has also served as Co-Chair of the Marine Mammal Taxon Advisory Group, Advisor to the Governmental Affairs Committee, and he has also served as a representative to the USDA/APHIS negotiated rule making process concerning marine mammals.
2005 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Gregg Dancho: Operations/Husbandry
Director, Connecticut’s Beardsley Zoo

Gregg Dancho has been an accreditation inspector for fifteen years. During that time he has participated in twelve inspections, serving as chair for all but one. As a former Accreditation Commissioner he continues to serve the Commission performing inspections and volunteering his time as a mentor for institutions preparing to undergo the accreditation process.

Gregg’s professional expertise and commitment culminated in his appointment as Director of the Beardsley Zoo in 1983. He continues to serve as Director today where he promotes all zoos as exceptional recreational assets that educate and entertain at the same time. As a Professional Fellow, Gregg has served as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Membership Committee. He served on the Accreditation Commission from 2000 to 2005. He was a member of the Conference Program Committee and is currently working with AZA on the National Awareness Initiative. Within his community Gregg serves on a Governor’s Council, and serves as Chairperson of the Bridgeport Chamber of Commerce.
2005 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Mark Reed: Operations/Husbandry
Executive Director, Sedgwick County Zoo

Mark Reed has been an accreditation inspector for thirteen years. During that time he has participated in fourteen inspections, serving as team chair for all but three. Of all the things Mark does for AZA, he admits his passion is accreditation. In addition to performing inspections, Mark also provides the Accreditation Commission an invaluable service by volunteering his time mentoring institutions preparing to undergo the accreditation process.

Mark’s passion for a career in the zoo industry was ignited by growing up at the Smithsonian’s National Zoo where his father, Dr. Ted Reed, was Zoo Director from 1958 until 1983. Mark earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Zoology from Kansas State University in 1972. His education continued at Texas Tech University where he was awarded a Master of Science in Park Administration in 1976.

In addition to being a full time student, Mark began working as a zookeeper at the San Antonio Zoological Gardens and Aquarium in 1972. As a result of his hard work and dedication, Mark was appointed General Curator at the San Antonio Zoo from 1974-1979. His commitment to excellence led to his appointment to Assistant Director of the Sedgwick County Zoo in 1979. After serving as Assistant Director of the Sedgwick County Zoo for twelve years, Mark was appointed Executive Director in 1991.

Busy with daily operations and future development, Mark manages to be an active member of AZA and has been since 1972. He served on the Ethics Committee from 1996-1998 and the Board of Directors from 1997-2004, acting as President from 2002-2003. Mark has served on numerous other AZA committees and conservation programs. In addition to his work with AZA, Mark has been an active participant in the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) since 1991. He has been a WAZA Council Member from 2003-2005.
2005 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Al Lewandowski, DVM: Veterinary
Head of Veterinary Services, Cleveland Metroparks Zoo

Al Lewandowski has participated in seventeen inspections during his sixteen years of service as an accreditation inspector. This type of dedication to his profession is commendable, as well as invaluable due to Al’s wealth of education, training, and experience.

Prior to becoming the Head of Veterinary Services (1989-present), as well as the David Steffee Chair in Veterinary Medicine (2004-present) at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, Al held positions at two other AZA accredited institutions. At those institutions he spearheaded renovation projects that directly involved improving animal care. His commitment to animal health was more recently made apparent by his instrumental role in the design and construction of the Sarah Allison Steffee Center for Zoological Medicine at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo.

Al’s current role and involvement at the Metroparks Zoo is quite different from where he started there; renting strollers and taking tickets at the front entrance. He was able to work as both a seasonal and special relief keeper later on, while earning a Bachelor of Science in Zoology/Wildlife Biology. As a graduate of the Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine and a past resident of Exotic Animal Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, Al now shares his professional experience with future Zoo Vets as a Clinical Instructor at Cuyahoga Community College (Avian and Exotic Animal Medicine) and as an Adjunct Professor at the Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine.

He has lent his expertise to at least seventeen professional publications and presentations. Al also remains active within both the zoo and veterinary medicine communities by maintaining an active membership in organizations such as the American Veterinary Medical Association, the Ohio Veterinary Medical Association, the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians, the Cuyahoga Community College Medical Advisory Board for Veterinary Technology, and of course the Association of Zoos and Aquariums.
2004 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Ed Asper: Operations and Husbandry
President and CEO, Great Plains Zoo and Delbridge Museum

Ed Asper has been participating in accreditation inspections for twenty-three years. A former Accreditation Commissioner, he is currently an Advisor to the Accreditation Commission. He has given of his time to AZA for twenty inspections, serving as team Chair for all but two.

Ed began his career at Marineland of the Pacific in 1961 working with a variety of marine mammals and birds. In 1972 he joined SeaWorld of Florida as Curator of Birds and Mammals and progressed to Senior Vice President/Zoological Director for all SeaWorld parks. In 1991 Ed was appointed Executive Director of the Great Plains Zoo and Delbridge Museum of Natural History and was promoted to President/CEO in 1997.

In addition to service as an active accreditation inspector, Ed has served on several AZA committees, including the AZA Board of Directors, Accreditation Commission, Government Affairs Committee, Animal Health Committee, Wildlife Conservation and Management Committee and has represented AZA at numerous International Whaling Commission and CITES meetings.

To date, Ed has participated in the following inspections: Dreher Park Zoo, Miami Metrozoo (twice), Central Florida Zoo, Sea Life Park Hawaii, Waikiki Aquarium, Roosevelt Zoo, Chahinkapa Zoo (twice), Dakota Zoo, Como Park Zoo and Conservatory, ZooMontana, Alameda Park Zoo, Grizzly Discovery Center, Biodome De Montreal, Ocean Park Hong Kong, Aquarium of the Bay, Bermuda Aquarium, American Fish & Wildlife Museum, and the Cincinnati Zoo.
Steve Taylor: Operations and Husbandry
Director, Cleveland Metroparks Zoo

Steve Taylor has been participating in accreditation inspections for twenty-two years. He served as an Accreditation Commissioner for six years (including two years as Commission Chair), and is currently an Advisor to the Commission. He has given of his time to AZA for twenty inspections, serving as team Chair for all but three.

Steve became Director of Cleveland Metroparks Zoo in January 1989. As Director, his first job was to complete the RainForest, which opened in November 1992. Since that time the Zoo has opened several major new exhibits including Wolf Wilderness and Australian Adventure. Prior to coming to Cleveland, Steve was Director of the Sacramento Zoo. He started his career as an animal keeper at the Los Angeles Zoo in 1972.

Steve is very active in AZA and was on the Board of Directors from 1987 to 1993. He was President in 1992. To date, Steve has participated in the following inspections: Micke Grove Zoo, Honolulu Zoo, Santa Barbara Zoo, Indianapolis Zoo (three times), Belle Isle Zoo, Columbus Zoo, Detroit Zoo, Bergen County Zoo (twice), Minnesota Zoo, Toledo zoo, National Zoo, Miami Metrozoo, Little Rock Zoo, North Eastern Wisconsin Zoo, Bronx Zoo, Pittsburgh Zoo, and Buttonwood Park Zoo.
2004 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Bill Bryant, DVM: Veterinary
Senior Veterinarian, Sedgwick County Zoo

Bill “Doc” Bryant has been participating in accreditation inspections for fifteen years. He has given of his time to AZA for fifteen inspections, serving as team Chair four times. It’s really not unusual to find Doc generously serving on more than one inspection team per cycle to help out in a pinch.

Doc graduated from Tuskegee University, Tuskegee, Alabama in 1978 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Animal Science and in 1980 as a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine. He has been with the Sedgwick County Zoo for 21 years.

Doc is a long-standing member of the AZA and AAZV and encourages more veterinarians to participate in the AZA Accreditation process. He is also serving on both the AZA Ethics and Diversity Committees.

To date, Doc has participated in the following inspections: Roosevelt Zoo, Kansas City Zoo, Dallas Zoo (twice), Dallas Aquarium, Denver Zoo, Cheyenne Mountain Zoo (twice), Riverside Zoo, Oakhill Center for Rare & Endangered Species, Folsom Children’s Zoo, Alexandria Zoo, Beardsley Zoo, Henson Robinson Zoo and St. Catherine’s Wildlife Survival Center.
2003 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Hayes Caldwell: Operations
Director, The Caldwell Zoo

Hayes Caldwell has been participating in accreditation inspections for thirteen years. He has given of his time to AZA for fifteen inspections, serving as team Chair for all but one!

Hayes worked his way up through the ranks, starting as a part-time summer keeper in the early 1960’s at the age of 13 and became the Executive Director of the Caldwell Zoo in 1976.

In addition to service as an active accreditation inspector, Hayes has served on numerous AZA committees, including the AZA Board of Directors and the Accreditation Commission. He has received five Outstanding Service Awards from AZA. To date, Hayes has participated in the following inspections: Three Barn N Ranch, El Coyote Ranch, Houston Zoo (three times), International Animal Exchange, Abilene Zoo, Montgomery Zoo, Ellen Trout Zoo, Tulsa Zoo, Moody Gardens, Dallas Aquarium, Henry Doorly Zoo, Cameron Park Zoo, and the Glen Oak Zoo.
2003 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Jack Grisham: Curatorial and Husbandry
Associate Curator, Smithsonian National Zoological Park

Jack Grisham has been participating in accreditation inspections for twelve years. He has given of his time to AZA for ten inspections, serving as team Chair for half of them. Jack started at the St. Louis Zoo in the mid-1960s in a variety of jobs from concession stand to supply clerk. After two years in Vietnam in the U.S. Army Infantry, Jack landed his first keeper job at the St. Louis Zoo in 1971. He worked his way up through the ranks to Assistant Curator of Mammals in 1982, finally joining the Oklahoma City Zoo as Director of Animal Management from 1986 to 2002.

In addition to service as an active accreditation inspector, Jack serves AZA as the Cheetah Species Survival Plan Coordinator, and Chair of the Canid, Hyena and Aardwolf Taxon Advisory Group. To date, Jack has participated in the following inspections: Dallas Aquarium (twice), Dallas Zoo, Red McComb’s Ranch (twice), Fossil Rim Wildlife Center (twice), Oakhill Center for Rare & Endangered Species, San Diego Wild Animal Park, and the Potter Park Zoo.
2003 Accreditation Inspector of the Year

Jeff Wyatt, DVM: Veterinary
Director of Animal Health and Conservation, Seneca Park Zoo

Jeff Wyatt has been participating in accreditation inspections for twelve years. He has done eleven inspections, serving as team Chair four times. Jeff’s first experience as Chair came unexpectedly when he graciously agreed to serve in that capacity at the last minute to help a fellow team-mate involved in a family emergency. Coming to the rescue is in Jeff’s blood, as evidenced by one occasion when AZA called and Jeff stepped in with only 24 hours notice before the inspection, and he did this after having just returned from another inspection!

Jeff graduated from Ohio State College of Veterinary Medicine. He is specialty board certified by the American College of Lab Animal Medicine and holds a Master of Public Health degree from the University of Rochester. Jeff has been with the Seneca Park Zoo for twenty years, and is an Associate Professor at the University of Rochester. To date, Jeff has participated in the following inspections: Erie Zoo (three times), Pittsburgh Zoo (twice), Ross Park Zoo, Binder Park Zoo, Buffalo Zoo, Cape May Zoo, Rosamond Gifford Zoo at Burnett Park, and Hutchinson Zoo.