



The Devra Kleiman Scientific Advancement Award

Established March, 2014

In March, 2014, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) established an award to recognize outstanding scientific research contributions to the field(s) of animal management, education, and/or conservation within the AZA-accredited zoo and aquarium community. This award, named for its first recipient Devra Kleiman, honors an individual's long-term commitment to using science-based research and mentoring others to advance the zoo and aquarium profession. Only one recipient can be honored in any given year, and since the award criteria are lofty, it is anticipated that the award will not be given every year.

To qualify for consideration, a candidate must unquestionably meet the following standards:

- The candidate must be a member of AZA in good-standing at the time the nomination is filed.
- The candidate must have demonstrated impeccable character, and a distinguished record of honorable service to the association throughout his or her career.
- The candidate must be strongly committed to utilizing scientific research to further the field(s) of animal management, education, and/or conservation within the AZA-accredited zoo and aquarium community.
- The candidate must have made outstanding contributions to the AZA-accredited zoo and aquarium profession, as represented by scholarly publications and presentations, institutional and association leadership, and/or other tangible and measurable achievements.
- The candidate must have influenced others to forward the field(s) of animal management, education, and/or conservation through scientific means, as represented by individual mentoring, graduate student supervision, and/or other professional growth activities.

Rationale:

AZA recognizes that scientific research is critical to improving, education, visitor experience, communications, animal husbandry, veterinary care, conservation impacts, and animal welfare in zoos and aquariums. Indeed, in 1994, AZA established a Research Coordinators Scientific Advisory Group (SAG) as well as numerous other SAGs to provide strong scientific support for AZA's Animal Programs. In 2009, AZA established the Research and Technology Committee which is charged with fostering, communicating, prioritizing and coordinating quality scientific research throughout the association and to the public.

In addition, "An AZA accredited institution must have a demonstrated commitment to scientific research that is in proportion to the size and scope of its facilities, staff and animals. There must be a formal written research policy including a process for the evaluation and approval of scientific research project proposals" (AZA 2014 Accreditation Standards).

AZA has established numerous awards to recognize successful animal management, education, and/or conservation programs however, an award that recognizes an individual's long-term commitment to using science-based research and mentoring strategies to advance these programs is needed. Establishment of an award for scientific research will acknowledge AZA's collective scientific expertise and emphasize to the public that scientific research underpins AZA's commitment to evidence-based animal care and management.

Criteria for the Award:

1. Eligibility For Nominees:

- The candidate must be a member of AZA in good-standing at the time the nomination is filed.
- The candidate must have demonstrated impeccable character, and a distinguished record of honorable service to the association throughout his or her career.
- The candidate must be strongly committed to utilizing scientific research to further the field(s) of animal management, education, and/or conservation within the AZA-accredited zoo and aquarium community.
- The candidate must have made outstanding contributions to the AZA-accredited zoo and aquarium profession, as represented by scholarly publications and presentations, institutional and association leadership, and/or other tangible and measurable achievements.
- The candidate must have influenced others to forward the field(s) of animal management, education, and/or conservation through scientific means, as represented by individual mentoring, graduate student supervision, and/or other professional growth activities.

2. Criteria

- Authorship of original, peer-reviewed, scientific publications regarding animal management, education, and/or conservation within the zoo and aquarium community.
- The candidate's research results have been translated into, or resulted in changes to, the practices of animal management, education, and/or conservation within the zoo and aquarium community.
- The candidate's mentoring of students, interns, post-docs, staff and colleagues has contributed to the advancement of scientific research within AZA.
- The candidate has been actively involved in the support and promotion of science and scientific research within AZA.

Judging/Evaluation of the Award:

1. The AZA Research and Technology Committee will be responsible for evaluating nominations for the award.
2. To avoid conflicts of interest due to collaboration and/or co-authorship, the RTC Chair and/or Vice-chair will select a group of at least 5 but no more than 9 members of the committee to judge award nominations. In the event that not enough RTC committee members are eligible to judge, the RTC chair will select qualified judges from the AZA membership.
3. It is not mandatory that the award is given each year.

Submission Requirements:

- Two letters of nomination. Letter must outline how the nominee meets the eligibility requirements and evaluation criteria. Letters should emphasize how the nominee's work has influenced the practices of animal management, education, and/or conservation within the zoo and aquarium community.
- One letter may be from the nominee.
- Complete CV
- Copies of most relevant scientific publications
- Evidence demonstrating how the nominee's body of work meets the award criteria (documents, policies, plans, manuals, etc.)

Please send the completed nomination to Barbara Pueschel (bpueschel@aza.org) or by mail to the AZA office: 8403 Colesville Road, Suite 710, Silver Spring, MD 20910.