

# The AAZK Lutz Ruhe Professional of the Year Award

The purpose of the American Association of Zoo Keepers Lutz Ruhe Professional of the Year Award is to recognize professional members of AAZK, in good standing in the association, for their day-to day professionalism within their facility. This includes participation in AAZK and/or AZA conservation projects and dedicating time to other facility-related projects or programs (e.g. BFR, TFYM, conservation, wildlife education and individual breeding projects). Commitment and dedication to AAZK at a National or Chapter level enhances the nomination.

The award was established in 1982 as a means of recognizing work done above and beyond the criteria of the Jean M. Hromadka Excellence in Animal Care Award. The award is presented at the annual AAZK National Conference.

## Qualifications

- The nominee must work full-time in animal care and shall be a Professional Member of AAZK, in good standing, employed in any zoo, aquarium, or related facility.
- Teams and chapters are not eligible for this award.
- The nominee must have been employed at least five (5) years on a permanent basis at a zoo, aquarium, or related facility.
- Peers or colleagues must nominate the nominee. Zoo, aquarium or related facility personnel may submit other supporting nominations. The nominators need not be from the same institution.

## Nomination Procedure

- Complete the nomination form which includes the nominee's name and position, institution's name, address, phone and Director, nominee's years of service in the field and the recommendation of a peer or colleague.
- List and **document** the outstanding achievements with AAZK, Institutional and AZA (Conservation project participation, exhibits, population management, conservation, etc.)
- Completed nomination packet (nomination form and supporting documents) may be submitted beginning January 1<sup>st</sup> and no later than the deadline: **MAY 1st** of each year.

**Verification** of the nomination requires a signature from the Director/CEO or Curator of the facility or their representative.

## Selection Procedure

The Awards Committee members will independently review each nominee.

The **winner** of the **AAZK Lutz Ruhe Professional of the Year Award**, receives a cash award in the amount of **\$500.00**, endowed by a generous donation through the **Lutz Ruhe Family Educational Trust** for AAZK. The cash award is endowed by the Lutz Ruhe Trust primarily to aid winners in making travel and registration arrangements to attend the AAZK National Conference in the year of their award, to receive the award and be recognized in person at a gathering of their peers.