

Marvin Jones Award of Excellence

The Zoological Registrars Association (ZRA) has established the Marvin Jones Award of Excellence to recognize meritorious achievements, specifically in the areas of animal record keeping, by members of the organization. The award is given in honor of its first recipient in appreciation of his many years of outstanding service towards the betterment of zoological record keeping.

The Marvin Jones Award of Excellence was created by the Zoological Registrars Association (ZRA) in 1993 to honor Marvin Jones, Registrar of the San Diego Zoo. Marvin had been a fixture of the zoo world for more than 40 years, and was as well known in Europe as in the United States. He was the animal records keeper par excellence; no one had done it for a longer time, or with more thoroughness.

Marvin embraced the concept that zoos should have good records on their animals and know what other zoos had as well. After many years of unofficially gathering and maintaining records of zoo animals from around the world, including the 20 years he spent in the U.S. Army, Marvin began working at the San Diego Zoo in 1974 in a records-keeping capacity. Seven years later he received the official title of Registrar. He continued there until his retirement in December 1993.

The January 1994 issue of the San Diego Zoo's magazine, "Zoonooz", traced Marvin's career from his early fascination with animals at the Philadelphia Zoo in the 1930s, through his travels to zoos all over the world as a member of the Army, and later as a representative of the San Diego Zoo. Wherever he went, he visited local zoos and poured over their records. He published numerous articles on zoo animals, made innumerable friends in the zoo field in many countries, and provided the ZRA with a standard of excellence to which all Registrars should aspire.

Marvin died on April 4, 2006 in San Diego, CA.

Eligibility

1. Candidates must have been Professional category members in good standing during the five years previous to being nominated and at the time of nomination. Retirees who were Professional category members in good standing during their last five years in ZRA, are eligible within the first five years after their retirement date, and thus do not have to be active members at the time of consideration.
2. Nominee must currently perform or be able to demonstrate past experience in those duties regularly associated with the registrar function, regardless of actual title, in a zoo, aquarium or related facility and must have been employed in that capacity for a minimum of five years (collective years of experience may be acquired at more than one institution).
3. Current members of the ZRA Board of Directors or Nominations and Elections Committee are not eligible for consideration for this award while serving terms on either.

4. The nominee must be nominated for the same accomplishments by at least three Professional category members in good standing of ZRA.

Award Criteria

1. This award represents excellence in activities representing the zoological registrar profession, with an emphasis on animal record keeping, at the nominee's own institution or within the zoo and aquarium community at large.
2. Previous recipients may be nominated again as long as it is for a different achievement.
3. The nominee's contributions to fellow registrars through demonstrated innovation or initiative in the performance of record keeping duties.
4. The nominee's contributions to increased appreciation of the importance of Registrars work throughout the zoo and aquarium profession.
5. The nominee's activities within the Association that represent commitment and significant contributions to the goals and objectives of the organization.

Call for Nominations

1. A Call for Nominations will be posted to the ZRA website with an email notice to the membership no less than sixty (60) days prior to the Annual Conference. The specific date shall be determined by the current ZRA Board of Directors in conjunction with the deadline for the Call for Award Nominations.

Nomination Procedure

Nominations must include:

1. The nominee's name, place of employment, and years of employment as a registrar.
2. The name and place of employment of each nominator.
3. Nominations must describe the accomplishments of the nominee that meet the criteria for the award.
4. The deadline for submission of award nominations to the ZRA President shall be determined by the current ZRA Board of Directors in conjunction with the deadline for the Call for Award Nominations.

Selection Procedure

1. Nominations are submitted to the President.
2. One award will be given each year based on merit.

3. Final decisions will be determined by a majority vote of the entire Board of Directors.

Award Notification

1. The ZRA President shall notify the recipient prior to the presentation of the award at the Annual Conference. The employer of the recipient will receive a letter from the ZRA President indicating that their employee will receive an award at the Annual Conference.

Presentation of the Award

1. The award will be presented during the Recognition Ceremony at the Annual Conference. The Marvin Jones Award of Excellence consists of an appropriate plaque and a letter from the ZRA President.

Board Approved 1993; Rev July 2003; Rev 9 August, 2007; Rev 25 March 2008; Rev 30 June 2009; Rev 21 August 2013; Rev 15 January 2024