

GET CONNECTED

Engage, Advocate, Mobilize, Create Change

Dear Colleagues,

We talk quite often about the collective power of our Association of Zoos and Aquariums community when we work together, share information, and celebrate successes or face challenges across organizations for the benefit of all. In this issue of *Connect*, we focus on the role we play and the strong voice we have as it relates to shaping policy and legislation that can create real change on the issues about which we all care.

Coming off another AZA Advocacy Day in April, we are reminded of the importance of building relationships at the local, state, and federal levels of government.

Big change often starts with local efforts, so rallying support and serving as a trusted source of information at the community level is critical. We know that lawmakers need to hear from constituents about issues that are important to them. You'll find information within the magazine about how finding common interests and empowering the public is a powerful way to kickstart a movement, especially for a passionate younger generation.

We will take a look at the work being done by the Aquarium Conservation Partnership to leverage member institutions to mobilize audiences on behalf of ocean justice.

We are fortunate to be in a period where aquariums and zoos have bi-partisan support, and we'll share information about a new piece of legislation—the Wildlife Rescue, Rehabilitation, and Reintroduction Act—that has sponsors from both sides of the aisle and supports efforts to save vulnerable wildlife.

This work is so impactful, but it can be complex and confusing if it's not an area you work in day-to-day. That's where AZA's Government Affairs team and the Government Affairs Committee can assist! They provide helpful information and support tools on the AZA website for you to use to connect in a substantive way with officials about the issues that are important and relevant to your mission.

The institutions within AZA, working in unison and backed by consistent messaging and a cohesive strategy, have the power to create a movement that can outlast us all. Through effective advocacy and bipartisan cooperation, we can advance our cause.



I leave you with these thoughts: Engage. Advocate. Mobilize. Create change.

LISA NEW
AZA Board Chair
Chief Executive Officer, Dallas Zoo



Connect

EDITOR

Tim Lewthwaite

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Angela Parrotta, Angela Parrotta Design LLC

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