



ADVANCING CONSERVATION THROUGH  
**EMPATHY FOR WILDLIFE**

# *December Committee Updates*

## **Communications Committee**

**Chair:** Natalie Stier (Utah's Hogle Zoo)

**Representatives:** Natalie Stier (Utah's Hogle Zoo), Liz Hines (Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium), Delanie Jellison (Santa Barbara Zoo), Brent Weston (Dakota Zoo), Leanne Schuh (Grizzly & Wolf Discovery Center), Cher Vatalaro (Lehigh Valley Zoo)

This month, we finalized coding for the posts in the 2025 edition of the Social Media toolkit and identified icebreaker activities for in-person attendees at the Empathy Summit.

## **Conservation Action Committee**

**Chairs:** Erica Carnes (Blank Park Zoo), Kelsey Raffel (Zoological Society of Milwaukee)

**Representatives:** Toby Seegert (Zoological Society of Milwaukee), Brooke Tucker (ZooMontana), Bethanie West (Idaho Falls Zoo)

This month, we began discussing how we want to gather input from Empathy Summit attendees on what we have drafted in the Wildlife Trafficking Toolkit.

## **DEAI Committee**

**Chairs:** Crystal Fox (Lake Superior Zoo)

**Representatives:** Abigail Flores (Racine Zoo), Crystal Fox (Lake Superior Zoo), Alejandra Medina (Minnesota Zoo), Sharon Spencer (Jacksonville Zoo & Gardens), Julie Pickard (Zoological Society of Milwaukee), Shanna Hillard (Zoological Society of Milwaukee), Kirinne Slaughter (Visitor Studies Association)

This month the committee further began outlining plans for their co-hosted Summit session and plans for launching DEAI-focused virtual coffee-chats in 2025.



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## **Membership Committee**

**Chair:** Heather Harelson Nutick (CuriOdyssey)

**Representatives:** Heather Harelson Nutick (CuriOdyssey), Chris Berg (Shedd Aquarium), Autumn Russell (Akron Zoo), Isabelle Bieser (Zoological Society of Milwaukee)

This month we determined our topic for discussion at the Empathy Summit and began to identify what is needed ahead of time for the committee to make progress on long-term planning with the Steering Committee.

## **Steering Committee**

**Chair:** Shana Kent (Alaska SeaLife Center)

**Representatives:** Hannah Tilden (Woodland Park Zoo), Shana Kent (Alaska SeaLife Center), Aszya Summers (Lincoln Park Zoo), Liz Gilles (Minnesota Zoo), Austin Reich (Zoo Boise), Courtney Cordova (Henry Vilas Zoo)

This month, we determined our focus area for gathering Network feedback at the Summit to inform our long-term Network planning with the Membership Committee.

## **Strategic Learning Committee**

**Representatives:** Cameron Whitley (Western Washington University), Jessica Schellhorn (Blank Park Zoo), Kelly McAdams (Clearwater Marine Aquarium), Dani Ford (ZooMontana), Jennifer Gauble (Saint Louis Zoo), Monica Digre (Como Park Zoo & Conservatory)

No meeting for the month of December.



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## **Interested in joining a committee?**

Reach out to us at [empathy@zoo.org](mailto:empathy@zoo.org) and let us know which committee you are interested in being a part of. In addition to an hourly meeting once a month, committee representatives can expect to spend 30 minutes-1 hour outside of meetings on committee tasks per month. Terms are 2 years.

We currently have open seats on the Conservation Action Committee and Membership Committee