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Global Accrediting Body Bestows Its First Award for Sanctuary Excellence to Save The Chimps

St Lucie, FL - The first ever Carole Noon Award for Sanctuary Excellence will be given posthumously to Dr. Carole Noon by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) at a memorial ceremony for the late primatologist. The award was created to honor outstanding contributions to the animal sanctuary field and memorializes Carole Noon, Ph.D., a courageous and innovative sanctuary pioneer and champion of chimpanzees who passed away earlier this year.

“Dr. Noon did remarkable work in creating Save the Chimps, the world’s foremost primate sanctuary. From innovative facility design to an institutional philosophy that recognized the worth of the individual animals in its care, Save the Chimps epitomizes what an animal sanctuary ought to look like. Not only did Dr. Noon transform lives, but she challenged conventional wisdom and reshaped our ideas of what a sanctuary ought to look like,” said Patty Finch, Executive Director for GFAS.

Save The Chimps was created in 1997 after Dr. Noon sought to obtain dozens of chimpanzees owned at the time by the Air Force but on loan to contract research laboratories. While unsuccessful in her initial bid for the chimpanzees she later obtained 21 through via a lawsuit brought against the US Air Force. The remaining chimpanzees and others used in research – 266 in total - later came into Dr. Noon’s care after the notorious Coulston Foundation, which was originally awarded the chimpanzees by the Air Force, declared bankruptcy.

“Not only did Carole never give up, but once she got the chimpanzees – or “people” as she insisted we call them in recognition of their individuality – she refused to follow standard operating procedures. When everyone said it couldn’t be done she successfully created large, multi-generational, mixed sex groups of chimpanzees, all with access to expansive grassy islands and comfortable indoor quarters. She challenged old ideas and set a new standard for chimpanzee care. The results are remarkable, as was the way she held and engendered in others a deep respect for all animals as individuals,” said Liz Ross, a GFAS board member who worked closely with Noon in establishing Save the Chimps.

The Carole Noon Award for Sanctuary Excellence will be given to a sanctuary or individual who embodies and puts into practice the GFAS philosophy of vision, dedication and excellence in animal care.

Carole Noon, Ph.D. exemplified these traits with an innovative spirit, creating solutions to overwhelming challenges; a deep knowledge of those entrusted to the care of the sanctuary; and a dedication to animals and a determination to succeed that manifested in a commitment to ensure humane and responsible care for the lifetime of each of the sanctuary residents.

The \$5000 award is underwritten this year by the Pettus Crowe Foundation, the Humane Society of the United States, and the Elliot Dinnerstein Foundation.

About Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries

The Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) was formed in 2007 by nationally and globally recognized leaders in the animal protection field for the sole purpose of strengthening and supporting the work of animal sanctuaries in the United States and abroad. GFAS has created a rigorous accreditation process to identify rescue facilities/sanctuaries that are providing animals the highest standards of care, conducting a thorough evaluation of sanctuary structure and governance, finances, community outreach, education, staffing, physical facilities, advocacy, security/safety, the veterinary medical program and specific animal care standards. GFAS is the first animal sanctuary accrediting organization to take on this task at an international level. GFAS also educates the public on the causes and conditions of displaced animals and solutions, and the compelling need to actively support accredited sanctuaries.

For more information on GFAS, visit www.sanctuaryfederation.org. Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries is a 501(c)3 charitable organization and all contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

About Save the Chimps

Save the Chimps was established in 1997 in response to the U.S. Air Force's announcement that it was ending its chimpanzee research activities. Save the Chimps eventually gained permanent custody of 21 chimps - survivors and descendants of those captured in Africa in the 1950s and used in the original NASA "chimpanaut" program. Since then, the organization has also rescued many chimpanzees being used for biomedical research, entertainment and the pet trade, and has become the world's largest chimpanzee sanctuary.

The vision of Save the Chimps is to create a sanctuary where rescued chimpanzees can live out their lives without the threat of ever returning to a laboratory. The sanctuary environment was carefully designed to nurture and stimulate these sensitive and complex primates by creating a secure and enriching environment, including the construction of 12 individual three-five acre islands on which to safely express natural behaviors.

For more information on Save the Chimps, visit www.savethechimps.org. Save the Chimps, Inc. is a 501 (c)(3) charitable organization and all contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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