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National Museum of the Marine Corps Receives Highest National Recognition

Awarded Re-Accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums

Triangle, VA – The National Museum of the Marine Corps collects, preserves, and exhibits artifacts that document the Marine Corps' rich history. It is a mission the Museum is honored and privileged to carry out. The National Museum of the Marine Corps is proud to announce it has been reaccredited by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), again achieving the highest professional recognition given to the nation's museums. The National Museum of the Marine Corps was initially accredited in 2012.

AAM accreditation brings national recognition to a museum for its commitment to excellence, accountability, and the highest professional standards of museum operations and public service. Accreditation follows a rigorous, lengthy process of self-study and peer review. Developed and sustained by museum professionals for 50 years, the AAM's museum accreditation program is the field's primary vehicle for quality assurance, self-regulation, and public accountability. It strengthens the museum profession by promoting practices that enable leaders to make informed decisions, allocate resources wisely, and remain financially and ethically accountable in order to provide the best possible service to the public. Of the nation's estimated 35,000 museums, only 1,099 are currently accredited, only about three percent. The National Museum of the Marine Corps is one of only 58 museums accredited in Virginia.

The National Museum of the Marine Corps is committed to excellence in all aspects of operation, from caring for the artifacts in perpetuity to exhibiting the material history of the Marine Corps and educating visitors. According to Museum Director Annie Pardo, the reaccreditation is an affirmation of the highest standards that the Museum has always upheld.

“When you’re charged with telling the story of the Marine Corps and of individual Marines—recounting their dedication, commitment, accomplishments, and sacrifices—and caring for the artifacts that help convey that history, you must tell the story in a way that honors every aspect of it. Our professional staff is committed to excellence in how we care for our collections; the depth of the research we conduct; the emotive exhibits we design; the educational programs we provide to children, families, Marines, and veterans; and the way that we welcome all of our visitors.”

Maintaining accreditation status is also important to the artifact donors. The 65,000+ uniforms, weapons, vehicles, medals, flags, aircraft, artworks, and other artifacts in the Museum’s collection are the touchstones of nearly 250 years of Marine Corps history. Each artifact is a time capsule and a Marine’s story. The curators and collections staff of the National Museum of the Marine Corps have demonstrated that they use the highest standards to properly care for and preserve the collections. Artifact donors feel secure in trusting their family’s heirlooms to the National Museum of the Marine Corps.

“With each collection or artifact the Museum accepts, we want our donors to understand that we see their history as more than an object. It is an important tribute to a person and the Marine Corps’ history. It allows us to preserve their memory and service, in perpetuity, for the benefit of generations to come,” Curatorial Chief Owen L. Conner said.

The AAM accreditation Visiting Committee used two words to summarize all aspects of the Museum’s operations and planning: thoughtfulness and mindfulness.

“This was evident in the strategic planning for the [National Museum of the Marine Corps], the execution of educational programs and offerings, the care of collections, the development and fabrication of the exhibitions and the operations. The [Museum] clearly keeps visitors and constituencies in mind when implementing new initiatives and activities,” the committee wrote in its final review. “It [is] obvious that the Museum serves the Marine Corps community very well but also provides a meaningful and engaging experience for the general public...It also serves as a model museum...that effectively encourages and facilitates community dialogue about the history of the United States Marine Corps.”

The reaccreditation confirms what an annual average of 500,000 Museum visitors have been saying for 16 years: the National Museum of the Marine Corps is *the* place to explore Marine Corps history.

“Accredited museums are a community of institutions that have chosen to hold themselves publicly accountable to excellence,” said Laura L. Lott, Alliance President and CEO.

“Accreditation is clearly a significant achievement, of which both the institutions and the communities they serve can be extremely proud.”

The Museum is a public-private partnership between the U.S. Marine Corps and the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation. The National Museum of the Marine Corps, under the command of Marine Corps University, preserves and exhibits the material history of the U.S. Marine Corps; honors the commitment, accomplishments, and sacrifices of Marines; supports recruitment, training, education, and retention of Marines; and provides the public with a readily accessible platform for the exploration of Marine Corps history. We are located at 1775 Semper Fidelis Way in Triangle, VA and open 9:00 am to 5:00 pm daily, except December 25. Admission and parking are free. For more information, call 703-784-6107 or visit us on the web at www.usmcmuseum.com.

About the American Alliance of Museums

The American Alliance of Museums has been bringing museums together since 1906, helping to develop standards and best practices, gathering and sharing knowledge, and providing advocacy on issues of concern to the entire museum community. Representing more than 35,000 individual museum professionals and volunteers, institutions, and corporate partners serving the museum field, the Alliance stands for the broad scope of the museum community. For more information, visit www.aam-us.org.