Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries

Helping Sanctuaries Help

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Recipients of the 2026 Carole Noon and Outstanding Sanctuary Awards Announced

Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries honors sanctuaries, rescue, rehabilitation, and transition centers for exceptional animal care, professionalism and ethics.

October 30, 2026- (Washington, DC) The Board of Directors of the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) today announced the recipient of the 2026 Carole Noon Award, Jackson Mbeke of Gorilla Rehabilitation and Conservation Education (GRACE) Center. The Carole Noon Award is named after the late Dr. Carole Noon, a courageous and innovative sanctuary pioneer and champion of chimpanzees.

The GFAS Board of Directors also presented the annual Outstanding Sanctuary Awards to recognize excellence in humane and responsible animal care; professionalism and ethics; organizational sustainability; public engagement; and contributions to, and leadership within, the sanctuary field. Recipients included Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge, Arkansas; Magical Creatures Sanctuary, Hawaii; Sanaga-Yong Chimpanzee Rescue, Cameroon; and the Kentucky Equine Adoption Center, Kentucky.

“This year’s award recipients represent so much of what we value in the sanctuary community,” said Valerie Taylor, Executive Director of GFAS. “Each of these sanctuaries and their teams bring tremendous heart, dedication, and expertise to their work. GFAS is so honored to have the opportunity to celebrate them, not only for the exceptional care they provide to animals every day, but also for the leadership, collaboration, and commitment they bring to the larger sanctuary community.”

To learn more about each of this year's award winners, click on the links above. GFAS urges everyone to help support the important work of these incredible organizations by making a monetary or in-kind donation, following them on social media, and signing up for and sharing their newsletters.

Editor’s Notes: GFAS is a global leader in accreditation programs for animal sanctuaries, assessing facilities against a robust set of operational and animal care standards, including species-specific standards for elephants, great apes, big cats, horses, farmed animals, and others. More information about GFAS at www.sanctuaryfederation.org and a list of previous awardees at https://www.sanctuaryfederation.org/about-gfas/carole-noon-award/.