

Delaware's State Museum System Awarded National Accreditation

NEW CASTLE – Delaware's state museum system has been accredited by the [American Alliance of Museums \(AAM\)](#), the highest recognition afforded to museums in the United States. Administered by the [Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs](#), the system includes five museums as well as the archaeological and historic objects collections curated by the state.

Gov. John Carney today joined museum staff, Delaware historians and friends of the museum community for a special ceremony recognizing this achievement at the New Castle Court House Museum.

✘ “The rich history on display in our state's museums ties us together as a community and enhances the quality of life here for Delawareans and for those who visit Delaware,” said Gov. Carney. “We've always known that these institutions and the dedicated folks who run them are top notch. Now we have a true seal of approval that assures all of us that we can count on a rewarding experience when we visit Delaware's state museums.”

The newly accredited state museums include the John Dickinson Plantation near Kitts Hummock; the Johnson Victrola Museum and Old State House in downtown Dover; the New Castle Court House Museum; and the Zwaanendael Museum in Lewes. State museums are under the stewardship of the Department of State.

“I know how hard the staff of the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs worked to earn this accreditation,” said Secretary of State Jeffrey Bullock. “The people of Delaware can be proud of the commitment and passion that they bring to

telling the story of Delaware's unique history and its place in the history of the nation and the world."

Developed and sustained by museum professionals, the American Alliance of Museums 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.

"This is a historic achievement for Delaware and the people who visit our state museums every day," said Tim Slavin, director of the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs. "It's our job to continue to ensure that we meet the high standards that have been set, and keep our promise to preserve the state's history for future generations as well as those who have gone before us."

Of the nation's estimated 33,000 museums, approximately 1,000 currently are accredited. Delaware's state museums join only two other museums accredited in Delaware, Hagley Museum and Library and Winterthur Museum, Garden and Library.

Accreditation is a rigorous process that examines all aspects of a museum's operations. To earn accreditation, a museum must first conduct a year of self-study and then undergo a site visit by a team of peer reviewers. An independent and autonomous body of museum professionals then considers the self-study and visiting-committee report to determine whether a museum should receive accreditation.

About the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs

The Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs is an agency of the Delaware Department of State. The division enhances Delaware's quality of life by preserving the state's unique historical heritage, fostering community stability and

economic vitality and providing educational programs and assistance to the general public on Delaware history and heritage. The division's diverse array of services includes the administration and operation of five museums, conservation of the state's archaeological and historic-objects collections, management of historic properties across Delaware as well as the management of a conference center and the operation of the State Historic Preservation Office.

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 is the only organization representing the entire scope of the broad museum community. For more information, visit <http://www.aam-us.org>.