

## Developing Tomorrow's Conservation Leaders Today



Maybe you've already met them, these unique and inspiring graduate students. Maybe they are already working at your Zoo or institution, conducting research and leading their communities to change. Maybe they have already left you wondering about how YOU could also get involved in this revolutionary degree program.

The Advanced Inquiry Program (AIP) is a unique Master's degree program offered through a collaborative partnership between Miami University's Project *Dragonfly* and currently eight zoos across the nation (Chicago Zoological Society-Brookfield Zoo, Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Gardens, Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, Denver Zoo, Phoenix Zoo, San Diego Zoo Global, Wildlife Conservation Society and Woodland Park Zoo). AIP students take courses onsite at one of these local AIP Master Institutions while sharing ideas with peers and instructors nationwide via web-based learning communities. AIP Master's candidates use inquiry not only as a tool for integrated learning, but as a powerful agent for student achievement, public engagement in science and ecological stewardship.

Graduate students are involved in a variety of projects allowing them to interact with communities across the country. For example, teachers are building schoolyard gardens in order to teach their students about biodiversity and plant growth; animal care professionals are studying best enrichment practices by running behavioral studies and sharing their findings with others; zoo educators are creating more meaningful program experiences by

working with schools and visitors to better target conservation motivators; and corporate professionals are exploring the health and productivity benefits that come with connecting employees to nature.

Many of the AIP courses run at Master Institutions are also available to be taken independently from the full degree program. Often teachers seeking additional credits for licensure and informal educators searching for professional development opportunities are interested in enrolling in these unique courses as a great alternative to other more traditional offerings in their areas. New in 2013, a number of AIP courses are also now included in the AZA Professional Development Certificate Program. Available course topics include, but are not limited to, regional environmental stewardship, primate conservation, adaptations and evolution, ecophysiology, leadership in science, and inquiry-based exploration.

The AIP is a fast-growing and influential Master's degree program helping its students to become leaders in conservation and education. With more zoos joining the program each year, AIP courses are becoming more available than ever. For more information about AIP, or to see how you can become the next student, visit [aip.projectdragonfly.org](http://aip.projectdragonfly.org).

Katie Corr  
Education Specialist  
Cleveland Metroparks Zoo



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