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Gateway Arch National Park Earns Top National Museum Recognition

The Museum at the Gateway Arch and Old Courthouse Awarded Re-Accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums

ST. LOUIS (Aug. 19, 2025) – Gateway Arch National Park has again earned accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), the highest national recognition for museums in the United States. Accreditation signifies excellence to the museum community, to governments, funders, outside agencies, and to the museum-going public.

Gateway Arch National Park, formerly Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, has been accredited since 1980. Museums undergo re-accreditation at least every 10 years to maintain their status.

"Being reaccredited by the American Alliance of Museums is a prestigious honor that validates the dedication, expertise, and collaborative efforts of everyone involved with Gateway Arch National Park," said David Murray, superintendent of Gateway Arch National Park. "This distinction not only reflects our commitment to maintaining world-class exhibits and collections, but it also elevates the park's stature among museums and cultural institutions nationwide."

Accreditation is a rigorous, year-long process that evaluates all aspects of a museum's operations. To qualify, museums must first complete a self-study and undergo a site visit by peer reviewers. The AAM Accreditation Commission, an independent body of museum professionals, reviews these findings to determine accreditation status.

The review highlighted Gateway Arch National Park's exemplary renovations through the CityArchRiver Project, which enhanced accessibility, preserved historic resources, boosted tourism, and showcased the strength of public-private partnerships that support park operations beyond federal resources.

Gateway Arch Park Foundation is the organization originally formed to fund and coordinate the \$380 million CityArchRiver Project that continues to be the largest private investment in a national park in National Park Service history. The Foundation now functions as a nonprofit conservancy and the official philanthropic partner of Gateway Arch National Park, whose mission includes funding maintenance and continued innovation within the museums.

"Gateway Arch Park Foundation extends its sincere congratulations to Gateway Arch National Park on this monumental recognition," said Ryan McClure, executive director of Gateway Arch Park Foundation. "This re-accreditation reflects the National Park Service's steadfast commitment to excellence in preservation, education, and public engagement. As the official philanthropic partner of Gateway Arch National Park, we



are proud to support and collaborate in advancing the Park's mission and ensuring its continued relevance for future generations.”

In addition to preserving the Museum at Gateway Arch, the Old Courthouse, and the Park's collections, Gateway Arch Park Foundation also co-manages a volunteer program with the Park; funds education and IT positions, conservation projects on the grounds, and educational programming for under resourced communities; and hosts free community programs on the Arch grounds.

The National Park Service and the Foundation collaborate with partners in the Arch Alliance, including:

- Jefferson National Parks Association, which operates gift shops; develops and supports educational programming; funds the park's archival and library positions; and houses the park's artifact collections.
- Bi-State Development, which manages the Tram Ride to the Top and ticketing operations along with owning and operating the Riverboats at the Gateway Arch.
- Great Rivers Greenway, a public agency connecting the region with greenways, supports the ongoing operations and maintenance of the whole project footprint.

"This accomplishment is a true testament to the hard work and dedication of our entire team and partners. The re-accreditation process was rigorous and exhaustive, examining every facet of our operations," said Murray. "Achieving this recognition is not just a milestone for the park - it's a celebration of the collaborative spirit that defines Gateway Arch National Park."

AAM accreditation recognizes a museum's commitment to excellence, accountability, and continuous improvement. Established over 50 years ago, the program is the field's primary system for quality assurance, self-regulation and public accountability.

"Accreditation is a monumental achievement," said Marilyn Jackson, AAM President & CEO. "The process demonstrates an institution's commitment to best practice and is flexible enough to be accomplished by museums of any size."

Of the nation's estimated 33,000 museums, only about 1,100 are accredited. Gateway Arch National Park is one of just 19 accredited museums in Missouri and one of seven national park units that have received this accreditation.

For more information or to visit the museums at Gateway Arch National Park, plan your trip at [NPS.gov/jeff](https://www.nps.gov/jeff).

To learn more about Gateway Arch Park Foundation and the CityArchRiver Project that reimaged the Museum at the Gateway Arch and the Old Courthouse, visit [archpark.org](https://www.archpark.org).

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About Gateway Arch National Park

Gateway Arch National Park, one of America's 430+ national parks, commemorates Thomas Jefferson's vision of a unified continental nation and St. Louis' role as the gateway to the American West during the 19th century. The park also preserves the Old Courthouse, the site of the first two trials of the pivotal Dred Scott v. Sandford case. The park includes the Gateway Arch, the Arch grounds, and the Old Courthouse, located on the riverfront in downtown St. Louis. Admission to the Museum at the Gateway Arch and the Old Courthouse is free, and most programs are free of charge and open to the public. Many programs and events at the park benefit from generous support from park partners Gateway Arch Park Foundation, Jefferson National Parks Association and Bi-State Development. The Gateway Arch is open daily from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. during the regular and summer seasons and 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday and Sunday during the summer season. The Old Courthouse is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The park is closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day. For more information about Gateway Arch National Park, visit [NPS.gov/jeff](https://www.nps.gov/jeff).

About Gateway Arch Park Foundation

Gateway Arch Park Foundation is the official philanthropic partner and nonprofit conservancy for Gateway Arch National Park. Its mission is to ensure the Gateway Arch, its grounds, neighboring public spaces, and attractions are a vital, welcoming, well-supported resource to the community and nation for generations to come. It seeks to fulfill its mission by providing for ongoing conservation, preservation and education at the park, in addition to hosting, facilitating and promoting community programs that bring the park and its surrounding areas in Downtown St. Louis to life. The Foundation is part of an alliance that helps meet this mission, which includes the National Park Service, Bi-State Development, Great Rivers Greenway, Jefferson National Parks Association, and the City of St. Louis. For more information, visit [archpark.org](https://www.archpark.org).

About the American Alliance of Museums

The American Alliance of Museums (AAM) is the only organization representing the entire museum field, from art and history museums to science centers and zoos. Since 1906, we have been championing museums through advocacy and providing museum professionals with the resources, knowledge, inspiration, and connections they need to move the field forward. For more information, visit [aam-us.org](https://www.aam-us.org).