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Tampa Bay History Center Receives Highest National Recognition

Awarded Re-Accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums

TAMPA, Fla.— The Tampa Bay History Center has again achieved accreditation by the [American Alliance of Museums](#), the highest national recognition awarded to museums in the United States.

Accreditation is a mark of distinction that signifies excellence and accountability in the museum field. Of the estimated 33,000 museums nationwide, only about 1,100 are currently accredited. The History Center first earned the national designation in 2015.

“Reaccreditation by the American Alliance of Museums affirms what our staff, volunteers, and supporters already know. The Tampa Bay History Center is committed to excellence, accountability, and public service,” said **Lisa-Perry Richardson**, interim president and CEO and chief development officer at the Tampa Bay History Center. “This recognition is not just a national credential. It reflects years of thoughtful planning, responsible stewardship, and a belief in the power of history to connect and inspire people throughout our community.”

“All museums must undergo a reaccreditation review at least once every 10 years to maintain their status,” the Alliance said. “The process is a rigorous but rewarding examination of a museum’s operations and impact.”

To earn reaccreditation, the History Center completed a yearlong self-study followed by a site visit from a team of peer reviewers. The final decision was made by the AAM Accreditation Commission, an independent body of museum professionals.

For the public, accreditation is a clear sign that a museum is trustworthy, well-managed and committed to high standards in everything from educational programming and visitor experience to collections care



and fiscal responsibility. Comparable to a school earning regional accreditation or a hospital passing a national review, the designation assures donors, funders and the community that the History Center meets the highest professional standards in the field.

“Accreditation is a monumental achievement,” said **Marilyn Jackson**, president and CEO of the American Alliance of Museums. “The process demonstrates an institution’s commitment to best practice and is flexible enough to be accomplished by museums of any size.”

Developed and led by museum professionals for more than five decades, the Alliance’s accreditation program is the primary vehicle for quality assurance, self-regulation and public accountability in the museum field. It recognizes institutions that demonstrate a commitment to excellence, high professional standards and ongoing institutional improvement.

The reaccreditation follows a series of national recognitions earned by the History Center in 2025:

- [USA TODAY 10Best Readers’ Choice Award](#) (Feb. 19, 2025)
- [Tripadvisor Travelers’ Choice Award](#) (July 22, 2025)

The Tampa Bay History Center, located on Tampa’s Riverwalk, features three floors of permanent and temporary exhibitions exploring the people, places and events that shaped the Tampa Bay region and Florida. The museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

About the Tampa Bay History Center

Located on Tampa’s Water Street, the Tampa Bay History Center offers three floors of exhibits that highlight 12,000 years of Florida’s history and culture. Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and a Smithsonian Affiliate, the center features the Touchton Map Library and Florida Center for Cartographic Education, as well as the Witt Research Center. The History Center is also home to the Columbia Cafe. Known as one of Tampa’s premier cultural venues, it provides interactive, hands-on exhibits and theaters that offer an engaging and educational experience for visitors of all ages. For more information, visit www.tampabayhistorycenter.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.

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