

## Exhibit A to March 20, 2023 Decision of Margo Keller

### DEFENDANT AZA – EXHIBIT A CONNECTS - **MODIFIED**

Dear AZA Members:

In March 2018, in response to reports of sexual harassment at AZA events and conferences, we committed to updating and strengthening our policies prohibiting sexual harassment and retaliation. At the time, we assured each of you that AZA had “zero tolerance” for acts constituting sexual harassment or retaliation made against those who report it.

In specific instances between 2018 and 2019, we did not live up to our promise. During that time period, we received credible complaints about sexually inappropriate conduct at conferences by an AZA member. The victims, also AZA members, are men. The alleged perpetrator is a woman. One complaint, made in July 2019, alleged a sexual assault, in a private hotel room, during the 2018 Annual Conference. The victim expressed worry that the AZA member would assault him again or retaliate against him. Indeed, shortly after the victim resisted the alleged sexual assault, the assailant and her close associates on the Orangutan SSP and SAFE committees began interfering with his research and employment opportunities. This is prohibited by our anti-retaliation policy. Once we learned of the attack and retaliatory conduct, we should have worked to prevent retaliation by these individuals. Because we did nothing, we failed our membership in this regard as well.

The victim of the alleged assault requested that AZA bar the alleged assailant from attending future AZA events attended by this AZA member.

We took no action at all. We did not contact or interview the AZA member or attempt any other investigation. We suggested to the victim that he “not put yourself in a position where you are alone” with the alleged assailant.

The AZA Code of Conduct identifies sexual harassment as unacceptable conduct, and states that “reports will be treated seriously and promptly” and “handled with respect”. Failure to contact and interview the alleged assailant is not indicative of seriousness. Suggesting that the victim of sexual assault has responsibility to avoid interaction with the alleged assailant is not respectful. Our response reflected neither the letter nor spirit of our Code of Conduct. We should have responded with empathy and action. We must and will do better.

The victim was – understandably – upset by AZA’s response (or lack thereof) to his report. In part due to this response by AZA to the report, the victim filed a lawsuit against AZA. Fortunately, the victim and AZA have agreed to a resolution of the claims on terms acceptable to all, avoiding a burdensome trial. In addition to other relief, including a significant monetary settlement paid to the victim, the AZA member accused of the assault has agreed to a ban on attending AZA events attended by the victim for five years. Furthermore, AZA will institute an option for third-party reporting of sexual harassment and investigation of complaints beginning at annual conference in 2023. We recognize that requiring reporting to AZA staff can

result in conflicts of interest and biases entering the investigation process, as happened here. Victims of harassment and abuse must feel safe and heard when reporting misconduct.

We are deeply sorry for putting the onus on the victim of sexual misconduct to protect himself from sexual misconduct. While AZA aspires to provide safe, respectful and productive environments for all its meetings and conferences, people sometimes behave inappropriately. When that behavior is reported, we owe you belief, empathy, and respect, and an active response that reflects each of these principles.

We made a commitment to you. Consequently, AZA reiterates our pledge of “zero tolerance” for sexual harassment and retaliation. As leaders, we will continue to work to earn your trust and to solicit your ideas and support as members of this organization to make meaningful change. In this regard, all are welcome to reach out to AZA leadership at: AZA President and CEO, Dan Ashe ([dashe@aza.org](mailto:dashe@aza.org)) or AZA Executive Vice President, Craig Hoover ([choover@aza.org](mailto:choover@aza.org)).