

Ford W. Bell, DVM
President, American Alliance of Museums

Ford W. Bell began his tenure as president of the American Alliance of Museums (then the American Association of Museums) in June 2007. He brings to AAM a lifelong passion for museums, and a clear understanding of the important role museums play as educational institutions, economic engines and community assets, as well as places of enlightenment and inspiration.

Under his leadership, AAM has undergone a dramatic transformation, and is now committed to championing the cause of museums with the public, the media and government officials, at all levels. Bell has also made it an organization-wide priority to nurture excellence in the field through the establishment and promotion of standards, ethics and best practices. He led the re-branding of AAM, beginning with the development of a new strategic plan and culminating in the launch of the American Alliance of Museums in September 2012, complete with a new name, look, logo, website and commitment to member service. The result has been a dramatic spike in membership and external support, ensuring the long-term sustainability of the 107-year old organization.

Bell has a longstanding relationship with the museum community. He helped raise \$103 million as co-chair of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts' "Bring Art to Life" capital campaign, completed in 2006 and he served as chair of the organization's board from 2003 to 2005. His grandfather, James Ford Bell, was a leading supporter of the Institute, and also of the Museum of Natural History at the University of Minnesota, renamed in his honor in 1966. Ford Bell served on the Advisory Board of the Bell Museum from 1983 to 2007. A board-certified veterinary oncologist, Bell credits his many childhood visits to the Bell Museum with fostering a lifelong love of nature and science.

Bell has more than 30 years experience as a nonprofit executive, board chair, donor, trustee and educator. From 1995 to 2005, he served as president and CEO of the Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation, a prominent clinical cardiovascular research organization and a nationally recognized provider of community heart health education.

From 1982 to 1995, Bell served on the staff of the University of Minnesota's College of Veterinary Medicine, where he taught and did clinical research in comparative oncology. He has advocated for science learning, conservation and community health initiatives through his affiliation with a wide range of organizations, including Project EarthSense and the JASON Advisory Committee, a public-private elementary and secondary school science education initiative. He served as trustee and elder at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Minneapolis, and co-chaired that institution's \$16 million capital campaign. From 1993 to 2007, he served as chair of the James Ford Bell Foundation. An educator for much of his career, Bell also served as a trustee of Connecticut College in New London, CT from 1998 to 2007.

A native Minnesotan, Bell is married and has four children. He lives in Potomac, MD.

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. With more than 21,000 individual, 3,500 institutional and 300 corporate members, the Alliance is dedicated to ensuring that museums remain a vital part of the American landscape, connecting people with the greatest achievements of the human experience, past, present and future. For more information, visit www.aam-us.org.