

Samantha Pencar
Director of Donor Relations
Chimp Haven



Samantha Pencar is an altruistic goodwill ambassador with a lifelong passion for conservation and animal welfare advocacy. As the newest member to the National Chimpanzee Sanctuary's leadership team, Samantha brings together resources and connects donors through the inspirational stories of the more than 300 chimpanzees formerly used in biomedical research now retired to Chimp Haven.

Before joining Chimp Haven, Samantha spent the early part of her career conducting zoological field research abroad and working directly with the animals in Zoo Miami's collection before trading in her rake and shovel for a professional career on Zoo Miami Foundation's development team. As a millennial Samantha understands the value of a diverse professional network. She supports national organizations and local charities notably the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries and Association of Fundraising Professionals Miami Chapter. During her first year in the not-for-profit industry, she was the recipient of the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce Rising Star Award and the Joyce Galya AFP Scholarship Award. She also landed a feature page in the Community HERO section of the Key Biscayne Magazine as a local animal advocate.

Despite being a proud Miami native, Samantha extends herself beyond her community. Continuing her college legacy as a two-time Division 1 All-American Water Polo athlete, she holds the distinct national honor as the 2018-2019 Bryan Weaver Female Athlete of the Year from the United States Water Polo Association. She has most recently been inducted into the inaugural class of Hartwick College's 40 under 40 for achievement in community relations and philanthropic endeavors.

Samantha holds a Master's of Science in Zoological Conservation Biology from the University of Plymouth, United Kingdom, and a Bachelor of Science in Biological Anthropology from Hartwick College, New York.