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New Name for ANA Accolade

The Association's Board of Governors votes to remove Farran Zerbe's moniker from the organization's highest honor

During an open session meeting on January 19, 2021, the ANA Board of Governors honored the wishes of nearly 20 past Farran Zerbe Memorial Award winners by voting to remove Zerbe's name from the ANA's highest honor after the 2021 presentation (its 70th year). According to the motion, the accolade will be called the Distinguished Service Award "until such time as the name of an exemplary, deceased ANA member be brought forward to the Board, after vetting by the Awards Committee, for consideration of formal approval with proper funding arrangements for such naming rights."

A well-known figure in 20th-century numismatics, Joseph Farran Zerbe served as ANA president from 1907-1909. A retrospective look at Zerbe's professional dealings uncovered accusations that he made deceptively inflated claims about the future value of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition gold dollars he sold; complaints of hucksterism and fraud for his creation and sale of coin-like 1904 gold-plated exposition souvenirs; allegations that he unscrupulously obtained personal ownership of *The Numismatist* in 1908 from relatives of the ANA's late founder, Dr. George F. Heath (then ANA Vice President W.W.C. Wilson subsequently purchased the periodical and donated it to the Association in 1910); and claims of bribery involving the 1909 ANA election in which Zerbe's friend John M. Henderson was named president.

The American Numismatic Association is a congressionally chartered, nonprofit educational organization dedicated to encouraging the study and collection of coins and related items. The ANA helps its members and the public discover and explore the world of money through its vast array of educational and outreach programs as well as its museum, library, publications, and conventions. For more information, call 719-632-2646 or visit money.org.