

JULY 27, 2005

ATTENDEES

- Jessica Sallis - Rogers Public Schools, ESL/Migrant Specialist
- Steve Beaupre - University of Arkansas, Associate Professor of Biology
- Gail Pianalto – Botanical Gardens of the Ozarks
- Kathy Short – T.G. Smith Elementary
- Sarah Lewis – University of Arkansas, Environmental Dynamics Program
- Rita Littrell - Director, Bessie B. Moore Center for Economic Education
- Walt Eilers – Terrapin Consulting
- Allyn Lord – Director, Shiloh Museum

INTRODUCTION

Brent Robinson gave a short presentation to update the attendees on the status of the project and the purpose of the Northwest Arkansas Museum Foundation. The focus was then turned to the Education Program component and opened for discussion.

DISCUSSION

UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

Adjunct professors as support faculty, assistantships, etc.

- The challenges behind this is the mix of funding sources (who pays for what?), endowments, and income sources (IMAX, exhibits, special events, classes, gifts shops, dining)
- It was suggested we look closely at other University/Museum relationships to determine possible opportunities and solutions (i.e. Sam Nobel Museum in Norman, OK)

COLLECTION OF RESOURCES

The collection and cooperation of resources was highly praised and supported.

GRANTS AS SOURCES OF FUNDING

Indirect grants – funding and research grants

- The idea of providing research space is being explored and has vast potential of being part of the strategic plan

Multi-lingual grants

K-12 PROGRAMS

Align programs with state science curriculum

- Newly revised curriculum will focus on incorporating sciences
- Include multi-discipline (math, reading, writing)
- Teachers (and museum) must convince administrators that field trips will cover standards

Do NOT limit to school/curriculum standards

- Sometimes a museum needs to be purely for the joy of learning
- Children need experiences outside of what “has to” be taught in school

Support

- Provide chaperones/assistant volunteers for school groups
- Teacher training days – provided to teachers to experience the museum before bringing children and help them prepare
- Busing – museum bus or reimbursement programs?
 - Grants are available to classrooms for this purpose (i.e. Wiesler (sp?))
 - Museum bus “experience” on the way to the museum through videos
 - Buses could also be used beyond K-12 (seniors, preschools, etc.)

DEMOGRAPHICS

Growing Hispanic population

- Multi-lingual signs and employees

Intergenerational

- Bear in mind parents and grandparents may be on same education level as their children (don’t make assumptions)

PROGRAMS

Mobil exhibits

- Bringing exhibits to classroom when the classroom can't come to the exhibit

Company sponsored exhibits

- Create quality exhibits by creating "competition" to keep updated and dynamic
- Limited signage preferred

Research labs, IMAX, Meeting rooms

MARKETING

Internet

- Functional, clear, interactive website
 - Mini-demonstrations, games
- Access through all area websites (regional city, entertainment, culture sites)
- Links to other area museums and partners
- Good driving directions and location information
- Global thinking

Multi-museum passport

- Package allowing multiple area museum visits

Family packages linked with area hotels, restaurants, etc.

Memberships and reasonable pricing

TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESSABILITY

View from Highway

Walk-able day trips

NWA Museum Foundation Education Workshop

- One-time parking
- Access to other entertainment, culture, restaurants, parks and activities

Mass transit

- City bus and light rail system would increase visitation and relieve parking and congestion

OTHER RESOURCES

Sam Nobel Museum – Norman, Oklahoma

Science and Industry in Chicago

NEXT STEPS

A Partner Workshop has been scheduled for Friday, July 29th. Future education workshops will be scheduled as well as numerous other community feedback sessions.