

## 2021 NCMC Annual Conference | Shifting Roles: Finding a New Path

March 29 - 31, 2021

For more information, visit [www.ncmuseums.org](http://www.ncmuseums.org)

### **Monday 3/29**

Welcome 8:45-9:15

Concurrent sessions (2) 9:30a - 10:30a

Whoa. This is Big. How do we even start? Introducing Equity and Inclusion into the Institution - 60 min

*Alexander Brooks, Education Manager, Gaston County Museum of Art & History; and Nancy Fields, Director and Curator, The Museum of the Southeast American Indian*

In the wake of the civil unrest and call outs of systemic racism, museums have been scrambling to address IDEA issues within their institutions - all while their employees are still reeling from the personal effects. But are these quick responses indicative of real and authentic change that shows commitment to inclusion? What do these terms even mean? How should institutions deal with either topic in respects to their employees, their volunteers and their audiences? How do museums effectively embrace “the other”, particularly if their environment is not hospitable to such conversation? Drawing on their experience as both members of marginalized communities and efforts to incorporate institutional equity and inclusion into multiple organizations, the speakers will breakdown the basics of consideration and facilitate conversation on building IDEA into institutional culture. We'll slow it down and, together, sift through the overwhelming amount of dialog and literature to discuss what works, what doesn't, and how you should begin.

How We Got That - 45min

*Camille Hunt, Senior Museum Registrar, North Carolina Museum of History*

How does a museum acquire artifacts? In many ways! For example, donation, purchase, transfer, and bequest. Short (2-3 minute) videos were created to explain how the North Carolina Museum of History acquired a certain artifact or collection. We chose artifacts and collections that are interesting and illustrate the various ways they are acquired (e.g., donation, purchase, transfer).

Learn about how two unique museum departments (Collections Management and Marketing) developed this interesting series. See the videos and hear about how we are sharing our collection in a new way!

Networking break 10:45 - 11:15

Introduce your furry co-workers

You share: Best at-home work hacks of 2020

Concurrent sessions (2) 11:30 - 12:15

The Black Light Project: Shining a Positive Light on the Unsung Heroes of Your Community - 45 min

*Alicyn Wiedrich, Art Curator, Imperial Center for the Arts & Sciences, City of Rocky Mount; and Tonya Jefferson Lynch, Executive Director, The Black Light Project*

2020 brought on a resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement with such enthusiasm that we saw protests and discourse across the globe. How can museums be a part of this important conversation? The Black Light Project brings a unique mix of art and technology (photography and video) to communities in order to celebrate black men who are the rule, not the exception. They are on a mission to change negative, preconceived notions by sharing narratives through their photography and videos. The second community they worked with was Rocky Mount, NC (Imperial Centre for the Arts & Sciences). Both the Black Light Project's Tonya Lynch and the Imperial Centre's Alicyn Wiedrich will present in this session sharing information about their partnership, the role of the museum as a safe place to broach difficult subjects, the impact the Black Light Project had on the Rocky Mount Community, and how you can continue this important conversation to your own community.

Teachers, Tik Tok, and Title 1: Reinventing the "Interpretation Wheel" for a K-12 Audience - 45 min

*Karen Walter, Director of Learning in Place, Old Salem Museums & Gardens/Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts; and Emily Miller, Education Coordinator, Old Salem Museums & Gardens/Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts*

On March 13, 2020, Old Salem Museums & Gardens/Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts (OSMG/MESDA) closed its doors to traditional public visitation in response to the emerging COVID-19 pandemic. That same day, the museum launched the Learning in Place Video Series - an online video series for K-12 students and their teachers who suddenly found themselves thrust into the world of remote learning. A restructuring of the museum's education division quickly followed, moving OSMG/MESDA from a site that interprets history to a site that uses history to interpret STEAM subjects for the K-12 audience. Prioritizing the needs of the K-12 community, with special emphasis on Title 1 schools, OSMG/MESDA assembled a team of professional educators, a documentary filmmaker, innovative craftspeople, and seasoned development officers to create an educational program that schools desired and needed. Recognizing its role as a provider of outstanding place-based education, OSMG/MESDA merged its former Education & Interpretation division with its successful Title 1 fundraising outreach initiative, Learning in Place. What started as an emergency response to a global crisis became a forward-thinking move that changed the trajectory of the educational experience at OSMG/MESDA. The instant and continued success of these strategic moves has resulted in a harvest of new audience members and a reimagining of the on-the-ground interpretive experience with the historic buildings becoming classrooms for expanded place-based learning. The presenters will share OSMG/MESDA's formation of Learning in Place and the strategies used to enlarge its K-12 audience, encouraging museum colleagues in their efforts to more effectively engage the K-12 community through their educational programming.

Screen Break 12:15 - 12:30

Section Lunch 12:45 - 1:15

Break for exhibitor hall 1:15-2:00

Leadership Forum 2:00p - 3:00p

*Michelle Lanier, Director, N.C. Division of State Historic Sites; Melanie Hatz Levinson, Creative Director and Lead Curator, Kidzu Children's Museum; and Leslie Strauss, Heady of Family & Studio Programs, The Mint Museum. Moderated by Scott Warren, NCMC President.*

The last year has been a tumultuous time for cultural heritage institutions across the country, including North Carolina. Join us for a conversation with leading museum professionals to learn how their institutions have navigated our difficult times.

This session is intended for all levels of museum leadership, and those who aspire to be in leadership.

### **Tuesday 3/30**

Welcome 8:30 - 8:45

Concurrent sessions (2) 9:00a - 9:45a

#### New Paths to Inclusion - 45 min

*Katy Menne, Curator of Education, NC Maritime Museum at Southport; and Jessica Rassau, Coordinator of Accessibility and Inclusion, North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences*

*Navigate with Rassau and Menne on their journeys from cultivating community partnerships to fostering more inclusive and accessible environments that are welcoming to all. Dive deep into how connectivity within the community helps foster deeper authentic relationships with those within our neighborhood and beyond. We'll discuss how to identify gaps in institutional offerings and some strategies used to overcome hurdles along the way. Whether you are working on-site or virtually, utilize these tips to welcome all people to learn and enjoy your institution.*

#### "Set at Liberty: Stories of the Enslaved in a New England Town" - 45 min

*Abby Battis, Associate Director for Collections at Historic Beverly*

Historic Beverly found a new path to share its collection and the history of the community when it launched its first online exhibit "Set at Liberty: the Stories of the Enslaved in a New England Town" at the start of 2020, for free and available to the public, after a year of research and curating.

Remarkably, a great number of stories of Beverly's black population have been preserved and can be found in the Historic Beverly archival collection. These are stories of citizens, black and white, battling against the unjust system of slavery; of enslaved men fighting for freedom for our nation, though not free themselves; of a woman using the law to emancipate her family; and of the racism that affected the lives of Beverly's black population, long after they were freed from bondage.

This online exhibit presents American history in a manner that is accessible to everyone, around the world, and at no cost to the user. This presentation offers a look behind the scenes at the creation of the exhibit and all of the do's and don'ts that Historic Beverly has learned (the hard way) throughout the process. It will also cover the use of online exhibits to increase accessibility, the presentation of difficult histories to the public, as well as the sustainability of a collection. The online exhibit can be found here: <https://spark.adobe.com/page/eLxVbalbhFbIE/>

Screen Break 9:45a - 10:00a

Networking break (2) 10:15 - 10:45

Desk Yoga with Jessica Hicks of Willow Tree Yoga

Discussion: Best Bingeable TV shows of 2020

Concurrent sessions (2) 11:00 - 12:00

Building Capacity for Collective Evaluation of Learning in Museums - 45 min

*K.C. Busch, Assistant Professor, North Carolina State University; Lynn Chesnut, Doctoral Student, North Carolina State University; Regina Ayala Chaves, Doctoral Student, North Carolina State University; Kathryn Stevenson, Assistant Professor, North Carolina State University; Lincoln Larson, Assistant Professor, North Carolina State University; Charles Yelton, Regional Network Chief, NC Museum of Natural Sciences; and Nicole Coscolluela, Head of the NC Sciences Museum Grant Program, NC Museum of Natural Sciences*

Collective evaluation, a hybrid of shared evaluation systems and collective impact, reflects a growing need for assessing the aggregate influence of museums and other informal education programs and institutions. In this session, we will present the guiding model and preliminary data from an exemplar project, IMPACT NC, which is a collaboration between the NC Museum of Natural Sciences and NC State University. The goal of IMPACT NC is to support a participatory process and foster a Community of Practice (CoP) for collective evaluation among science museums across the state of North Carolina. Attendees at this presentation will learn about how to foster a collective evaluation effort in their own organization or across similar organizations.

Dust Isn't a Protective Coating: How to Clean Effectively and Efficiently Inside Historic Houses - 45 min

*Ainsley Powell, Curator of Collections, City of Raleigh; Marian Inabinett, Curator of Collections, High Point Museum & Historical Park*

Cleaning a historic house is a chore by anyone's standards. Two veterans of historic houses and museums share tips, tricks, tools, and strategies for cleaning efficiently, effectively, and safely - whether you are doing it yourself or directing volunteers.

Section Lunch 12:15 - 1:15

Break for exhibitor hall 1:15 - 2:00

Session (1) 2:00 - 3:00

Grant Writing for Cultural Institutions - 60 min

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*Caitlin Stanley, Director of Programs and Operations, North Carolina Humanities Council*

A dedicated cultural funder in North Carolina for over 45 years, the North Carolina Humanities Council is pleased to present this grant-writing workshop. Participants will learn the fundamentals of writing a competitive grant proposal in the cultural sector as well as perspectives on how reviewers approach the evaluation of proposals and letters of interest/intent (LOIs). Participants will also learn about current funding opportunities offered by the North Carolina Humanities Council.

**Wednesday 3/31**

Welcome 8:30 - 8:45

Networking break (2) 9:00 -9:30

Desk Meditation with Jessica Hicks of Willow Tree Yoga

Discussion: Humble Brag - What are you proud of from this year?

Concurrent sessions (2) 9:45 - 10:45

Let's Get Digital: Digitization of Collections and Exhibits for Collections Staff and Curators - 45 min

*Ainsley Powell, Curator of Collections, City of Raleigh; and Alicyn Wiedrich, Art Curator, Imperial Center for the Arts & Sciences, City of Rocky Mount*

These days with pandemic precautions taking place and some institutions not yet opening or re-closing, all museum professionals are forced to get creative. How do we stay relevant and keep our audiences engaged? In this session, a history curator and an art curator will discuss how they are digitizing in their area. One half will be devoted to digitizing collections through PastPerfect 5, addressing the prep work involved for such an undertaking, how to maintain the database once it goes live, and the benefits beyond the obvious. The other half will be devoted to digitizing art exhibitions, addressing how to take a physical exhibit that was not designed to be digital and make it a digital experience as well as curating art exhibits from collections and partnering with other institutions to make unique online experiences.

Shifting Roles: Youth Programs in the COVID and Post-COVID World - 60 min

*Peter Koch, Education Associate, Mountain Heritage Center, WCU; Lauren May, Assistant Site Manager, Vance Birthplace State Historic Site; and Katy Menne, Curator of Education, North Carolina Maritime Museum at Southport*

This past year brought about vast change and incredible opportunity for institutions and how they have chosen to modify programming in order to support their respective communities. In the Pre-COVID world, youth programs were key to the learning opportunities offered by museums. Join Koch, May, and Menne in a discussion of the adaptations made at their respective sites to continue to deliver quality and engaging

experiences while remaining safely distanced. Utilize their lessons learned as the remainder of the school year and upcoming summer season is swiftly approaching.

Concurrent sessions (2) 11:00a – 12:00p

Learning About Diversity and Inclusion From Libraries - 60 min

*Linda Jacobson, Keeper, North Carolina Collection Gallery, Wilson Special Collections Library, UNC-CH; Rachel Reynolds, Exhibitions Coordinator, Wilson Special Collections, Library, UNC-CH; Margaret (Meg) Brown, Head of Exhibition Services, Duke University Libraries; and Christian Edwards, Assistant Keeper North Carolina Collection Gallery, Wilson Special Collections Library, UNC-CH*

Exhibit professionals in academic libraries in the Triangle have been working in partnership to create a tool that will help curators think about appropriate language, especially as it relates to diversity and inclusion in exhibitions. Working with a variety of curators, both external and in-house, library exhibition staff saw the need for a document of guidelines and principles. This runs parallel to and is informed by conscious editing and ethical description work that libraries are doing to reconsider terminology in cataloging. Cataloging and archival description practices of the past tended to marginalize figures they deemed less important. Conscious editing helps redress the inequities in our descriptive language.

Presenters will share information about the conscious editing initiative, the collaborative process used to turn that work into a style guide, and the final product, a guide that can be used by museums for interpretation in exhibitions.

Teaching Hard History: How Partnerships Can Help Us Effectively Face Our Shared Past & Present - 60 min

*Christie Norris, Director, Carolina K-12 at UNC-CH; Chrystal Regan, Chief Education Officer, NC Museum of History; and LeRae Umfleet, Outreach & Programming at NC Department of Natural & Cultural Resources*

Navigating hard histories with K-12 students is challenging, but “hard history is not hopeless history” & we do our students and their educators a disservice by not covering a comprehensive past and highlighting its legacies today - whether in our textbooks, our lessons, or our exhibits. This session will explore the challenges we face in addressing “hard history,” while highlighting how partnerships between museums, historians, historic sites, & K-12 leaders can be maximized to effectively address and engage learners of all levels in exploring difficult topics, ultimately helping our educators feel better prepared to effectively do so.

Section Lunch	12:15 - 1:15
Break for exhibitor hall	1:15 - 2:15
Awards Ceremony/Closeout	2:15 - 3:15
Happy Hour	5:00p - 7:00p

