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**EdCom Newsletter:
April 2015**

Chair's Corner

In our current accountability-happy era, no one is off the hook. We demand evidence from CEOs, politicians and teachers that they're trustworthy, effective and that good money isn't going after bad.

In the same vein, it's becoming increasingly deficient for museum educators to simply tout the menu of programs we offer as being valuable per se. To a greater extent today, we're required to go beyond anecdote and intuition in order to unequivocally demonstrate the impact of our work. The latest issue of the *Journal of Museum Education* focuses entirely on how to pull off evaluation, even with limited resources. We've organized a [Google Hangout](#) for April 16 to discuss this timely topic with experts in the field, including Lynn Dierking, Joy Kubarek and Lauren Trainer. See below for more details and please join us!



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Let's Talk About It

Evaluation in Our Practice

Thursday, April 16, 2 p.m. (ET)

Google Hangout

This EdCom Virtual Book Club will draw from the spring 2015 issue of the *Journal of Museum Education* (JME), *Empowering Museum Educators to Evaluate*, published by the Museum Education Roundtable (MER). Noted experts in the field will engage in an on-air discussion about the role of evaluation in our work and address practical questions for building it into practice. Participants will receive a summary of the JME article prior to the start of the program and can take part in a lively online conversation via a moderated chat box.

Presenters

- Joy Kubarek, vice president of learning, Shedd Aquarium
- Laureen Trainer, independent evaluator, Trainer Evaluation
- Lynn Dierking, sea grant professor in free-choice STEM learning. Oregon State University

EdCom's Virtual Book Club is a casual opportunity to discuss current issues and articles. The Museum Education Roundtable provides one free article from every issue to allow broader participation in the conversation. Access the article at www.museumeducation.info.

What Are You Reading?

Each month we ask luminaries in the field what's on their nightstand. This newsletter features Doug Shipman, CEO of the National Center for Civil and Human Rights. Shipman will also serve as our featured speaker at the [EdCom Luncheon](#) on Tuesday, April 28 in Atlanta.

Deca Stories

A cooperative of award-winning journalists bringing deeply reported, global stories straight to your phone tablet or computer.

The Bitter Southerner

For the sake of the story / for the love of the South



Image courtesy of The Bitter Southerner

Both Deca Stories and The Bitter Southerner are online-only publishers of “long-form” stories. Deca is a collection of global journalists who tell stories of people and places seldom visited but reflective of key global issues like energy exploration and immigration. The Bitter Southerner—based in Atlanta—aims to showcase contemporary stories that reflect the people and issues of the “new South” but remain deeply rooted in the history and culture of the South’s indelible past. Both sites are creating new ways to think about storytelling, about subscribing to online media, and the ways we can use multi-platform media to encounter stories of life as it is being lived now, around the world and here at home.

The EdCom Luncheon is generously supported by Mind Gamez.



2015 AAM Annual Meeting & MuseumExpo

Things to do while in Atlanta this April

Sweet Eats for Your Neat Retreat in Atlanta

Submitted by Kate Whitman, vice president of public programs, Atlanta History Center

Here are some of my favorite restaurants just a short cab ride away from the convention:

Alma Cocina

191 Peachtree Street, NE

This downtown restaurant specializes in inventive Mexican fare with regional influences, has an extensive tequila list, and some of the best margaritas in the city.

Baraonda

710 Peachtree Street, three blocks from the Historic Fox Theatre

Casual Italian food; wood fired pizzas, fresh pastas and nice Italian wine selection. Baraonda is known for their great service, and friendly wait staff. Check out the servers shirts for a good laugh.

South City Kitchen

1144 Crescent Avenue, NE

Located in midtown Atlanta, this is the place to eat classic Southern food with a twist. Their fried chicken was voted Best in the South, and the biscuits are out of this world. You cannot go back to <insert your town here> without eating Southern food, and this is some of the best.

Holeman and Finch

2277 Peachtree Rd, NE

Located in the Buckhead, this modern gastropub is very small and always busy. For years if you were lucky enough to be there at 10 p.m. you could sample the city's best hamburger, which they made in only limited quantities. The burger is finally a fixture on the menu and a must try for carnivores.



Image courtesy of Richardlovesfood

Gunshow

924 Garrett Street, STE C.

For fans of Bravo's Top Chef this is Atlanta Chef Kevin Gillespie's restaurant. But it is more than a restaurant; it is a dining experience (and it's ideal for groups). The food is served on rolling carts, and the menu is entirely a la carte, with diners selecting what looks good as it rolls by.

Sights, Sounds, Smells: Senseful Atlanta

Submitted by Dina Bailey, director of educational strategies, National Center for Civil and Human Rights

Here are a few of the must-see attractions I've found over the past year of living in Atlanta:

Atlanta Streetcar

East-West Route

Ride the new streetcar system through the famous Auburn Avenue community stopping between the King Historic District and Centennial Olympic Park.

Fox Theatre

660 Peachtree Street NE

Make sure to take time to view the fantastic grandeur of the Fox Theatre while you're in Atlanta. Go online to schedule a quick tour of the curious and colorful history of Atlanta's most renowned theatre.

Michael C. Carlos Museum of Emory University

571 South Kilgo Circle

The Carlos Museum is now one of the Southeast's premier ancient art museums. It's a gem, and they have FREE afternoon admission (from 1–4 p.m.) on April 30!

National Center for Civil and Human Rights

100 Ivan Allen Jr. Boulevard

I may be biased (because I work there), but I can't say enough about Atlanta's newest museum! Find your own inspiration in connecting the American Civil Rights Movement, the global human rights movements of today and the power individuals have to make a difference.

Piedmont Park

12th Street and Piedmont Avenue

Whether you want to go for a run, enjoy the view or sit back with a book, this park is seriously amazing! While you may have to pay to park, the park itself is FREE and open to the public daily (6 a.m.–11 p.m.).



Image courtesy of Lee Coursey

Panel Peeks

Who's Presenting What in Atlanta

Below, we highlight a few select sessions of interest to EdCom members in Atlanta. Panelists have written brief articles to preview those sessions in advance of the Annual Meeting and for those EdCom members who cannot attend. You can read the full articles [online](#).

The Education, Curation & Evaluation track is supported by the Canadian Museum for Human Rights.

Creating New Connections: How to Engage Communities with AiR

Sunday, April 26, 3:30–4:45 p.m.

How do Artist-in-Residence programs foster stronger connections with a museum's community?

...and offer programs that the community desires. Driven by this goal, Artist-in-Residence interns have the freedom to create new programs and exhibits...

Keeping Civic Engagement Civil

Monday, April 27, 8:30–9:45 a.m.

What is the Arc of Dialogue and how do museums use it to create safe spaces for productive conversations?

...recognize them in your visitors. My uncle stands on the edge of your tour group and makes an intelligent and mildly incendiary comment to...

Missouri Burning: Turning Conflict into Conversation

Tuesday, April 28; 10:45 a.m.–12 noon

How does a history museum generate conversation from challenging circumstances such as the events in Ferguson, Missouri?

...answers to long-simmering questions that have plagued the region since the Missouri Compromise. The unrest in Ferguson was so much more than the...

Exploring Empathy: Research on a Hot (But Tricky) Concept

Wednesday, April 29, 9:15–10:30 a.m.

How can museums foster empathy in visitors?

...empathy is something I was sure was fostered through the Museum's approach to storytelling, but was at a loss to measure and...

Meeting People Where They Are: Experiments in Pop-Up Engagement

Wednesday, April 29, 9:15–10:30 a.m.

How do pop-up programs create a more welcoming and engaging space for visitors?

...visitors who were new to the Museum, or museums in general, often hesitated to participate, either because they did not feel "invited" or because...

There's still time to register for the [2015 Annual Meeting & MuseumExpo](#). Advance [registration rates](#) have been extended through **April 8**.

Save the Date

Leading the Future of Museum Education: Challenges and Opportunities

May 27–29

Denver

Bank Street College, along with EdCom, and the major museums of Denver are hosting a convening of leaders in education from May 27–29 at the History Colorado Center and other museums in Denver. This convening brings together directors and managers of museum education departments and programs to advance the future of our profession.

Central to the discussions will be the leadership challenges facing museum educators. How do we articulate our public value, measure success, and affirm access and engagement at the core of our institutional mission? How do we embrace change and address our own leadership development, and those that we mentor? Among the attendees/speakers will be: Marsha Semmel, Jane Sillis, Kaywin Feldman, Mizuko Ito, Shari Werb, Dan Spock and more.

Learn more about the program on the [AAM website](#) and visit [Eventbrite](#) to register for this program

One Good Thing

Hands on with 3D Printing Chicago Art Institute

Hands on with 3D Printing combines art with technology to provide a multisensory experience for visitors with disabilities. In partnership with *Art in the Moment*, a program serving people living with Alzheimer's and dementia, and *Tours with Sighted Guides* for people with blindness or low vision, the *Hands on*

program offers a series of 3D reproductions printed at a one-to-one scale for visitors to explore through touch. This unique experience enhances the museum visit by encouraging guests to explore the form, texture, and scale of the artworks, and study the translation from original object to 3D replica.

Hands on is more than touch though; it encourages multisensory engagement and reflection. For example, music is played at strategic moments in a discussion about musical instruments, and participants are invited to strike a bronze replica Chinese bo bell. Visitors round out their experience with an art-making activity led by a professional art therapist from CJE SeniorLife—a valuable opportunity for expressive therapy.

Hands on with 3D Printing offers a unique tactile experience not otherwise possible in museums. It was developed with support from an IMLS Sparks! Ignition Grant and the Cigna Foundation (which supports the Institute's other access programs). For more information, visit www.artic.edu/lifelonglearning.



EdCom Leadership Election

The votes are in! The following members will be assuming their new responsibilities with EdCom leadership at the conclusion of the 2015 AAM Annual Meeting in Atlanta:

- **Anthony Pennay**, Chair-Elect, EdCom Board
- **Sherri Levinsky-Raskin**, Chair-Elect, Professional Development
- **Claudia Ocello**, Chair-Elect, Board Development and Awards
- **Jason Yoon**, Chair-Elect, Museum Education Issues

EdCom is also excited to announce that two current Committee Chairs will be assuming new leadership responsibilities at the conclusion of AAM 2015:

- **Elissa Frankle**, Chair, Board Development and Awards
- **Megan Wood**, Chair, Museum Education Issues

Congratulations to all the new board members! Here's to an exciting year. A full list of board members will be in the next newsletter.

Meet the Board

This month we meet National Associate **Robert Stein**, deputy director, Dallas Museum of Art.

Why are you involved in EdCom?

I think museum education is the single best way museums can deliver on the life-changing impact possible through visitor engagement with art, history and science in an informal learning context like a museum.

What is the future of museum education?

The future of museum education lies in the ability to adapt our practice in response to consistent evaluation and validation about what works.

What advice do you have for new museum education professionals?

Think critically about what specific goal you are trying to achieve through your particular work in museum education. Do you hope that visitors will gain new knowledge? Enhance their own confidence in your subject

area? See themselves as creators and producers? Connect to each other in more meaningful ways? Appreciate the relevance of your subject? Your ability to focus on a small set of these will help you prove the importance and impact of your efforts.

What are your go-to sources for keeping your thinking fresh, i.e. specific books, blogs, articles, mentors, etc.?

I'm an avid reader of online content aggregators like Zite, Pulse, Flipboard, etc... Rather than following particular blogs or news channels, these services build a profile of my areas of interest and then survey the whole of the web for articles and feeds that relate best. I also maintain a very active Twitter network of museum professionals who often post about their work or things they find online that are valuable. This professional network has proven to be extremely valuable and I highly recommend that anyone in museums begin to build and cultivate peers on Twitter that they respect.



Calendar

- April 3** **Deadline Extended!**
Sustainability Excellence Award Submissions Due
- April 16** **Using Evaluation in our Practice as Educators**
Google+ Hangouts Event
- April 26–29** **AAM Annual Meeting & MuseumExpo**
Atlanta
- May 27** **Orphan Works Basics and Best Practices**
Live webinar
- May 27–29** **Leading the Future of Museum Education: Challenges and Opportunities**
Denver



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