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**EdCom Newsletter:
December 2014**

Chair's Corner

"If you build it, they will come." *Field of Dreams* tells us that. But like most things in Hollywood, the logic behind that proclamation isn't totally rooted in reality. When it comes to real life museum work and engaging diverse audiences, the statement: "if you want people to come to you, first go to them" might ring more true.

The upcoming AAM/EdCom webinar [Takin' it to the Streets: Successful Models for Museum Outreach](#) explores this idea with four educators who are offering compelling programs beyond museum walls. Join us to discover how these museums are provoking thought, inspiring action and creating community outside of the physical site to the benefit of their communities.

See below for more details!



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Let's Talk About It

[Takin' it to the Streets: Successful Models for Museum Outreach](#)

Wednesday, Jan. 21

2-3:30 p.m. (ET)

This webinar will explore compelling examples of programs and initiatives taking place beyond the walls of the museum. How do programs like these provide opportunities for innovation and experimentation? How can museums leverage programs like these to fulfill their civic responsibilities to the communities in which they exist? How can museums provoke thought, inspire action, and create community outside of the physical museum? These questions and more will be explored during the webinar.

Details and registration can be found on the [AAM website](#).

Call for Volunteers: Help with January Webinar!

We are looking for volunteers from across the country to invite and host colleagues from across their region for follow up discussions to the Takin' it to the Streets: Successful Models for Museum Outreach webinar on Jan. 21.

All you need is a projector, reliable internet connection, a space to host colleagues and a desire to network and learn with fellow museum professionals from your area. If you are interested in serving as a host, please contact [Jennifer Reifsteck](#).

What Are You Reading?

Each month we ask luminaries in the field what's on their nightstand. This newsletter features Jane Burrell, senior vice president of education and public programs at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Creativity, Inc.: Overcoming the Unseen Forces That Stand in the Way of True Inspiration, by Ed Catmull and Amy Wallace



I came across this book while searching for another title and although I don't normally read books about starting companies, the concept of how to manage in a creative environment intrigued me. The founding of Pixar Animation Studios turned out to be more compelling than I had imagined and I was able to take away a number of insights to apply to museum work. Some of my favorites are to hire people smarter than you are and then give them the potential to grow because getting the right team can make ideas better. To push small problems down the organization, rather than solving them yourself, and not to be convinced that you are always right. That communication should not mirror the organizational structure and that supervisors should share problems as a way to create a more inclusive culture. I look forward to putting these ideas and others into practice.

Awards of Excellence Spotlight

EdCom has recognized outstanding contributions to museum education since 1983. Over the next four newsletters we will highlight the accomplishments of this year's award winners. If you know a person, program or resource worthy of recognition, keep them in mind for our next call for nominations this winter.

2014 Excellence in Programming Award: Young Researchers Collaborative, Lincoln Park Zoo, Chicago



In 2014 the Young Researchers Collaborative at the Lincoln Park Zoo in Chicago received the EdCom Award for Excellence in Programming. Grounded in best practices, responsive to community needs for science education, and rigorous in its evaluation, the Young Researchers Collaborative offers a powerful model for successful education programming. Students and classroom teachers develop and carry-out original research projects in ethology of ecological diversity. Participation offers an opportunity for students to build overall science literacy, increase awareness of the conservation research occurring at Lincoln Park Zoo on the part of students and classroom teachers, and support teachers in making classroom connections to this work.

Contact: [Allison Price](#), director of education, Lincoln Park Zoo.

Nominate Excellence You Know!

EdCom is proud to announce the opening of nominations for the 2015 EdCom Awards in the following

categories:

Excellence in Practice: This award recognizes an individual who demonstrates exemplary service to the public through the practice of education in a museum. The person's contributions may be through teaching, program development, community organizing, writing, research and/or professional activities. [Submit your nomination today.](#)

Excellence in Programming: This award recognizes exemplary creativity and innovation in museum educational programming. [Submit your nomination today.](#)

Excellence in Resources: The award recognizes outstanding education resources in print, online and/or multimedia formats based on audience research, best practices in education theory, and creativity and design. [Submit your nomination today.](#)

All Excellence award nominations are due by **Feb. 1, 2015.**

We are also still accepting nominations for the **John Cotton Dana Award for Leadership.** Nominations are due by **Dec. 14, 2014.**

Calling You!

As your bimonthly newsletter, we want to hear from you! Want to highlight events at your museum or in your community? Is there a burning issue you want to bring to the attention of your colleagues? Or do you have some thoughts to share on museums and museum education? Let us know! E-mail your opinion pieces to edcomweb@gmail.com for inclusion in the newsletter, and we'll share your ideas with the museum education community.

EdCom Website

We are happy to announce that the EdCom website is back up and running, now hosted under AAM's website. You can find it at <http://www.aam-us.org/resources/professional-networks/edcom>.

We have lots of revisions planned for the upcoming months, ranging from a completely redone resources page, to an archive of past newsletters, to more details on getting involved. Keep an eye open!

Upcoming Survey

AAM is conducting surveys of the various professional networks. Look for a survey from EdCom in January.

One Good Thing

The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston: hang@MFAH

Thanks to support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH), researched, developed and is now implementing hang@MFAH, a teen-centric learning lab providing teens with guidance and resources to help them succeed in today's digitally-enhanced world.

Hang@MFAH (Houston Art New Generation) is composed of motivated teens interested in the visual arts and digital media.

While the group is guided by a mentor artist, the program participants self-direct their own learning



experiences and initiate a variety of projects. *Hang@MFAH* participants can ask questions, discover what they want to pursue and then make it happen in a communal environment. By providing a safe, fun space for teens to gather for self-directed learning with ample access to innovative technology, *hang@MFAH* is successfully equipping young people with the tools to communicate ideas, discover new boundaries in artistic expression, and think critically about the impact of art and technology on their daily lives through the lens of MFAH collections.



This 21st century model of Connected Learning is based on evidence that the most resilient, adaptive, and effective learning involves individual interest and social support to help young people overcome adversity and provide recognition. As such, *hang@MFAH* has been recognized by the Association of Art Museum Directors as a "next practice" in art museums. This honor distinguishes *hang@MFAH* as a forerunner in 21st century engagement.

For more information, please visit www.mfah.org/hang

Meet the Board

This month we extend a huge welcome to Jason Porter, associate director of education at the Skirball Cultural Center and Kelly McKinley, director of the Oakland Museum of California Lab.

Jason Porter

Why are you involved in EdCom?

I am interested in helping to create and support the community of museum educators both in their local regions and across the country. Personally, my experiences in the field have been enriched each time I connect with colleagues at other institutions or look more broadly for ideas, inspiration, and best practice. I hope to participate, along with this talented team of board members, in furthering our abilities to connect and share what works.



What's your day job?

I am the Associate Director of Education at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles.

What is the future of museum education, in 10 words or fewer?

Finding new ways for visitors (of all ages) to connect with objects, ideas, communities, and each other. (I'm way over on words, but who's counting?!)

What advice do you have for museum professionals?

Three qualities that I believe are important to cultivate - regardless of where you work or in what role - are creativity, the ability to look critically at your own work, and your humility. Master those and you'll move mountains!

What is one fun fact about yourself?

I am a proud bike commuter in a city where people drive down the block (and pay for parking) to get a cup of coffee.

Kelly McKinley

Why are you involved in EdCom?

EdCom figured strongly in my navigation of the field as an emerging museum education professional. I

seized the invitation to join the EdCom Steering Committee Board as an opportunity to give back now that I'm two decades into my career!

What's your day job?

I joined the Oakland Museum of California five months ago as the Director, OMCA Lab. I oversee the museum's curatorial team of historians, art historians and natural scientists, our experience developers and visitor research specialists.



What is the future of museum education, in 10 words or fewer?

Our future is about reimagining what public service can mean for our institutions and our communities.

What advice do you have for museum professionals?

Build your network in person and online. Look beyond the museum field for inspiration and models for our work.

What is one fun fact about yourself?

I was born in Montreal, Canada, and raised in Ireland.

Calendar

- Dec. 14** **John Cotton Dana Award for Leadership** Submissions Due
- Jan. 16** **Excellence in Exhibition** Submissions Due
- Jan. 17** **Nancy Hanks Memorial Award for Professional Excellence** Submissions Due
- Jan. 17** **Distinguished Service to Museums Award** Submissions Due
- Jan. 21** **Takin' it to the Streets: Successful Models for Museum Outreach**
Live webinar
- Jan. 28** **Training Museum Volunteers**
Live webinar
- Feb. 1** **Excellence in Practice** Award Submissions Due
- Feb. 1** **Excellence in Resources** Award Submissions Due
- Feb. 1** **Excellence in Programming** Award Submissions Due
- Feb. 23** **Muse Award** Submissions Due
- Feb. 23–24** **Museums Advocacy Day**
Washington, DC
- April 26–29** **AAM Annual Meeting & MuseumExpo**
Atlanta



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