



Message from the Chair

Dear EdCom Members,

Much has happened this year in EdCom, but personally the most significant moment happened during the Annual Luncheon in Baltimore this May. If you were among the attendees, you were treated to an amazing conversation with four scions of our field—Elaine Gurian, Mary Ellen Munley, Bonnie Pittman, and Linda Sweet—about the founding of EdCom four decades ago and challenges the field faces today. A recording of the session can be viewed [here](#). Each panelist not only spoke about the genesis of the organization, but also gave their views and advice on what lies ahead for EdCom and the field.

Two of the most salient comments made by Ms. Munley were the importance of grassroots organization and the need for each professional to look closely where needs or gaps appear. Her advice is to advocate passionately for solutions and not passively wait for ideas to come forth, but actively make work. It is my view that EdCom has the ability to do both of those things successfully, but can only succeed with the involvement, input and contributions of colleagues in the field. One of the major changes we implemented this year was a board restructuring that empowers focused committee work to address issues across the field and creates new opportunities for colleagues to become involved. If you are interested in joining the conversation and learning about ways you can participate, please contact our Board Development Committee through [this form](#) and let us know what interests you most.

One of EdCom's strategic agenda themes is the promotion of excellence and advancement in our field. There are two important and immediate ways you can help us achieve those goals. First, nominate an individual or program for an [EdCom Award of Excellence](#). A full list of awards, descriptions and past winners can be [viewed on our website](#). The second way is to present at the Marketplace of Ideas. Personally, I think the Marketplace is one of the most valuable sessions during the Annual Meeting and is a prime way to share great work and gather new ideas on best practices and emerging trends. You will receive a second email in the weeks ahead with information about applying for the Marketplace.

The EdCom board is continuously seeking input on how better to serve its constituents. You are always welcome to send feedback and suggestions to me directly at chair@edcom.org. Now that membership to EdCom is free to any member of the Alliance,

December 2013

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Calendar

Jan. 15

[Award-Winning Digital Communities, Technology-Based Educational Programming and Public Outreach](#)

Live webinar

Jan. 17

[Nancy Hanks Award for Professional Excellence](#)

Submission Deadline

Jan. 17

[Award for Distinguished Service to Museums](#)

Submission Deadline

Jan. 24

[Museums Advocacy Day](#)

Registration Closes

Jan. 31

[Excellence in Exhibition](#)

Submission Deadline

Feb. 10

[Award for Excellence in Resources](#) Submission

please encourage your friends and colleagues to opt in—it's a benefit to them and to the field.

Deadline

Best wishes for a happy and healthy 2014.

Nathan Richie
EdCom Chair
Director, Golden History Museums
Golden, Colorado

A Note on Bimonthly Newsletters

Welcome to your new bi-monthly e-mail newsletter from EdCom! Since one of EdCom's values as a professional network is transparency, we want to ensure you know what the board is doing and what's going on around the field. Every other month, we'll send you some brief updates from the EdCom Board letting you know what we're working on and how you can get involved.

In each newsletter, look for:

- A message from the EdCom chair
- A report from one board committee
- A report from one of the six regional representatives
- A look back and ahead at EdCom and Alliance events
- Meet the Board: a chance to get to know some of the board members a little better

We're also looking to hear from you! We'd love to know:

- Are there events in your area you'd like to highlight?
- What are you thinking about museum education today?
We're looking for short opinion pieces to run in each newsletter
- What do you want to hear about in the newsletter?

If you're interested in writing for the newsletter or have information to share, please contact us at edcomweb@gmail.com.

As always, the Communications Committee's virtual doors are always open to you, via [e-mail](#), on [Twitter](#), on [Facebook](#) and on [LinkedIn](#). If you have a question, comment or concern, we'd love to hear from you.

Elissa Frankle
Communications Chair

Annual Meeting: Looking Back, Looking Ahead

Thank you to those who could join us in Baltimore for the AAM Annual Meeting. We hope you left Charm City feeling pumped-up, inspired and connected to colleagues. The conference offered many education-related sessions to stir our thinking. One of the most compelling (and I don't think it's an overstatement to say "historic") programs took place at the EdCom lunch. We brought together titans in museum education—Bonnie Pitman, Elaine Gurian, Linda Sweet and Mary Ellen Munley—for a conversation reflecting on the committee's 40th anniversary. These gamechangers spoke candidly about the difficulties and eventual

triumphs establishing EdCom, petitioning for spots on AAM's Board and publishing Excellence and Equity—a mere 42 drafts and four years after the initial idea! It's hard to believe there really was a time, and that it wasn't so long ago, when education didn't have a prominent seat at the table. The panelists' accounts reminded us how indebted we are to their doggedness. If you didn't get a chance to attend, check out [this video](#). We're looking forward to seeing you in Seattle for our [next meeting](#), May 18–22. If you have ideas for lunchtime speakers, we're all ears: please fill out [this survey](#) and share your thoughts with us.

Sarah Jesse
EdCom Chair-Elect

Update from Museum Education Issues Committee

February is not so far off. What's important about February? [Museum Advocacy Day](#), of course! Mark your calendar for Feb. 24–25. Why should museum educators care about Museum Advocacy Day? There are so many reasons.

First, those folks on Capitol Hill are making decisions about things that directly affect the work we do every day. For example, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 was the name given to the law that reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Since that's due for reauthorization, this is our opportunity to [let our representatives](#) know the important role museums play in the education of our nation's students. They need to know that teachers are bringing their students to museums less and less as they focus on teaching to the test. Second, in our work as museum educators we have powerful stories to share. For example, the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library's partnership with the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation brings new meaning to the concepts of courage, commitment, sacrifice integrity, citizenship and patriotism as teachers and students learn firsthand about what these words mean to Medal of Honor recipients. These real world stories mean a great deal to our congressmen as they make decisions that influence important funding streams that impact our programs. Third, museum educators are doing great things. [Museum Advocacy Day](#) gives us an opportunity to let our nation know. If you won't be attending but someone else from your institution is, be sure to share a story or two with that person about how your museum education programs have changed somebody's life.

Betsy Bowers
Museum Education Issues Vice Chair

Regional Updates

The EdCom newsletter highlights news and events from a featured region each month. Please look for an update in the next issue. Do you have information about recent or upcoming professional development, exceptional public programs, new initiatives or issues in your region? Please share your news with your EdCom state or regional representative. If you need their contact information, please contact [Leah Fox](#), Membership Chair.

A Note on Volunteering for EdCom

The Board Development Committee is pleased with the response from members to our call for volunteers. Each volunteer is being slotted into a committee over the next month. Volunteers, look for communications from your new committee chairs soon. If you missed the opportunity to volunteer, there are always opportunities to connect through projects. Please contact [Judy Koke](#) if you would like to volunteer.

Meet the Board

Hassan Najjar, Professional Development Committee Chair



Why are you involved in EdCom?

My involvement with EdCom began during my senior year of college. I was an EdCom Diversity Fellow and the Vice Chair of Awards helped me navigate my first AAM Annual Meeting. That was in 2005 and now in 2013 I have the same position within EdCom. Being able to work with individuals and museums that are being nominated for their very best work has been a great experience. Working with newcomers to the field has been the most rewarding of all. Serving as a mentor for rising professionals is a great way to give back to the field and it helps build your professional network.

What's your day job?

Executive Director, Museum Center at Five Points, Cleveland, TN

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

Finding ways to become increasingly relevant in a world with many distractions.

What advice do you have for new museum education professionals?

As a new museum director I rely on my network constantly for advice, recommendations, and second opinions. New professionals should take every opportunity they can to build their networks and participating in EdCom and the Alliance is a great way to do that.

What is one fun fact about yourself?

I've got mad skills on the tambourine.

Courtney Brouwer, Annual Conference Committee Chair



Why are you involved in EdCom?

My position is fairly unique in that I work for a foundation that operates three museums—two bricks-and-mortar, one mobile. I oversee programming and operations for the mobile museum from our downtown office, while the other museums are located in the suburbs. Although I work in an office

with over 40 people, just one of them is a fellow museum professional. EdCom has connected me to a community of professionals that I have really come to rely upon and trust.

What's your day job?

I work as an assistant director at the McCormick Foundation, where I oversee the Freedom Express mobile museum.

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

Fostering dialogue and building skills that strengthen our communities.

What advice do you have for new museum education professionals?

Networking in the traditional sense can feel like unabashed opportunism. And if you're an introvert like me, it's only slightly preferable to the intestinal flu. If you think about it less as a way to land your next job, and more as a chance to learn from and contribute to a community of practice, your interactions will feel sincere and the connections you make will be genuine. The professional opportunities will follow.

What is one fun fact about yourself?

Before settling on a history degree, I majored in aviation for three weeks. Take off, flying and landing? No problem. Communicating with the tower at the same time? Not so much.



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