

Never having attended a TAM conference, or a museum conference for that matter, I had no idea what to expect but everyone, including the hotel staff, was warm and inviting. A couple of the TAM folks at the registration table even recognized me as one of the three scholarship winners.

The daily sessions provided a wide variety of speakers and topics. I took copious notes and walked away from each session with practical information that can benefit both me and my employers. One of my favorite themes in some of the sessions was how various exhibits or organizations came into being; an important reminder that museums cannot exist and be successful apart from their communities.

Due to an emergency at home, I had to leave the conference after lunch on Thursday so I was not able to partake in all sessions, tours, and after-hours festivities, though I am happy to report I did win the framed print of Marie Thérèse in the silent auction. I had a great time listening to the various speakers, meeting my colleagues, and even getting to socialize with my coworkers outside of the office. The conference itself seemed to be running smoothly & efficiently as well. It's no small feat to make sure speakers and sessions stay within their allotted times!

This was my first "small", multi-day conference and I really see the benefit of a smaller group experience, rather than being just one of thousands and getting lost in the shuffle. I'm excited to see all of the great work being done in our state, and I'm thankful for the opportunity to be a part of it.