

TAM Conference Schedule

Draft 1/6/2022

Wednesday, March 16

8:00 am–4:00 pm

Conference Registration and Information

10:30–11:30 am

Regional Meet Ups

11:15 am

Humanities Tennessee Scholarship Winners Pre-Conference Meeting

12:00–1:15 pm

Welcome to TAM 2022 Luncheon – Recovering

Zach Ledbetter, TMP, Director of Outreach & Engagement for the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development, will kick off our conference with an update about tourism in the state and how it is recovering post-COVID.

12:00–4:30 pm

Silent Auction Open for Bidding

1:15–4:30 pm

Punch Your TAM Passport! Exhibit Hall Open

1:30–2:30 pm **SESSION ONE**

- **Adding Self-Care to Your Day:** Tired of mindfulness tips that leave you even more stressed? Let's talk about the trifecta of work, family, and health. This session will share ideas that you can (yes, actually CAN) include in your day to respond to your own mental health needs and reconnect with the love of family and career that sometimes becomes cloudy, especially during a pandemic. Participants will leave with mindfulness tips that can be applied to our varied lives.
Speaker: Polly Brasher, Education Director, Discovery Park of America
- **Serving and Extending Your Mission Through Online Exhibitions:** Online exhibitions, whether stand-alone or complementary to physical installations, can help museums not only serve their missions, especially when visitors cannot visit, but also extend scholarship beyond the physical space and provide new ways for visitors to engage with content. When combined with a social media strategy, that expansion can be particularly successful. Hear how the Tennessee State Museum and others have used online exhibitions this past year, and plans for moving this strategy forward in the future.
Speaker: Joe Pagetta, Director of Communications, Tennessee State Museum
- **The Power of Art and Story: Surviving a Global Pandemic in Tennessee's Oldest Town:** This session will discuss how the McKinney Center handled the initial closing of the building to the public at the onset of the COVID pandemic in 2020, the phased reopening of the building,

creating new online content and videos, creating new programming, and revamping existing programs to meet community needs and safety standards. It will also explore how they followed CDC guidelines when many around them did not, and how they consciously began planning events and programs in safe ways.

Speakers: Jules Corriere, Outreach Director, McKinney Center; Theresa Hammons, Director, McKinney Center

2:30–3:15 pm **BREAK AND POSTER SESSION** – *Ballroom Lobby*

3:15–4:15 pm **SESSION TWO**

Join facilitator-led Roundtable Sessions and discuss issues related to post-COVID recovery for Tennessee's museums. Share your stories and ideas and hear from others throughout the state as we plan for 2022 and beyond.

- **Collections/Curators:** *Moderator: Tori Mason, Historic Site Manager, Nashville Zoo*
- **Directors/Administration:** *Moderator: Erica Dahlgren, Director of Interpretation and Operations, Belle Meade Historic Site*
- **Educators/Interpreters:** *Moderator: Charles Googe, Education Director, Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum*
- **Volunteers/Docents:** *Moderator: René Rodgers, Head Curator, Birthplace of Country Music Museum*

Evening Event: TAM Awards in Historic Jonesborough

6:00pm Buses depart hotel

6:45–7:30pm Explore downtown Jonesborough

7:30pm TAM Awards of Excellence Presentation and Dinner at McKinney Center

9:30 Buses depart for hotel

Thursday, March 17

8:00 am–4:00 pm

Conference Registration and Information

Silent Auction Open for Bidding

Punch Your TAM Passport! Exhibit Hall Open

8:30–9:30 am **SESSION THREE**

- **Exhibit Fundraising Case Study: Growing a Culture of Support:** In January 2019, Discovery Park of America set a lofty fundraising goal to create an exhibit on innovation in agriculture. On December 5, 2020, "Agriculture: Innovating for Our Survival," the new, one-million-dollar exhibit, opened to the public. This case-study presentation includes examples, tips and tricks, and fundraising lessons learned that can be applied to projects large and small and in museums of all sizes.

Speaker: Scott Williams, President and CEO, Discovery Park of America

- **Re-Housing a Doll Collection – Challenges with Multi-Composite Materials:** A long-term collections-care project is currently underway at the Tennessee State Museum in preparation for a move to a new storage facility. While packing the collection offers many challenges, dolls present a particular conundrum due to their complex material-makeup and varied shapes and sizes. This session will focus on how conservators examined the dolls and associated items, assessed previous storage methods, and developed an easily replicated and standardized packing method for dolls in the TSM collection.

Speakers: Mark Bynon, Owner, Bynon Art Services, LLC; Kayla Silvia, Contractor, Bynon Art Services, LLC

- **Using Technology to Engage with Your Visitors:** In this digital age and many venues going 100% digital ticketing and more, attendees will learn how Powernet has helped venues adapt to changes and engage with their visitors better than ever. We will also review how new technologies play an important role in visitor engagement, staff connectivity, museum operations, and security, and the ways it can increase efficient operations of large public venues.

Speaker: Oscar Bross, Senior Account Manager, Powernet

9:30–10:00 am

Coffee and Conversation with Exhibitors

10:00–11:00 am **SESSION FOUR**

- **A Happy Marriage: How to Develop a Fruitful Relationship with Your Nonprofit Board:** Presenters will discuss the role of a nonprofit board of directors and its relationships with the executive director and staff. They will discuss conflict resolution and strategies for balancing the board's goals and mission with those of the cultural site. Attendees will leave with strategies to foster healthy board participation. Finally, this will create a safe environment for attendees to ask questions and have honest conversations about addressing their site's relationship with its board.

Speaker: Sarah Williams, Museum Curator, Tennessee Agricultural Museum

- **Connecting Local Stories to Uncover Tennessee's WWII Homefront History: A Curriculum Project:** Tennessee's nickname as The Volunteer State predates WWII by over a century, but its residents were still living up to their reputation during the 1940s. However, stories about how Tennesseans contributed to the war effort from home are often overshadowed by the war itself. This session will discuss the WWII Homefront Curriculum Project launched by Teaching with

Primary Sources—MTSU in collaboration with the Library of Congress, Tennessee State Parks, The Gore Center, and others.

Speaker: Colbi Layne Hogan, Education Consultant, Teaching with Primary Sources, Middle Tennessee State University

- **Furniture on the Move: Handling, Shipping, and Storing Furniture Pieces in Museum Collections:** Moving furniture collections can pose logistical challenges due to their unwieldy size, complex construction, and large storage footprint. This session will address the process of shipping and storing furniture through description and analysis of the methods used in the current Tennessee State Museum collection rehousing project. Topics will include general handling guidelines, common furniture challenges, selection of materials, long-term versus short-term packing, and palette construction.

Speaker: Sarah Beach, Conservation Technician, Bynon Art Services

11:15 am–12:30 pm

Business Luncheon

12:45–1:45 pm **SESSION FIVE**

- **Education on the Flip Side: High-Tech and Low-Tech Approaches to Reconnect Audiences in 2021 and Beyond:** As museums revamp approaches to education, institutions have multiple viable paths to engage audiences in an impactful learning experience. Hear two different approaches to reconnect audiences to their museum's mission and content through relevant digital programs and immersive living history presentations.
Speakers: Charles Googe, Education Director, Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum; Christopher Grisham, K-12 Programs Manager, Tennessee State Museum
- **Making Good on Our “Alliance”:** This session examines a selection of recent projects undertaken by The Heritage Alliance to address African American history in Northeast Tennessee, unfolding in the context of COVID-19. These programs include a historic play, an inter-institutional workshop series, and museum exhibits that respond to the call for more inclusive, representative regional histories. What does contemporary social and racial justice work look like, even in the context of a global health crisis? Find out here.
Speakers: Anne G'Fellers Mason, Executive Director, The Heritage Alliance of Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia; Joe Spiker, Head Docent, Chester Inn State Historic Site & Museum; Megan Cullen Tewell, PhD, Programming Coordinator, The Heritage Alliance of Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia
- **Taking STEPS Toward the 250th:** America 250 is fast approaching, and it will have a significant impact on state and local history organizations. How can we best prepare for this commemoration? The AASLH STEPS program is a great first step to prepare your organization for this event by reviewing best practices in the field and applying them to your museum now before long-range planning begins for the national commemoration. This session will also include an update on national America 250 activities.

Speaker: Bethany L. Hawkins, Chief of Operations, American Association for State and Local History

2:00–3:00 pm **SESSION SIX**

Plenary Session: Institution Interrupted: Reconnecting in the Era of COVID-19

March 2020 brought about an unprecedented shift in the way museums could connect with their audiences. In response, this plenary session panel will feature museum leaders from large, mid-size, and small Tennessee institutions in a discussion about the ways that they shifted, changed, and expanded their outreach plans in the era of COVID-19.

Moderator: Brigette Jones, Founding Manager, Bridge Builders Historical Consulting, LLC

Panelists: Rachel Shaver Gibson, Belle Meade Historic Site and Winery; Tamar Smithers, National Museum of African American Music; Joe Sweatt, Promise Land Historic Site

3:15–4:15 pm **SESSION SEVEN**

- **Collection Management and You: A Brief Guide to Record Keeping, Storage, and Professional Scavenger Hunting:** Collections. You can't have a museum without them. But what do you do with them once you have them? Join staff from the Tennessee State Museum's registration department as they discuss how they've pursued "better practices" at their museum. Attendees are encouraged to join in the discussion with their own issues and approaches. It's time to reconnect to our collections and remember that small steps to make things better lead to best practices!

Speakers: Brad Kavan, Registrar, Tennessee State Museum; Nicole Nomany, Curatorial Assistant, Tennessee State Museum

- **How'd You Hear About Us? Reaching Real Audiences in a Virtual World:** Whether you work at a large or small museum, marketing is always a challenge. The COVID pandemic over the past two years has made reaching audiences even more difficult. This session will tap into the experience and strategies of three cultural institutions as they explore marketing methods and staffing, the question of metrics, and the impact of the pandemic on marketing strategies.

Speakers: Spenser Brenner, Exhibition Coordinator, Reece Museum, East Tennessee State University; Anne G'Fellers Mason, Executive Director, The Heritage Alliance of Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia; René Rodgers, Head Curator, Birthplace of Country Music Museum

- **Responding to the Past: Reconnecting to Descendant Communities:** This session will explore the relevance of ethical interpretation concerning "difficult history," as well as the actions that should follow to further re-connect our historic sites with descendant communities. During our time, session participants will be given details about our initiatives and advice on how to implement similar strategies at your respective sites.

Speakers: Erica Dahlgren, Director of Interpretation and Operations, Belle Meade Historic Site and Winery; Brigette Jones, Director of Equitable Partnerships, Belle Meade Historic Site and Winery

Evening Events: Bristol and Bidding

5:00pm Buses depart hotel

5:45–7:00pm Reception and visit at Birthplace of Country Music Museum

7:15pm Group photograph under Bristol Sign

7:30pm Dinner and live auction at Bristol Train Station

9:30pm Buses depart for hotel

Friday, March 18

8:00–11:00 am

Conference Registration and Information

Punch Your TAM Passport! Exhibit Hall Open

Auction Items Payment and Pick Up

9:00–10:00 am **SESSION SEVEN**

Keynote Presentation – Responding

Bethany L. Hawkins, TAM Board Member and Chief of Operations for the American Association for State and Local History, will share inspirational stories from across the country of museums that found creative ways to reach their audiences during 2020 and 2021. How can Tennessee’s museums take these ideas and serve our audiences in the future?

10:00–10:30 am **BREAK**

10:30–11:30 am **SESSION EIGHT**

- **Caring For Business, Caring For People:** Instead of wishing for the old normal, let's embrace our challenges and move forward into this brave new world. Participants will hear about the leadership decisions and staff pivots that allowed Discovery Park of America to continue providing educational content to their local and distant audiences.
Speakers: Polly Brasher, Education Director, Discovery Park of America; Jenny Gilliland, Director, Obion River Regional Library Center
- **Exhibit Development: Tips and Best Practice from Small, Medium, and Large Museums:** This session will provide attendees with practical information about exhibit development. Hear from representatives from small, medium, and large cultural sites address how they manage exhibit development with their specific needs and limitations. Attendees will leave with resources and skills that can be applied to their unique sites.
Speaker: Sarah Williams, Museum Curator, Tennessee Agricultural Museum
- **Recovering and Responding: Tennessee Arts Project Support Grants You Can Apply for Today!** At this session, we will discuss grants available to nonprofit organizations and local governments

through the Tennessee Arts Commission. In response to the news across the state, the TAC is offering the COVID-19 Arts Resilience Grant that provides non-matching funds (yes!! you read correctly, non-matching!!) of \$500–5,000 to support creative responses through the arts and rebuilding efforts related to COVID-19. Join in to find out about this grant and others, along with how to apply today!

Speaker: Krishna Adams, Director of Visual Arts, Craft, Media, and Design, Tennessee Arts Commission

11:45 am–1:00 pm

Closing Luncheon

1:30–3:30 pm

Post-Conference Tours