



Annual Report Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund Legacy Amendment Science Museum of Minnesota



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The Science Museum of Minnesota is pleased to submit an annual report for the work we are doing with the generous appropriation of \$1.2 million for fiscal years 2016-2017 from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund of the Minnesota Legacy Amendment. This report details accomplishments in **FY16: July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016**. We are grateful for your support of our programs.

American Indian Programs

July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2017

FY16 Report, 2.15 FTE

The Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund has been instrumental in helping the Science Museum of Minnesota establish and expand our American Indian exhibit and programming, beginning with the purchase of the Bishop Henry Whipple Collection in fiscal years 2010-2012. We were fortunate to acquire the Bishop Whipple Collection, consisting of local and regional American Indian artifacts from the 1850s. *We Move and We Stay*, the exhibition's title, was created in FY13 and features artifacts from both the Whipple collection and the museum's other American Indian collections. The exhibition tells the story of generations of Dakota and Ojibwe people who have made their home in Minnesota. We have relied heavily on our American Indian advisory council in shaping this exhibit and they have lent their voices and stories to the objects in this collection, as this is their story to tell. The exhibition opened in February 2013 and we continue to expand and improve the exhibit and visitor programming.

In FY16 our focus included: adding final objects and interactivity to the exhibition; developing curriculum materials associated with the exhibition; improving operations of the Visible Lab; and continuing collection digitization efforts. Progress made toward our goals includes:

Goal 1: Increase interest, understanding, and knowledge of Minnesota's Native American culture.

New objects and multimedia visitor experiences were added in FY16 to the exhibition to enhance the visitor experience which will increase interest, understanding and knowledge of Minnesota's Native American culture. The project team also worked on developing and prototyping three physical interactives: Jingle Dress interactive, Star Quilt interactive, and a Create-a-Pot interactive for future additions to the exhibition.

Some of the objects added to the exhibition include:

- 700 year old farming tools found in an ancient village near Prairie Island and a 1,500-2,000 year old cooking pot found near the shores of Spring Lake;
- Ethnographic objects like knocking sticks and winnowing baskets that relate to the wild rice season;
- A video describing the history of jingle dresses and the dressmaker dancing in the dress commissioned for the museum; and
- A large video projection of *Cloudy Waters: Dakota Reflections on the River* created by Mona Smith that depicts the Mississippi River from the perspective of the Dakota.



Goal 2: Increase access to teaching resources on Minnesota's Native American culture.

Now that the exhibition components are finalized, Science Museum of Minnesota educators are developing a curriculum guide for classroom teachers. Museum staff developed a timeline for the project that includes phases for development, pilot testing and revisions related to feedback during testing. Museum staff met with a project consultant and are working on assembling an advisory panel of teachers for guidance and pilot testing. A project advisor is being consulted for teacher recommendations. Our goal will be the development of culturally appropriate materials for the teacher guide. The curriculum development team reviewed the Minnesota Academic Standards for English Language Arts, Social Studies and Science to assess the best alignments of exhibits and classroom activities to support classroom learning goals. The curriculum guide will be completed in FY17 and will be available to teachers visiting the exhibition via the museum's website.

Goal 3: Increase awareness and knowledge of the behind the scenes conservation methods to care for the objects in the museum's collection.

Digitization work will resume in FY17 and will focus on objects in the Minnesota Native American Archaeology collection. The Visible Lab is now staffed by a variety of museum professionals, volunteers and interns who demonstrate research that is currently happening in the museum in relation to the Native American objects in the collection. The main content areas presented in the lab include:

- **Paleoethnobotany:** Museum research staff, Jasmine Koncur, and interns discuss native agriculture and ancient plant use using archaeological data from area excavations. They created a small display of seeds and the artifacts are helping to put the content into context for museum visitors. They discuss the process of their work and the findings.
- **Woodland ceramics:** A Science Museum of Minnesota researcher, Dr. Ed Fleming, and a University of Minnesota collaborator, Dr. Gilliane Monnier, presented pre-contact ceramic traditions of the Woodland period using specimens from the Bremer village site (excavated in 1956, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014).
- **Archaeology of Steele County:** Dr. Fleming and volunteers work on identifying and processing surface collected materials from multiple sites in Steele County, MN. The artifacts represent 8,000 or more years of native history in south-central Minnesota.
- **Object Conservation:** Museum Conservator, Rebecca Newberry, works on object mounts and conservation needs in the lab as appropriate for the objects, project and content.

The museum's Native American Advisory Committee continues to share positive comments about the project. Advisory Committee Chair, Roxanne Gould has stated, "The advisory committee has waited many years for space to be cleared to show the Science Museum's Native collections and we would like you to know we greatly appreciate your support for our request." The exhibition has been a critical teaching tool for classes at Macalester College: Midwest Archaeology (S2015) and Cultural Resource Management (S2016). The physical connection to the museum's *Race: Are We So Different?* exhibition has brought more people into the space to explore the objects, interactives and content of the exhibition. Museum gallery staff have commented on how popular the redeveloped multimedia components are with visitors.

As of June 30, 2016, the direct expenses for this project are \$190,287.93. The administrative costs are \$9,514.40. Other funds for the project were not needed or received in FY16. We are grateful for the continued support from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund to expand this project – from purchasing the Bishop Henry Whipple Collection to completing the exhibit.

Statewide School Initiative

July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2017

FY16 Report, 2.80 FTE

The Science Museum of Minnesota continues to make it a top priority to enhance our programs and offerings to schools and teachers throughout the state. With previous Legacy support, we undertook a museum-wide evaluation of our offerings to schools to determine the best way to serve student and educator audiences. Current Legacy support of our second project has given us the ability to invest in new programs and resources that directly address academic standards and ensure high-quality educational experiences. Progress made toward project goals includes:

“Our students had a great time exploring all of the interactive hands-on exhibits at the Science Museum. They were able to get experiences they won't get anywhere else.” – Teacher Feedback

Goal 1: Increase access to museum programming and resources for schools throughout Minnesota.

We fulfilled our commitment to reach all 87 Minnesota counties in FY16 through our work with schools. We served over 181,000 participants through field trips or outreach programming. To provide greater access, generous private donors provide scholarships and reimbursements for schools and youth programs through the Education Opportunity Fund which supported the participation of over 30,000 students and youth in Science Museum programs.

Goal 2: Support students, teachers, schools and districts to provide high quality STEM learning experiences.

We have continued to revise existing and develop new learning experiences for school audiences aligned to Minnesota Academic Standards for Science. Program development incorporates best practices for science education instruction, culturally relevant teaching strategies and informal science methods. We updated field trips, learning labs, Educator Guides, program packages and residency program curricula. Topics are wide-ranging, covering content such as: Electricity, Energy Connections, Dinosaurs, Engineering, Water, Computational Thinking, and more.

Goal 3: Engage students, teachers and schools in dialogue about race and identity.

In October 2015 the museum brought back *RACE: Are We So Different?* - one of its most powerful exhibition experiences - to help learners of all ages examine the biology, history, and contemporary lived experience of race and racism in the United States. In FY16 the exhibition was available for all school field trip visitors. We introduced programs targeted for the school audience around *RACE*, including:

- A *Race Exhibit & Program Package* for schools was offered with the support of the Legacy funding. The package started in the museum auditorium with the presentation of “*Race to the Finish Line*,” a 15 minute, two actor performance highlighting the difficulty of talking about race and identity even between friends. Following the performance, the actors



engaged students through reflective questions and response. Students then experienced the *RACE* exhibit. We served 10,518 students attending 102 schools through this package.

- In partnership with the Penumbra Theatre over 2,000 students from 10 schools participated in the *Race Program Package* followed by a Penumbra Theatre Race Workshop at their school. The workshops led by Penumbra Theatre teaching artists used theater techniques and small group activities to explore and discuss race and identity. This work was supported by a Knight Arts Challenge grant from the John L. and James S. Knight Foundation.
- Staff updated the previous version of the *RACE* exhibition Educator Guide to: a) be more relevant to students' life experiences; b) enhance student-exhibit interaction and activities, and c) incorporate facilitation strategies.
- *RACE* Exhibition Educator Groups provided opportunities to visit the exhibition, to see the *Race to the Finish Line* performance, and reflect on their experiences. Eight groups attended with 233 participants.

Goal 4: Communicate effectively with Minnesota teachers, schools, and districts about museum programs, resources and professional development opportunities.

We focus on meaningful communication and engagement with Minnesota teachers through print, e-mail, web, personal contacts, conferences, museum events and other meetings. Highlights of these efforts include: reaching out to 11,000 teachers every week with e-mails that include classroom tips, inspiration, and museum programming information; creating a Teacher Resource Guide for the 2015-2016 school year which was mailed to 10,000 teachers across Minnesota; and hosting an educator preview to showcase the *National Parks Adventure* Omnifilm - over 200 teachers attended to learn about relevant educational resources. Our School Liaison, Kelly Meyer, attended nine conferences including the Minnesota Conference on Science Education in Duluth and the Minnesota Council for Social Studies in St. Cloud.



We are inspired by these successes, especially the milestone of reaching all 87 counties in Minnesota through field trips and school programs. We hope to continue this work with additional Legacy funding during the FY18-19 biennium.

As of June 30, 2016, the direct expenses for this project are \$311,478.22. The administrative costs are \$15,573.91. Additional funding for the School Network project includes gifts from private donors totaling \$994,150. The support provided by the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund has given us the ability to invest in new program development and create new resources that directly address academic standards and ensure teachers and students have high-quality educational experiences with Science Museum of Minnesota programs.

Information

July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2017

The Science Museum of Minnesota is pleased to submit this report on support from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund of the Legacy Amendment. We're proud of our work on these projects and look forward to continuing the important work that these funds make possible. The museum would be thrilled to provide a tour of the museum, our school services or American Indian programming and we would be happy to answer any additional questions. Please contact Jon Severson for additional information: jseverson@smm.org or 651-221-9499.

Legacy project information is accessible online at:

<http://www.smm.org/legacy>

<http://www.legacy.leg.mn/projects/2016-2017-science-museum-minnesota>

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