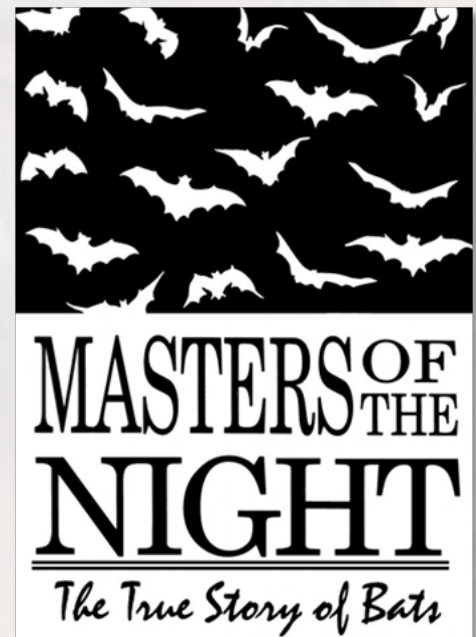
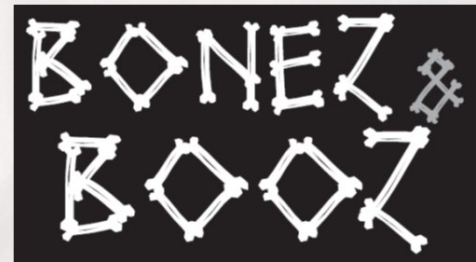


FY2024 Advancement

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“Celebrating 2,000 years of natural history”



About VMNH Advancement

VMNH Advancement includes the major areas of Marketing, Development, Exhibits (including rentals), Museum Rental, and Special Events. The museum's Deputy Director serves as the liaison to the VMNH Foundation, providing fundraising support and administration.

About the Virginia Museum of Natural History Foundation

The VMNH Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit that exists to support the Virginia Museum of Natural History. The board consists of up to 30 members from across the Commonwealth and beyond. The VMNH Foundation works to secure support for the museum, utilizing the VMNH strategic plan as a guide. The VMNH Foundation operates under the VMNH strategic plan, working closely with staff and Trustees to secure support for mission-based programs and initiatives as identified by the Board of Trustees and staff leadership. VMNH Foundation Board Members, Museum Trustees, and museum staff work collaboratively to:

- Identify fundraising needs and priorities based on museum needs
- Implement tactics to support the overall museum strategy
- Communicate museum needs to existing donors, donor prospects, and identified key stakeholders
- Secure support for museum priorities and initiatives, with key tactics to include:
 - Membership
 - Annual giving
 - Corporate Partnership support
 - Grants
 - Capital gifts
 - Endowment support

Fundraising Activities

The below activities are in addition to the crucial tasks of donor cultivation, solicitation and stewardship, including sending and following up on appeal letters, distributing promotional materials, maintaining updated information both in print and online, ensuring that donors receive the benefits that correspond to their giving level, and ensuring that donors are properly recognized.

Events

The VMNH Foundation Board and staff leaders will utilize events and programs strategically for support of mission-based programs. The primary fundraising events for FY24 are the museum's science festivals. These festivals provide several key

benefits, including:

- Generating earned revenue for the museum
- Serving as fundraising tools, with festivals representing an attractive benefit on the menu of Partner benefits.
- Serving as drivers for VMNH Memberships, with signups at check-in.
- Generating direct overall support for mission-based museum programs.
- Directly supporting the museum's mission

Enhanced festivals have replaced previous events held primarily as fundraisers (not mission-based), including the VMNHF Golf Tournament and the VMNHF Annual Gala. Science Festivals provide greater connection to mission and return on investment. For example:

- The last Grapes & Grains gala, held in 2022, generated \$20,261 in gross revenue with \$4,763 in net revenue = **24% profit margin**.
- The 2022 Dino Festival generated \$44,590 in gross revenue with \$41,090 in net revenue = **92% profit margin**.

Science Festivals are our most impactful and successful fundraising events.

Updating fundraising and marketing systems

Staff are leading a major upgrade from the current Raiser's Edge system to DonorSnap, with the change-out taking place in April 2023.

Staff updates

Bethany Fisher began as Museum Experiences Manager in early 2023, with the new position title reflecting the emphasis of this position on public outreach via exhibitions, graphic design and project management.

Program-specific grants

Research, proposal writing and administration of program-specific grants, with areas of focus including:

- Science Festivals
- New exhibits
- Education programming
- Current and proposed capital projects
- Scientific research (providing support for curator grants)

Membership

VMNH mission: To interpret Virginia's natural heritage within a global context in ways that are relevant to all citizens of the Commonwealth.

Communicating to members and prospective members the importance of membership to the museum's mission, along with highlighting Member benefits:

- Launch of Membership campaign in fall 2023
- Direct mailing to lapsed members
- Social media campaign targeting new members
- Communication of benefits, including reciprocal admission program, retail discounts, and free general and festival admission

Increased benefits to increase Memberships

- Promotion of free admission as a key Membership benefit.
- Promoting member benefits, discounts and events to increase participation.

Reciprocal membership agreements

- Renewal of membership agreement with Danville Science Center, with enhanced joint promotions and both virtual and in-person events
- Identification of additional partners, including the Science Museum of Western Virginia

2-year Memberships

- Implemented in 2013 with continued popularity and growth
- Continued promotion of the program in FY2024

Annual Fund

Targeted messaging to tie gift with examples of programming made possible by those gifts

- "Thanks to your support, ___ area students experienced ___ program."

Increased donor recognition

Corporate Partnerships

Partnerships customized for individual organizations

Diversified recognition options:

VMNH mission: To interpret Virginia's natural heritage within a global context in ways that are relevant to all citizens of the Commonwealth.

- Festivals
- Exhibits
- Scientific research & collections
- Education

Increased Corporate Partner participation by companies and organizations outside the region

- Potential Partners in regions where we have Outreach Education, Traveling Exhibits, etc.

Monthly renewals/upsell contacts/information sharing

- Working with Foundation Board whenever possible, maintain ongoing identification, cultivation, solicitation and stewardship of gifts ranging from \$100 Non-profit level Corp. Partnerships to six-figure prospects statewide.

Volunteer opportunities

- Promote to current and potential Corporate Partners the opportunities for their staff to volunteer at the museum. Opportunities include festivals, events, programs.

Capital Projects

Jean S. Adams Education Pavilion - Project bids open spring 2023. Staff anticipate completion of construction in spring 2023, with a public opening to take place in summer 2023.

VMNH-W - In conjunction with detailed planning, planning and early tasks in preparation for a capital campaign in support of the VMNH-Waynesboro branch, with campaign fundraising contingent on the overall capital funding allocation from the Commonwealth.

Young Explorers Center - Move of books to Douglas pending environmental upgrades, followed by state agency transfer of compactors. Next steps include requested state capital funding with additional private fundraising.

Fundraising priorities

Jean S. Adams Education Pavilion

Fundraising was completed in early 2019, exceeding the fundraising campaign goal by 41%. Due to cost escalation, the total cost of the Pavilion will be much higher, with successful completion necessary in FY24.

Event support

Corporate Partnerships and grants in support of:

- Science Festivals (x4)
- Exhibits (new rental and and improvements to current exhibits)
- Education programming, including need-based scholarships
- Research & Collections activities supplemental to R&C grants
- Additional outreach statewide and beyond

Research and Collections

Working with curators on grant submission and administration

Match for Hoffman Endowment

- \$100,000

Endowed curator position

- \$2 million

Named VMNH Research Center

- \$2 million

Education

In-person and outreach programming

- Homeschool
- Direct to families
- Direct to community organizations
- School programming

Sponsor the salary of one science educator

- \$25,000 per year

Planning support Young Explorers Center

VMNH mission: To interpret Virginia's natural heritage within a global context in ways that are relevant to all citizens of the Commonwealth.

- Campaign amounts TBD, with pending state capital funding request

Exhibits

Securing support for *Dinosaur Discoveries: Ancient Fossils, New Ideas*, open February 11, 2023 to January 20, 2024

Securing support for *Masters of the Night*, open February 10, 2024 to January 12, 2025

Underwrite travel of *Dinosaurs* (traveling maze exhibit)

- \$10,000 per year

Naming Opportunities

A variety of naming opportunities exist at the Virginia Museum of Natural History, from endowed curator positions to individual displays. Giving options include major gifts, planned gifts, and multi-year pledges.

\$2 million

- Endowed curator position

\$1 million

- **Named** – *Harvest Foundation Hall of Ancient Life*

\$500,000

- Science Exhibit Hall

\$250,000

- **Named** – Lee & George W. Lester, II *How Nature Works* gallery
- **Named** – Mr. & Mrs. L. Dudley Walker Lecture Hall

\$150,000

- Plaza
- *Eoibalanoptera* whale cast – Harvest Foundation Hall of Ancient Life
- *Acrocantnosaurus* skeleton cast – Harvest Foundation Hall of Ancient Life
- Clawd the giant ground sloth
- Distance Learning Center
- **Named** – Estate of William F. Carter & Ella Cousins Carter *Allosaurus* skeleton cast – Harvest Foundation Hall of Ancient Life

\$100,000

- Main Lobby
- *How Nature Works: Rocks*
- *How Nature Works: Life*
- *Fossil Overlook*
- **Named** – Dr. Richard L. Hoffman Recent Invertebrates Lab
- **Named** – Cindy Gray Memorial Pollinator Garden

\$75,000

- *Uncovering Virginia – Solite*
- *Uncovering Virginia – Grundy*
- *Uncovering Virginia – Carmel Church*

- *Uncovering Virginia – Saltville*
- Archaeology Lab
- **Named** – Jean S. Adams Education Pavilion
- **Named** – Bassett Furniture Foundation *Graham-White* exhibit
- **Named** – Kitty Sue & Clyde Hooker *Chippokes* exhibit

\$50,000

- Dinosaur and fossil animal (Vertebrate Paleontology) Storage
- Fossil shell (Invertebrate Paleontology) Storage
- Pickled animal (Wet Biology) Storage
- Bugs and bones (Dry Biology) Storage
- “Dirty” Lab
- **Named** – Richard P. Gravely, Jr. Archaeology Collections Storage
- **Named** – Charity League of Martinsville-Henry County Classroom
- **Named** – Claude Moore Charitable Foundation Classroom
- **Named** – George & Jean Adams Earth Sciences Lab
- **Named** – Elster Foundation Vertebrate Paleontology Lab
- **Named** – Hooker Furniture *Discovery Reef*
- **Named** – Mammalogy Lab – In Memory of Mattie H. and Irving M. Groves, Sr. by their Grandchildren Smith and Gael Chaney
- **Named** – Suzanne M. Lacey Education Center

\$25,000

- Invertebrate Paleontology Lab
- Marine Biology and Bryozoan (moss animal) Lab
- Molecular Analysis lab
- Specimen preparation lab
- Nile Crocodile
- *Pteranodon*
- Sinistra whale skull (Hall of Ancient Life)
- Catering Kitchen
- **Named** – Column case – In Appreciation of and to Honor All Virginia Teachers Past, Present and Future
- **Named** – Column Case – In Honor of Nancy L. Barnett
- **Named** – Column Case – In Honor of Caroline, Hunter, Jacob, J. B. and Caroline Frith and Peyton Drane by the J. Burness Frith Family
- **Named** – Column Case – In Honor of Gael Chaney
- **Named** – Column Case – In Memory of Jerry S. Chaney, given by Ruth G. Chaney
- **Named** – Column Case – The Wilbur S. Doyle Family
- **Named** – Column Case – Ralph and J. D. Lester

- **Named** – Column Case – Will & Susan Pannill

\$10,000

- Moose
- Tiger
- Black Bear and Cubs
- Arctic Fox
- Sea Turtle
- Corny the Corn Snake
- Sheldon and Speedy the Turtles
- Cockroach colony

\$10,000

Endow some VMNH Secrets. Contact us at 276-634-4163 or information@vmnh.virginia.gov to learn more...

1. How do we make a skeleton?
2. VMNH has Southside Virginia's largest chamber of horror...
3. Where do we store secrets yet unlocked?
4. We have many ones-of-a-kind... This one is our biggest...
5. How did we find an animal locked in stone?
6. We have a 750-legger...
7. We have a gem of a specimen...
8. We have true crime scene first responders...

Calendar of Events – FY2024

July-August 2023 – Wyoming Dinosaur Dig in partnership with the University of Lynchburg

Sponsored by:

National Science Foundation

July 10-14 – VMNH Summer Adventure Camp: Camp Science Exploration (ages 10-14). Visit www.vmnh.net or email discover@vmnh.virginia.gov to learn more.

Sponsored by:

**Southwestern Piedmont Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists
Kiwanis**

July 20 – Members/Supporters reception for Dino Festival. Special presentation/experiences for VMNH Members/supporters.

July 21-22 – Dino Festival

Sponsored by:

**The Helen S. & Charles G. Patterson Jr. Charitable Foundation Trust
Bassett Furniture Industries
Carter Bank & Trust
Martinsville First Savings Bank
Sovah Health**

August 7-11 – VMNH Summer Adventure Camp: Extreme STEAM (ages 9-11). Visit www.vmnh.net or email discover@vmnh.virginia.gov to learn more.

Sponsored by:

**Southwestern Piedmont Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists
Kiwanis**

August 12 – VMNH BOT meeting (virtual)

August 18 – VMNH Foundation Board meeting

October 13 – VMNH Foundation Advisory Board meeting at noon

October 27 – Members/Supporters reception for Bonez & Booz

October 28 – Bonez & Booz

Sponsored by:

**The Helen S. & Charles G. Patterson Jr. Charitable Foundation Trust
Bassett Furniture Industries
Carter Bank & Trust
Sovah Health**

November 17 – VMNH Foundation Board meeting

November 18 – VMNH BOT meeting

December 8 – A Night at the Museum with Santa

January 20, 2024 – Last day of the *Dinosaur Discoveries: Ancient Fossils, New Ideas* exhibit

January 22-26, 2024 – *Dinosaur Discoveries* de-installation

January 22-26, 2024 – *Dinosaur Discoveries* shipment out

February 8, 2024 – Members/supporters reception for the *Masters of the Night* special exhibit

February 10, 2024 – VMNH BOT meeting

February 10, 2024 – Opening day celebration for the *Masters of the Night: The True Story of Bats* special exhibit

Sponsored by:

Bassett Furniture Industries

(PENDING) The Helen S. & Charles G. Patterson Jr. Charitable Foundation Trust

February 10, 2024 to January 11, 2025 – *Masters of the Night: The True Story of Bats* exhibit

Sponsored by:

(PENDING) The Helen S. & Charles G. Patterson Jr. Charitable Foundation Trust

February 16, 2024 – VMNH Foundation Board meeting

April 18, 2024 – Reptile Festival Members/Supporters preview reception

April 19-20, 2024 – Reptile Festival

Sponsored by:

(PENDING) The Helen S. & Charles G. Patterson Jr. Charitable Foundation Trust

May 11, 2024 – VMNH BOT meeting

May 17, 2024 – VMNH Foundation Board meeting

June-July 2024 – VMNH Summer Camps

Discovery

What will you discover?

As the state museum of natural history, the Virginia Museum of Natural History leads ground-breaking scientific research and collections, award-winning exhibits, and transformational educational programs for all ages. With statewide outreach education and distance learning programs, online resources, and traveling exhibits and displays, ***we are not the biggest experience, but we are the best!***

Research

VMNH scientists make new discoveries that transform the story of Earth's history.

Education

Students of all ages across the Commonwealth and beyond discover new knowledge, inspiring them to become tomorrow's leaders.

Exhibits

VMNH visitors discover the story of Virginia's natural history through immersive exhibit experiences.

Core Audiences

- **General public**
 - Explorers—motivated by personal curiosity (i.e. browsers)
 - Facilitators—motivated by other people and their needs (i.e. a parent bringing a child)
 - Experience-Seekers—motivated by the desire to see and experience a place (i.e. tourists)
 - Professional/Hobbyists—motivated by specific knowledge-related goals (i.e. a scholar researching a specific topic)
 - Rechargers—motivated by a desire for a contemplative or restorative experience
- **Parents/grandparents**
- **Students/teachers**
- **Corporations**
- **Individuals and organizations focused on conservation**

Virginia Museum of Natural History Marketing – FY2024

Focus on maximizing all marketing resources With limited funding for advertising and promotions, staff will make data-driven decisions for all paid advertising and promotions. With a strong focus on festivals and exhibits for FY2024, available funding will be used to maximize attendance using media proven to reach the museum's core audiences.

Targeted grant opportunities to increase marketing budget:

- Partnership with billboard firm to generate annual revenue from VMNHF-owned billboard site
- Portions of grant budgets designated for marketing support
- MHC Tourism grants

What will you discover? As the state museum of natural history, the Virginia Museum of Natural History leads ground-breaking scientific research and collections, award-winning exhibits, and transformational educational programs for all ages. With statewide outreach education and distance learning programs, online resources, and traveling exhibits and displays, ***we are not the biggest experience, but we are the best!***

Target Market As the state museum of natural history, VMNH serves all citizens of the Commonwealth through direct visitation, in-house and traveling exhibits, and education programs both at the museum and through distance learning. Although the museum exists for the benefit of all Virginians, the institution's core visitation and program participation comes from a primary audience within a 50-mile radius. Visitor demographics include:

- Adults – 47%
- Seniors and College Students – 11%
- Children ages 3 to 18 – 37%
- Children under 3 – 5%

Core Audiences

- Corporations
- Individuals and organizations focused on conservation
- Students/teachers
- Parents/grandparents
- General public*

VMNH mission: To interpret Virginia's natural heritage within a global context in ways that are relevant to all citizens of the Commonwealth.

- Explorers—motivated by personal curiosity (i.e. browsers)
- Facilitators—motivated by other people and their needs (i.e. a parent bringing a child)
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- Rechargers—motivated by a desire for a contemplative or restorative experience

*Falk, John. *Identity and the Museum Visitor Experience*. Left Coast Press, 2009

Industry Trends

- Museums and their unique educational programming and multi-use functionality represent significant drivers of educational attainment and economic growth.
- According to the American Educational Research Association, children who visited a museum during kindergarten had higher achievement scores in reading, mathematics and science in third grade than children who did not. This benefit is also seen in the subgroup of children who are most at risk for deficits and delays in achievement.
- According to the American Alliance of Museums, museums had a \$1.8 billion impact on Virginia's economy in 2017, with 28,373 jobs supported by the museum industry and \$408 million in tax revenue generated at the federal, state and local levels. Regardless of their political affiliation, 89% of Americans believe that museums provide important economic impacts to local communities.
- Museums employ more than 400,000 Americans and directly contribute \$21 billion to the U.S. economy each year and billions more through indirect spending by their visitors.

Goals

The overall marketing goals for the museum are:

- to increase visitation and program participation
- to increase awareness of the institution and its mission
- to increase earned revenue (*in addition to providing increased revenue and awareness for the museum, visitors also benefit the Martinsville-Henry County area as a whole with overall visitor spending on fuel, food and other services.*)

Strategies

Our marketing strategies include reaching a greater number of potential attendees than

VMNH mission: To interpret Virginia's natural heritage within a global context in ways that are relevant to all citizens of the Commonwealth.

in past years while providing unique new experiences for all visitors.

Public Relations – Museum staff develop and disseminate a variety of press materials, including press releases, media alerts, photo submissions, and letters to the editor. Scientists and other staff also serve as expert media resources for a variety of stories.

Marketing – In addition to the utilization of traditional media outlets, we have implemented new marketing efforts to promote museum programs. These new initiatives include Facebook advertising, Groupon promotions, Instagram engagement, and increased feedback and interaction with visitors who engage with the museum on TripAdvisor and other visitation sites. In addition to these new initiatives, we will build on our traditional marketing efforts through increased advertising in targeted media outlets as the budget allows. Our visitation trends and demographics show that advertising targeted to specific markets for specific museum programs is very effective in reaching our target audiences.

Yearly Marketing Budget

The annual marketing budget for the museum is \$20,000 (dependent upon state approval).. These funds cover a variety of programs and expenses, including website hosting, monthly e-newsletter/special e- blasts, print projects (posters, flyers, note cards, etc.), registration and fees for trade shows and other events, professional development, and any marketing software.

Staff actively pursue opportunities to enhance overall marketing funding, with several grants currently in-process.

Top 3 Competitors

While the museum does not have any regional competitors directly offering the same experiences or programs, visitors do have other choices in cultural experiences and learning activities. While we regularly partner with other institutions across the region for joint marketing and visitation promotions, we do compete indirectly through comparisons made by visitors in terms of price, area amenities, and overall quality of the visitor experience at other museums and science centers. Indirect regional competitors include:

Danville Science Center – This institution, located in Danville, VA, offers a variety of exhibits and other experiences geared mostly toward children and families.

Science Museum of Western Virginia – This newly renovated science center, located in Roanoke, VA, offers a variety of hands-on exhibits and activities aimed at children and families.

Greensboro Science Center – This large science center, located in Greensboro, NC, provides visitors with a large number of hands-on exhibits aimed at children, families and adult visitors.

Strengths

While there are many science centers and other types of museums (art, history, etc.) across the region, the Virginia Museum of Natural History is the only research and collections-based natural history museum between Raleigh, NC and Washington, DC. The VMNH also offers the largest dinosaur displays between Raleigh, NC and Washington, DC. Visitors can view and learn about real specimens while engaging with scientists at work uncovering Virginia's natural treasures.

Notable specimens at VMNH:

- *Triceratops* fossil material with *T. rex* bite marks, representing the world's only direct evidence that a *T-rex* attacked a living *Triceratops*
- One of the largest complete stromatolite heads in the world
- The holotype specimen of *Eobalanoptera* (the “dawn whale”)
- The holotype specimen of *Mecistotrachelos apeoros*, a long-necked gliding reptile discovered at the nearby Solite quarry site
- A fossil whale skull showing direct evidence of “left-handedness” in a 14-million- year-old whale

“Must-see” exhibits at VMNH:

- Jefferson's Ground Sloth – Take your picture with *Clawd* the giant ground sloth in the museum's lobby.
- Dinosaurs – Face off with the carnivorous dinosaurs *Allosaurus* and *Acrocanthosaurus* while getting up close with *Stegosaurus* and *Triceratops*.
- 500 million-year-old stromatolite – Get up close with and touch one of the largest stromatolite (one of the oldest records of life on earth) specimens in the world.
- Ancient Reptiles – Learn about a one-of-a-kind 225 million-year-old gliding reptile fossil discovered at the nearby Solite quarry.
- Fluorescent Minerals - Watch how ultraviolet light changes the physical appearance of rocks and minerals, which is a technique used by geologists to identify such materials in a beautiful display of hues.
- Live Animals – Meet the museum's most popular residents, including *Corny* the

corn snake, *Reggie* the ball python, *Speedy* and *Sheldon* the turtles, Madagascar hissing cockroaches, and more.

- Live Trout Habitat - A 300 gallon enclosure celebrates Virginia's trout populations, while repeat visits allow for observations of their growth and development over time.

Weaknesses

- VMNH, like many other research and collections-based natural history museums, is sometimes perceived as aloof or too "hands-off" for some visitors.
- The museum has the ongoing challenge of educating visitors on why large areas of the museum are not accessible to visitors while at the same time sharing with visitors why the research and collections components of the museum are vital.
- Remote geographic location combined with minimal resources for marketing outside the local region.
- Relatively small exhibit space – we provide a 19,000 sq. ft. visitor experience.
- Along with educating visitors on the research and collections activities, the museum must also continue to provide positive visitor experiences through exhibits and programs.

The VMNH mission

- The mission of the Virginia Museum of Natural History is to interpret Virginia's natural heritage within a global context in ways that are relevant to all citizens of the Commonwealth.
- Additionally, the museum seeks to:
 - Expand science literacy statewide and beyond through scientific research, education, and exhibits.

Marketing challenge

- Defining and achieving success during the global pandemic.
- Implementation of ***Museum Without Walls, 2020-2025***
- Establishing a regional tourist niche and building a regional presence through collaborations with other tourism stakeholders.
- Developing programs and exhibits that will attract visitors from outside the local area.

Marketing mission

- Identify and understand the visitor.
- Increase membership.
- Increase individual visits and repeat visitation.
- Create an irresistible attraction to the museum and the area.
- Communicate and showcase new exhibits, programs and events.
- Build consensus and a sense of ownership with each constituency.

Marketing mission

- Provide reasons for visitors to tour the museum over and over again.
- Attract visitors from a wide geographic region and a multi-demographic base.
- Provide the best possible experience for visitors through outstanding customer service.

Major museum events

While large events are not feasible during the COVID-19 pandemic, museum staff continue to develop both virtual programming and future post-pandemic in-person large events.

Current special exhibits:

Wild About Cats – Now open through March 20, 2021

Stories from Skeletons – Now open in the Harvest Foundation Hall of Ancient Life

Major museum events

The schedule of events for FY2021 is greatly reduced due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Once it is deemed to be safe, VMNH will bring back a variety of popular and successful in-person events and programs, including:

- Family Science Festivals
- Summer Camps
- Exhibit openings
- Member socials
- In-person school group programs
- Outreach education programming in area schools

Who Are We Trying To Talk To?

The Audience

- Public/Visitor/Member
- Scientific Community
- Government Agencies
- Foundations
- Donors/Friends/Board Members

The Audience



The Audience

- A “Brand Hierarchy” has been developed which summarizes emotional, functional and communication of the VMNH brand essence as it applies to each of the constituent groups.
- The museum’s marketing plan targets each of these audiences.
- Each element of the marketing program should include something for each constituent group.
- The marketing plan focuses on the visitor, guest or the explorer.

Understanding The Visitor (Public)

The Visitor

- Children who made frequent visits to museums with their family as well as their school, were more likely to be heavy 'users'/visitors as adults.
- Frequent visitors have children under the age of 15.
- 64% of heavy visitors are women with children.

The Visitor

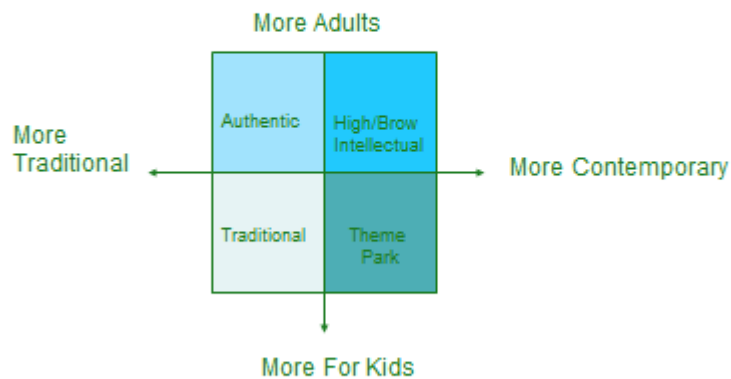
- **Psychographics - Adults**
 - Curious, interested in learning more about everything
 - Have a wide variety of life interests
 - Thirst for adventure and new experiences
 - Have a desire to stay in the know
 - Have an active life orientation

The Visitor

- Have an “Explorer Mentality” and “believe” museums are an excellent source.
- The exploration must be coupled with “relevance”.

The Visitor

- There are four museum visitor types



The Visitor

- **High Brow Intellectual**
 - Exhibit driven
 - World class affiliation
 - Source of authority
 - Will impress and interest out of town guests
 - Up to date and contemporary
 - A must see place
 - Wants to be in the know
 - Influences others

The Visitor

- **Museum as Theme Park**
 - Great place to bring the kids
 - Friendly, warm atmosphere
 - A bit magical
 - Exciting
 - Unique and different
 - Entertaining
 - Popular
 - Creates great memories

The Visitor

- **Traditional**
 - Important place to bring kids
 - Address issues and interests of the average person
 - Major attractions are entertaining
 - “Feel” like learning and discovering lots of things
 - Exhibits must be relevant to their lives
 - Offers a sense of adventure

The Visitor

- **Authentic**
 - For real museum lovers
 - Exhibits must be of interest to “serious” museum goer
 - Traditional and conservative
 - Intellectual stimulating
 - Really educational
 - A place to roam and explore as you like
 - Wide variety of exhibits

The Visitor

- **Target**
 - Primary Target: Authentic and Theme park
 - Frequent visitor
 - Moms of children 15 and under
 - Adult explorers
 - Adult pursuers of intellectual growth
 - Adults in the “know”
 - Interactive/experiential kids of all ages
 - Relevance
 - Variety

The Visitor

- **Secondary Target: highbrow intellectual**
- **Use novelty, immediate reward and uniqueness to attract young singles who are usually non-museum goers**
 - Must have MAGIC and Style
 - Must be contemporary and smart
 - Must be creative at the “get-go”
 - Teach me something I don’t know
 - Show me something I have never seen before
 - Help me impress my friends and out-of-town visitors

The Visitor

- **With Children**
 - Responsible and active parenting (regardless of economic or ethnic affiliations)
 - Building family memories
 - Sharing quality time
- **Without Children**
 - Social experience
 - Almost always come with another person(s)
 - Curious and a sense of adventure
 - Sharing quality time

Media

- [DEPENDING ON FUNDING]: The media plan for the museum is implemented in overlapping geographic and demographic arenas
 - Geographic
 - Core (Within 50 miles of the facility location: 1,543,098 population)
 - Local (Within 100 miles of the facility location: 4,636,370 population)
 - Regional (Within 250 miles of the facility location: 27,601,293 population)
 - Regional/State/National Tourism
 - Life Style
 - Parents with children under 15
 - Adults without children
 - Singles
 - Seniors
 - Students 15+
 - Ethnicity
 - Hispanics
 - African Americans
 - Tourists

Media

- Implement a media plan that provides for consistent exposure throughout the year and during peak season.
- Reach audiences and visitors in markets with the greatest likelihood of visitation.
- Provide strong media support that is New Exhibit and Event driven.

Creative Strategy

VMNH delivers:

- An exciting experience of education and learning.
- Preservation and exploration of Virginia's natural history and heritage through scientific research.
- Interpretation of these elements in a relevant global context
- Providing events that are compelling and further understanding of the natural world and its history.
- Advancement of world knowledge in the field of natural history
- Hosts exhibits of new discovery.
- Education and participation of the community at large.
- Learning is an adventure.

Creative Tools

Social Media – Critical to the museum's marketing success, providing a truly global platform with strong results-based analytics:

- Both free and paid options, with each providing unique benefits and opportunities.
- Paid social media advertising provides clear metrics for measurement of efficacy and demographic reach.
- While experimentation with new platforms is important, it is important that we make data-based advertising decisions based on clearly defined goals and objectives (we will not employ a "scatter-shot" approach to spending valuable and limited advertising dollars).

Creative Tools

Press Releases – a great, FREE tool to promote the museum. Upcoming press releases will highlight:

- Exhibits
- Economic impact of new facility
- Partnerships with other agencies/organizations
- World-class scientific research and collections programs
- Festivals
- VMNH publishing of scientific books/journals
- Hosts exhibits of new discovery.
- Education (at-the-Museum, Outreach, Distance Learning)

Creative Tools

Advertising – Depending upon the availability of funds, advertising will be used to promote museum programs regionally.

- Print (newspaper, magazine, etc.)
- Television
- Radio
- Internet

Creative Tools

Partnerships – Because most museums and cultural institutions have limited funds available for marketing, strategic partnerships can be formed to share marketing costs and increase marketing effectiveness for partners.

Recent marketing partners include:

- Danville Science Center
- Smith River Sports Complex
- Virginia Tourism Corporation
- Piedmont Arts Association
- Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society
- And more....