VMNH Board of Trustees Education and Public Programs Committee

May 13, 2021, 3:00 p.m. via Zoom

Board Members Present: Cord Cothren (Chair), Joan Montgomery (foundation)

Board Members Absent: Faye Cooper, Nathan Sanford, Siri Russell, and Makunda Abdul-Mbacke

Staff Present: Christy Deatherage, Ryan Barber

* The committee reviewed the February meeting minutes.
* The committee was briefed on Education Updates-
  + Quarterly numbers update- (see table below) Program numbers and numbers served were discussed for January through March 2021. 2020 numbers available for comparison. COVID shutdown occurred Mid-March 2020 and is reflected in the numbers.
  + At-the Museum highlights - The Education Department provides “Saturday Education Activity Tables” for visitor interaction. The material coincides with the “Museum Minute” videos on social media that highlight specimens on display.
  + Outreach highlights– The museum hosted a Drive Thru “Treasures from the Vault” event in Waynesboro (May). Curators provided tables with material particular to their field. Education provided pre-packaged craft bags (color-you-own animal mask, dinosaur notebook, and VMNH pen) to children.
  + Distance Learning – The committee discussed the various virtual programming currently offered. Scholarships (details below) are available for public/private schools to participate in virtual programs (13 choices). Virtual programming provides the ability to connect to the entire grade level at once versus traveling to individual classes with previous in-person outreach programs. Programs are 60 minutes, interactive, grade/SOL specific and highlight exhibit areas and the related specimen material. The (virtual) Homeschool Science and Engineering Academy will wrap up next week. 17 sessions were offered (twice a month) focusing on STEM topics. A parent/caregiver survey will be distributed to gather demographic information as well as details for next school year.
  + The Education Department collaborated with B.F. Yancey Community Center (Albemarle County) in April for a “Science Explosion Week.” We offered 9 virtual programs (free to the public) throughout the week for pre-K through adult. Over 100 participants registered for the programs and around 75 attended. The week coincided with Albemarle County/Charlottesville student’s spring break.
  + The Education Resources page on the museum website has been updated with activities and the link to the museum’s YouTube page. The Education Department worked with Research and Collections staff on videos that teachers can use towards recertification points and/or supplemental curriculum in their classroom. Videos are correlated to the Virginia Science Standards of Learning.
* The Education Department (and other staff) participated in the Virginia Association of Museums (VAM) Virtual Conference in February. This was an opportunity to network with other educators to discuss program options during COVID.
* Upcoming:
  + 2021 Summer Adventure Camps – 4 camps will be offered (2 in June 2 in July) for ages 6-8 and 9-11. Maximum number of participants: 10 per camp. COVID Guidelines strictly enforced. Camp fee: $130 non-member/$120 member. Camps are M-F, 9:00-4:00 with before and after care options. Scholarships are available on a need basis and follow federal income requirements.
* The committee was briefed on current Education Related Grants:
  + Boxley Grant for Virtual Programming - $10,000 total - $4,000 towards scholarships for virtual programs (equivalent to 44 programs). Teachers and Administrators were notified of the opportunity through press release/social media/email and teachers can request virtual program for an individual class or their entire grade level. The Education Department has completed 32 programs to date, serving over 1,200 students. $6,000 towards virtual content such as *“Tales of Ancient Life”/* *“Ben in Nature”* and marketing expenses. The Boxley Grant is from March 2021 to December 2021.
  + Hooker Furnishings -$2,500 total - $1,500 towards scholarships for virtual programs for students in underserved public schools qualifying for free or reduced lunches. Teachers and Administrators were notified of the opportunity through press release/social media/email and teachers can request virtual program for an individual class or the entire grade level. $1,000 towards the “Museum’s for All” initiative through the Institute of Museums and Library Services (IMLS) in which EBT cardholders will receive free museum admission. The Hooker Furnishings Grant is from March 2021 to April 2022.
* Exhibit Subcommittee –
  + The *Wild Watersheds* exhibit has been updated with an AR (Augmented Reality) Topography Interactive table and stream interactive floor (images provided during meeting).
* Report/Recommendation to BOT: Committee Chair Cord Cothren will report on:
  + Virtual programs/scholarships
  + Virtual Homeschool Science and Engineering Academy sessions
  + 2021 Summer Adventure Camps
  + Waynesboro Drive Thru event

**DEPP Quarterly Numbers**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Outreach  (Martinsville, Central, South Central, Eastern) | | At-the-Museum | | Distance Learning | |
| MONTH | PROGRAMS | SERVED | PROGRAMS | SERVED | PROGRAMS | SERVED |
| January 2021 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 46 | 6 | 33 |
| February 2021 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 48 | 10 | 146 |
| March 2021 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 40 | 16 | 488 |
|  | **0** | **0** | **6** | **134** | **32** | **667** |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Outreach  (Martinsville, Central, South Central, Eastern) | | At-the-Museum | | Distance Learning | |
| MONTH | PROGRAMS | SERVED | PROGRAMS | SERVED | PROGRAMS | SERVED |
| January 2020 | 27 | 589 | 26 | 1627 | 0 | 0 |
| February 2020 | 29 | 551 | 28 | 535 | 0 | 0 |
| March  2020 | 17 | 410 | 14 | 316 | 0 | 0 |
|  | **73** | **1550** | **98** | **2478** | **0** | **0** |

**NOTES:**

January 2020: Ice Age Festival Student Day and Public event

Mid March 2020: COVID shutdowns