Advocacy Update: Congress Passes FY 2019 Funding Bill with $2 Million NEA Increase

From the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies:

[On February 14] the U.S. House of Representatives, by a vote of 300-128, passed legislation providing funding for federal agencies until the end of the fiscal year (September 30). The Senate also passed this legislation, by a vote of 83-16. The bill funds the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) at $155 million, an increase of $2 million over its current funding level. The President has signaled that he plans to sign the legislation before current funding expires at midnight tonight.

NASAA recognizes the hard work of our members and advocates on both sides of the aisle to get this legislation enacted. We appreciate the considerable work that was done to help the NEA receive an increased appropriation.

Once the bill is signed, Congress is expected to begin the fiscal year 2020 appropriations process. NASAA will keep you updated as that process unfolds.
Wishing you could attend the American Association for State and Local History’s Annual Meeting in Philadelphia this year? Apply for a small museum scholarship! Find the details here:

The American Association for State and Local History will hold its Annual Meeting and Online Conference in Philadelphia, PA from 28-31 August 2019. This year’s theme, What Are We Waiting For?, examines the personal, communal, and organizational journeys that lead to vibrancy, authenticity, social change and sustainability.

Unfortunately, many working in our nation’s small museums feel as if we can only dream of attending this meeting. In a perfect world, boards would grant every request to fund our professional development. Institutions of modest means, however, may not have the resources to help us become effective stewards of our community’s memory.

Websites, listservs, and social media constantly offer new sources of technical and psychological support, but nothing is better than sharing challenges, strategies and successes face-to-face. Every year, increasing numbers of Annual Meeting sessions address issues specifically affecting small museums. These sessions can be as practical and wide-ranging as training, marketing, and strategic planning. Other sessions focus on creative ways to forge and re-energize relationships with the surrounding community.

Now in its fourteenth year, AASLH’s Small Museums Committee is offering scholarships to any AASLH members who are full-time, part-time, paid, or volunteer employees of small museums. Each $700 scholarship will cover the cost of both the conference registration and the Small Museums luncheon. Any remaining funds may be used to offset travel and/or lodging expenses. Recipients, though, must submit a post to the AASLH blog, Big Ideas for Small Museums, about their Annual Meeting experience.

To qualify, the applicant must work for a museum with a budget of $250,000 or less. They also must either be an individual AASLH member or work for an institutional member. Application forms are available here.
The deadline for applications is **15 May**. The committee will email award winners by 1 June. For questions, please contact Bruce Teeple, Small Museum Scholarship Subcommittee Chair at mongopawn44@hotmail.com, or Aja Bain, AASLH Program and Publications Coordinator, at abain@aaslh.org.

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**2017 Grant Update: Hodgeman County Historical Society and Haun Museum**

Each year, KMA awards grants to museums to help fund small projects that improve their museum operations. The museums, in turn, share a summary of their projects with the greater KMA membership as a way to give back and spur ideas for others. Over the next few months we will be featuring the projects funded with 2017 grants.

**Hodgeman County Historical Society and Haun Museum: Museum Collection Management Software Project**

In 2017 we applied and received a grant from KMA, which initiated a fund raising project to purchase Museum Collection Management software, PastPerfect, to preserve historical records and manage our collections. The grant of $450 enabled us to leverage other funds and complete our fundraising project and for that we are very thankful and appreciative.

We began our fund raising project with the slogan, Help Us "Save Our Assets". Our former computer system had collapsed and artifacts could no longer be catalogued. We planned a Haun Museum Open House celebrating our 150 years as a county on September 23 - 24, 2017. Hodgeman Community Foundation partnered with the museum and offered a $400 match on incoming donations. The weekend showcased the museum as Haun Board Members, HCF members and others came together to have interactive history displays, costumed guides, scavenger hunts,
refreshments, tours and demonstrations of PastPerfect software samples. Membership was also promoted and a volunteer listing was established. Over a thousand dollars was raised including donations from county banks and retail businesses.

After purchasing PastPerfect we worked through Humanities Kansas receiving a grant consisting of $3500 in grant funds and $6,865 in-kind cost share for a total of $10,365. Mary Regan, former director of Finney County Museum was hired as a consultant, along with local residents to learn the new program. Regan came for a full day of training. At that time we took steps and made plans to develop an Acquisitioning and Accessioning Policy, New Donation Forms, Deed of Gift and Artifact Information documents. On our workshop day, Mary was very helpful with general information and encouragement for the museum board and volunteers.

Our volunteers were organized as "Haun Helpers" and did considerable work to get artifacts grouped and ready for cataloging. Our initial project has centered on a "sports"artifacts project. Haun Helpers have organized areas and provided new ideas and energy for the Haun Museum.

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**Spotlight On: Erin Raux - Museum Curator/Director, Mid-America All-Indian Center**

In 2018, eight deserving applicants received scholarships from KMA to cover their registration for the annual conference, as well as a stipend for travel and lodging. Our scholarship recipients hail from across the state; some are young professionals and some have years of experience but they all joined us in Independence eager to learn and grow with their colleagues in the profession. We will be featuring articles that they wrote about their experience in the coming months to highlight the connections made and lessons learned as KMA celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2019.

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I received a full conference scholarship from the Kansas Museum Association this year! It was my first conference of the sort, I was a bit nervous and excited to learn and meet people in my field. Everyone was enjoyable and accommodating. I made some connections right away. I am new to the museum field. I have a Masters in Fine Art which is very helpful, but it
I certainly am not an Art History degree or Museum Studies. I have been at my new position as Museum Curator/Director at The Mid-America All-Indian Center in Wichita Kansas for 8 months. Needless to say my head is spinning.

I had the opportunity to attend the pre-conference workshop, Collections 101 and I'm grateful I did. The workshop, taught by the Head of Collection Management at the Spencer Museum the enthusiastic, Sofia Galarza Liu offered me an insight on what it takes to have a well-managed collection. I appreciated the instructors approach to basic information. She was thorough and had hands-on tools to help us learn. I am new to my job. I am both overwhelmed and excited about what needs to be done to manage this collection I've come into. The instructor never batted an eye or made anyone feel bad about the questions that were thrown her way. The workshop covered the basics of marking artifacts for accession, the importance of using a numbering system, and basic forms for donations, gifts, and shipping/receiving. The instructor gave us copies of the example forms. I have already put to use some of the things I learned!

I think the most important lesson was finding comfort in the realization that I am not alone in my experiences. The sense of comradery alone was worth it. Throughout our careers, we come to meet many people and problems that help us gain experience and change the way we think. Some lessons are learned through trials and tribulations; some are learned through experience. No matter how we've learned our lessons, they will stay with us forever, and help us through. I will definitely be more involved with KMA in the future and look forward to going to more conferences to maintain my relationships and knowledge. I can only go up from here!

Webinars and Continuing Education Opportunities

National Association for Interpretation’s Upcoming Webinars
Interviewing Skills: How to Do It Right
March 19
12:00 - 1:00 pm Central
Register

Redefining Interviews: Searching for the Beacon on the Rocky Shore to Land the Best New Employee
March 26
12:00 - 1:30 pm Central
Register

American Association for State and Local History’s Upcoming Webinars
Break the Budget Bubble: How to Build and Read Budgets
March 20
2:00 - 3:30 pm Central
Cost: $40 members/$65 nonmembers - discount for StEPs
Register
Connecting to Collection Care's Upcoming Webinars
Planning for Natural Disaster Damage in Botanical Collections
March 12
1:00 - 2:30 pm Central
Register

Planning Your RE-ORG Project
March 20, 27, April 10, 24, May 8, June 5
1:00 - 2:30 pm Central
Cost: $149 ($20 discount for registration by March 6 with code C2CC20)
Register

Wisconsin Historical Society's Upcoming Webinars
Women in Museums
March 13
1:30 - 3:00 pm Central
Register

Interpreting Women at Historic Sites
March 27
1:30 - 3:00 pm Central
Register

Advocacy Connection and Museums in the News

Museum topics in the news:

**Kansas' Indigenous Arts Initiative** - Paul Pietsch, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

**New Legislation Seeks to Protect Lost African-American Burial Grounds** - David Anderson, Forbes

**A Haines Museum Worker Found a WWII Mortar Round in the Vault. It Was Still Live.** - Madeline McGee, Anchorage Daily News

**New Conservation Lab Advances Library, Museum Goals** - Rick Hellman, University of Kansas Press Release

**Met Museum to Return Prize Artifact Because it Was Stolen** - Colin Moynihan, New York Times

**World-class Oil Paintings Blighted by 'Art Acne': Scientists Finally Diagnose Mysterious Lumps and Bumps Destroying Famous Works by Using New iPad Technology** - Mia De Graaf, Daily Mail

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