



September 2020 Museline Transcript

Fall is in the air and with it comes the measured reopening of our many of our statewide cultural institutions and the ramping up of TAM programming. Welcome to our September 2020, Edition of the Texas Association of Museum's Museline our digital newsletter featuring all things T.A.M.

Whether it is in the classroom or at home, the fall semester has begun around the state and TAM is doubling down our efforts to help museums and cultural institutions connect with these teachers and students no matter where they are.

The Texas Association of Museum's (TAM) and Mid-America Arts Alliance (MAAA) is currently working on our *Museums Connecting to Schools at a Distance* initiative. Over the coming months, we will develop a series of practical, hands-on workshops to help our members and greater cultural community learn about existing quality virtual school programming and how to build their skillsets in their development. The initiative will create four online short-courses (skills training in a short period of time) and six accompanying online workshops, these sequential training modules will help museum educators and external relations staff develop the skillsets needed to introduce and advance the creation of digital, mission-based resources for schools and families.

Over the next few weeks, TAM and MAAA staff will lead three more regional focus groups to inform the project's development. If you are in South Texas, Northeast Texas, or West Texas and are interested in participating, please reach out to me. To learn more, see our latest post on the TAM website and sign up for our technology-focused news.

This month, we are also announcing the kick-off of another major professional development project. Made possible by the support of the Houston Endowment, the Texas Association of Museums (TAM) is working on an expanded continuation of the successful initiative ***Finding Alternative Futures: Sustainability through Coaching***.

Finding Alternative Futures, Phase 2 (FAF2) will retain and further our goals of assisting participating museums in understanding their options for sustainability, elevating proficiency, and preparing for pivotal change. And boy, do we see changes happening all around us. In addition to the coaching, **FAF2** will address digital readiness and technologies and approaches that can help move the museum community forward in the current environment.

The first stage of the project has begun with a needs assessment that investigates technology-related challenges common in the museum community, such as

- assessing digital strategy
- developing proposals for supporting tech projects
- Using data to inform organizational decision-making
- managing vendor relationships
- and using social media for community engagement.

TAM is currently selecting advisors to guide the creation of an RFP that will lead to the development of five online short courses that will serve as the core of the **FAF2** 2021-2022 programming. You can learn more about that exciting project on TAM's website.

Annual Meeting

Now on to *TAM 2021: Roots and Reckoning: Museums Respond and Redefine*. Our premier conference will be held April 10-13, 2021, in San Antonio. Yes, you heard that right. While virtual conference options proliferate, we will be meeting in person in San Antonio. To support this decision, TAM is surveying our community and the early results clearly show that museum professionals want to meet in person and there couldn't be a better city than San Antonio! We are taking the right steps to prioritize our attendee's health by creating a decentralized event at various venues across the city and lowering capacity. We are also investigating some streaming or on-demand options for those not able to attend in person.

While we work to finalize the host venues for the conference, our program committee met this week to review session proposals - thank you to those who took the time to submit your ideas. In that dynamic online meeting, we began fleshing out a program that you won't want to miss. Topics concerning the impact of the pandemic and civil unrest on museum collections, exhibitions, and communications will ensure timely and relevant discussions. Thank you to our program committee members for ranking and shepherding these sessions along. Take time to these thought leaders on our website. They represent the breadth and depth of the Texas museum community.

This month we also continue to thank our TAM 2020 Virtual Sponsors. Thank you, for your continued support of TAM.

Member News

Finally, members are the key to our community. Please help me welcome TAM's newest member(s): Jose Contreras from New London, CT, Steve Draper from Copperas Cove, TX, Emily Wilkinson from Lubbock, TX and Jennifer Duncan from Copperas Cove, TX, Mary Tavares from Houston, TX, and Grace Rosa from Denton, TX. I also wanted to give a couple of shout outs. First, congratulations to all our museum members who ventured into re-opening in

the past month or so. We know you are working hard to keep your staff and visitors safe. And finally, I want to thank former TAM President Mikey Sproat for his generous donation.

TAM's mission is to strengthen the Texas museum community through collaborations, connections, professional development, and advocacy.

To Learn more about TAM Membership and become more involved go to texasmuseums.org or reach out to me directly at alex@texasmuseums.org. Be safe out there - Goodbye!



Alex Freeman

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