Building Capacity for Evaluation: Individuals, Institutions, the Field

CELEBRATE! 27th Annual Visitor Studies Association Conference

July 15-19, 2014
Albuquerque, New Mexico
In Memory of
Alan J. Friedman, President, Visitor Studies Association, 2005-2007

Photos: courtesy of the New York Hall of Science

Those who knew Alan are left wondering, who will be our wise man? Who will be our champion? Who will say what needs to be said with charm and eloquence? Who will fight the fight that needs fighting? Who will smile the way Alan smiled? Who will exude the cheery disposition we all need from time to time? And who will kiss the ladies on both cheeks?

We are left with an eerie silence, an enormous hole in our informal science world. Alan had so many really good ideas that grew into really great projects that generated fabulous results. He was creative, smart, humble, and oh so generous with his time—to everyone who approached him; he was a truly nice guy—a real, honest-to-goodness mensch. We will miss him.

Beverly Serrell; Elsa Bailey; Sue Allen; Randi Korn; Kirsten Ellenbogen; Kirsten Buchner – Insight Evaluation Services; University of Queensland Visitor Research Team; Ellen Giusti; Josh Gutwill – Exploratorium; Chris Catanese; Lynn Courtney; Jessica Sickler; Matt Sikora; J2R2 Leadership & Change Associates, LLC; Kathleen McLean; People, Places & Design Research

To honor Alan’s gentlemanly ways, we will host a kissing booth. For those who wish to be kissed on both cheeks, and for those who wish to be the kissers—please stop by and pay your respects.
## Conference Schedule at a Glance

### Monday, July 14
- **4:00 – 7:00 p.m.** Registration Open

### Tuesday, July 15
- **8:00 – 11:00 a.m.** Registration Open
- **4:30 – 7:30 p.m.** Pre-Conference Workshops
  - Hotel Conference Rooms, Explora Science Center and Children’s Museum
- **9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.** Pre-Conference Workshops
  - Hotel Conference Rooms, Explora Science Center and Children's Museum

### Wednesday, July 16
- **8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.** Registration Open
- **8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.** VSA Board of Directors Meeting
  - Fireplace Room
- **9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.** Pre-Conference Workshops
  - Hotel Conference Rooms
- **5:00 – 6:30 p.m.** April Award Celebration (ticket required)
  - Seasons Rotisserie & Grill, Balthazar Room
- **7:00 – 9:00 p.m.** Opening Reception at Explora (ticket required)
  - Explora Science Center and Children’s Museum

### Thursday, July 17
- **8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.** Registration Open
- **8:00 – 9:00 a.m.** Coffee Break
  - North Atrium
- **9:15 – 9:45 a.m.** Welcome from VSA and President’s Address
  - Alvarado D
- **9:45 – 10:45 a.m.** Opening Keynote
  - Alvarado D
- **11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.** Concurrent Sessions – One
  - Alvarado A, B, C, D, F
- **12:15 – 2:15 p.m.** Lunch on Your Own
- **12:15 – 2:15 p.m.** Committee Meetings
  - Alvarado A, B, C
- **2:15 – 3:30 p.m.** Concurrent Sessions – Two
  - Alvarado A, B, C, F
- **3:30 – 4:00 p.m.** Coffee Break
  - North Atrium
- **4:00 – 5:15 p.m.** Concurrent Sessions – Three
  - Alvarado A, B, C, D
- **6:30 – 9:00 p.m.** An Evening at the National Museum of Nuclear Science and History (ticket required)
  - Buses leave hotel promptly at 6:00 p.m. from main hotel entrance

### Friday, July 18
- **8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.** Registration Open
- **7:45 – 8:00 a.m.** Coffee Break
  - North Atrium
- **8:00 – 9:00 a.m.** VSA Business Meeting
  - Alvarado D
- **9:00 – 10:15 a.m.** Moderated Panel Discussion
  - Alvarado D
- **10:30 – 11:45 a.m.** Concurrent Sessions – Four
  - Alvarado A, B, C, D, F
- **11:45 a.m. – 1:45 p.m.** Visitor Studies Editorial Board Meeting
  - Alvarado G
- **11:45 a.m. – 1:45 p.m.** Lunch on Your Own
- **12:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.** Committee Meetings
  - Alvarado A, B, C
- **1:45 – 3:00 p.m.** Concurrent Sessions – Five
  - Alvarado A, B, C, F
- **3:15 – 4:15 p.m.** Coffee Break
  - North Atrium
- **3:15 – 4:15 p.m.** VSA Poster Session
  - North Atrium
- **5:00 – 6:30 p.m.** Get to Know VSA Happy Hour (ticket required)
  - QBar Lounge, Hotel Albuquerque

### Saturday, July 19
- **8:30 – 9:00 a.m.** Coffee Break
  - North Atrium
- **9:00 – 10:15 a.m.** Concurrent Sessions – Six
  - Alvarado A, B, C, E
- **10:30 – 11:45 a.m.** Concurrent Sessions – Seven
  - Alvarado A, B, C, E
- **12:00 – 1:30 p.m.** Closing Luncheon & Plenary (ticket required)
  - Alvarado D
- **2:00 – 5:00 p.m.** Post-Conference Workshop
  - Alvarado A
Our passion for learning endures.

plan
reflect
evaluate
act

twenty-fifth anniversary

We are celebrating our anniversary. Please join our celebration by asking others how museums have enriched their lives. Write 25@randikorn.com and tell us what you learn so we can share it with our followers.

Randi Korn & Associates, Inc.
Impact Planning, Evaluation and Research Specialists
Evolving Since 1989

We’ve Moved! 2417 B Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22301
Dear Visitor Studies Conference Attendees:

Welcome to Albuquerque for the 27th Annual Conference of the Visitor Studies Association! With the increasing interest and attention to evaluation across the informal learning and cultural field, we felt it timely to direct this year’s conference to the exploration of capacity building for evaluation. This year’s sessions, speakers, and events offer a chance for you to explore new findings and methods, but we hope you will also think creatively about how your work fits into the broader field and how you can help shape the future of evaluation within your institution and beyond.

Building Capacity for Evaluation: Individuals, Institutions, the Field
The 2014 VSA Conference offers attendees the opportunity to address the increasing interest in evaluation and think strategically about how to continually build capacity for evaluation. Capacity-building can happen at many levels, from the development of individual skills, to fostering culture and stakeholder knowledge at the institutional or geographic level, to increasing consistency within the field.

Together we will examine new methods of data collection and new methods of understanding visitors that could increase our individual capacities as researchers. We will consider ways to build systems that support the process of conducting evaluation. We will identify successful strategies for infusing evaluative thinking into the culture of an organization. We will debate the merits of ideas for standardizing our work to increase stakeholder understanding and use of findings. We invite attendees to explore capacity-building on all levels, including those that suggest next steps for our field to support evaluation efforts across the informal learning field in its entirety.

Our Albuquerque Hosts
This year we are excited to enjoy Southwestern hospitality in Albuquerque, New Mexico. In addition to taking in the beauty of the Sandia Mountains, you have the opportunity to learn about and enjoy the food, festivals, and history of this Route 66 city that is home to the Shins, the largest hot air balloon festival in the world, and Breaking Bad. Our Albuquerque hosts have graciously planned two evening events at local institutions including the Opening Reception at Explora and An Evening at the National Museum of Nuclear Science and History. Many thanks also go to the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science as a big partner in the conference planning and support. We hope you enjoy exploring these local institutions. Please thank our hosts when you see them!

In addition to the events planned by our hosts, there will be the 18th Annual April Award celebrated during a cocktail hour prior to the Opening Reception, the popular Get to Know VSA Happy Hour, as well as the Closing Luncheon. Consult this program for times and locations of these events.

We hope you enjoy this conference, interact with others, and leave inspired. Do feel free to share your suggestions and thoughts with VSA about the 2015 conference that will be in Indianapolis, Indiana! We hope to see you there!

With warmest regards,

Your 2014 Program Co-Chairs
Claire Thoma and Linda Wilson
Registration and Information Desk
Check in at the registration desk, located in the North Atrium of the Hotel Albuquerque for conference materials, badges, tickets, and information. You will also find information about the local sites and events from the Albuquerque Convention and Visitors Bureau information that will be provided!

Registration Desk Hours:

Monday, July 14
4:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, July 15
8:00 – 11:00 a.m.; 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, July 16
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Thursday, July 17,
8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Friday, July 18,
8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Conference Abstracts
The 2014 VSA Conference Abstracts introduce the presentations, panels, and posters at this year’s conference. Beyond that, they act as a lasting record of the topics discussed here in Albuquerque as we build capacity for visitor studies. In keeping with our commitment to environmental stewardship, VSA now publishes the abstracts exclusively in electronic format. To download the full PDF, go to: http://visitorstudies.org/conference-overview/past-conferences

Conference Tweeting
Use #vsas14 for all your conference tweets!

Conference Events
April Award Celebration at Seasons Rotisserie & Grill
2031 Mountain Road Northwest
Wednesday, July 16  5:00 – 6:30 p.m.
$20 - $40
You don’t want to miss this event! Kick off the 2014 VSA conference in Albuquerque with an award celebration to remember. Each year, the April Award honors one outstanding new professional and welcomes them to the visitor studies field. Come toast this year’s award recipient, meet up with friends and colleagues old and new, and support a longstanding VSA tradition. Additional donations get you extra drink tickets. This is a fundraiser to keep the April Award fund alive, so please give generously if you can!

Sponsored by the Albuquerque Museums

Opening Reception at Explora Science Center and Children’s Museum
Wednesday, July 16  7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
$45
Join VSA at Explora for a festive conference kick-off event. Explora is a new kind of learning place, providing real experiences with real things that put people’s learning in their own hands. Explora’s mission is to create opportunities for inspirational discovery and the joy of lifelong learning through interactive experiences in science, technology and art. Explora’s exhibits, designed to engage visitors of all ages, are scaled small – most fit on tabletops.

The parts are hand-sized and made for handling, with the intention that both the exhibit and the user are changed by the encounter.

Pre-registration is required. Event includes heavy appetizers and refreshments. Due to New Mexico regulations, alcohol will not be served at the museum. More information will be provided regarding drink tickets at Registration Desk. The museum and exhibits will be open for attendees.

Event hosted by Explora Science Center and Children’s Museum.

An Evening at the National Museum of Nuclear Science and History - Reactions Welcome
Thursday, July 17  6:30 – 9:00 p.m.
$45
Join VSA at the National Museum of Nuclear Science and History. The Nuclear Museum is the nation’s only congressionally chartered museum in its field and an intriguing place to learn the story of the Atomic Age, from early research of nuclear development through today’s peaceful uses of nuclear technology.

Evening includes heavy appetizers and refreshments. Due to New Mexico regulations, alcohol will not be served at the museum. More information will be provided regarding drink tickets at Registration Desk. The museum and exhibits will be open for attendees. Transportation to and from the Museum will be provided, buses leave from the Hotel entrance at 6:00 p.m.

Event hosted by the National Museum of Nuclear Science and History.
Get to Know VSA Happy Hour  
Friday, July 18  5:00 – 7:00 p.m.  
Free  
VSA’s Membership Committee invites new attendees and all members for a happy hour at the Hotel Albuquerque. This is an informal way to meet and chat with other members and VSA leaders to learn about VSA committees.  
Pre-registration is required for this event. Hors d’oeuvres provided, cash bar available.

Event to be held at QBar, Hotel Albuquerque.

Closing Luncheon  
Saturday, July 19  12:00 – 1:30 pm  
Free  
Join colleagues for a last hurrah and an opportunity to gather your thoughts after several scintillating days of presentations. Speak with colleagues about your own reflections on ideas related to building capacity for evaluation and hear about potential next steps that conference conversations have sparked for a few of VSA’s leaders.

Pre-registration is required for this event. Event includes food and refreshments, and will take place in room Alvarado D at Hotel Albuquerque.

Sponsored by New Knowledge

Congratulations to the Recipients of the April Award and Student Scholarships

The April Award and Student Scholarship programs help bring new talent to the field of visitor studies and the Visitor Studies Association.

VSA is pleased to welcome the following recipients to their first Visitor Studies Conference:

18th Annual April Award:  
*Ivel Gontan Jr*, Oregon Museum of Science & Industry  
Meet Ivel at the April Award Celebration on Wednesday, July 16.  
The April Award commends an outstanding emerging professional in the field. The award was established by Dr. Marilyn (Molly) Hood to honor the memory of her longtime research assistant April Lahm.

2014 Student Scholarships:  
*Stacy Niemiec*, Erikson Institute  
*Lauren Wilson*, University of Texas  
*Taline Kuyumjian*, University of Washington  
The Student Scholarship program supports conference attendance for active students interested in the field of visitor studies.


Time for YOU to get involved!!

YOUR NAME HERE...

Joe Heimlich, Dale McCreedy, Kirsten Ellenbogen, Kathy McLean, Alan Friedman, Mary Ellen Munley, Deborah Perry, Ross Loomis, Ridgeley Williams, Harris Shettel
Conference Workshops
Tuesday, July 15, Wednesday, July 16, and Saturday, July 19

VSA presents two days of professional development workshops in conjunction with the conference. Pre-conference workshops provide an important opportunity for professional development and are attended by students, evaluators, exhibit and program designers, and museum directors alike. Leaders of these lively half and full day workshops come from a broad range of fields and professions.

We are offering a special slate of workshops for those who may be new to visitor studies, but want to add evaluation to their skill set. These “get started fast” workshops are labeled “Level 101.”

For experienced evaluators, we also have a robust slate of “Level 301” advanced workshops.

Full Day Workshops - $150 VSA Members, $180 non-Members
Half Day Workshops - $75 VSA Members, $90 non-Members

VSA supports the ongoing professional development of all evaluators across the informal learning field. With the support of a planning grant from the Informal Science Education Program of the National Science Foundation, VSA developed the Evaluator Competencies for Professional Development Assessment (visitorstudies.org/professional-development). Since individuals are attracted to the field of visitor studies from a variety of backgrounds, these guidelines are to aid in the identification of transferable skills and knowledge from previous experiences as well as areas that are considered specific to the field of visitor studies. VSA has identified the competencies most relevant for each conference workshop. Below is a description of each of the major competencies:

**Competency A: Principles and Practices of Visitor Studies**
All professionals involved in the practice of visitor research and evaluation should be familiar with the history, terminology, past and current developments, key current and historic publications, and major contributions of the field. Visitor studies professionals should also be familiar with major areas that have relevance to visitor studies, including evaluation, educational theory, environmental design, developmental psychology, communication theory, leisure studies, and marketing research.

**Competency B: Principles and Practices of Informal Learning Environments**
All individuals who engage in visitor research and evaluation must understand the principles and practices of learning in informal environments, the characteristics that define informal learning settings, and an understanding of how learning occurs in informal settings. An understanding of the principles, practices, and processes by which these experiences are designed or created is required in order to make intelligent study interpretations and recommendations.

**Competency C: Knowledge of and Practices with Social Science Research and Evaluation Methods and Analysis**
Visitor studies professionals must not only understand but also demonstrate the appropriate practice of social science research and evaluation methods and analysis. These include: Research design; Instrument/protocol design; Measurement techniques; Sampling; Data analysis; Data interpretation; Report writing and oral communication; Human subjects research ethics; and Research design, measurement, and analysis that shows sensitivity to diversity and diversity issues.

**Competency D: Business Practices, Project Planning, and Resource Management**
Visitor studies professionals must possess appropriate skills for designing, conducting, and reporting visitor studies and evaluation research. Professionals should demonstrate their ability to conceptualize a visitor studies or evaluation research project in a context of informal learning institution management and administration (i.e., scheduling, budgeting, personnel, contracting).

**Competency E: Professional Commitment**
Visitor studies professionals should commit to the pursuit, dissemination, and critical assessment of theories, studies, activities, and approaches utilized in and relevant to visitor studies. Through conference attendance and presentations, board service, journals and publications, and other formal and informal forums of communication, visitor studies professionals should support the continued development of visitor research and evaluation.

Registration is required. (Fee: Full Day Workshops - $150 VSA Members, $180 Non-Members, $125 Student Members
Half Day Workshops - $75 VSA Members, $90 Non-Members, $65 Student Members) Registration may be available onsite pending space availability. Please check at the Registration Desk for more information.

Almost all workshops are at the Hotel Albuquerque. Attendees are responsible for transportation to and from the workshop locations. Please check the Registration Desk for transportation information if needed.
Full Day Workshops
9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Flexible Methods for Exhibit Formative Evaluation
Anna Lindgren-Streicher, Project Manager, Research & Evaluation, Clara Cahill, Research & Evaluation Associate, Museum of Science, Boston

To be held onsite at Explora Science Center and Children’s Museum

Half Day Workshops
9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

How to Lead Evaluation Capacity Building Efforts using Team-Based Inquiry
Sarah Cohn, Evaluation & Research Manager, Science Museum of Minnesota
Scott Pattison, Research & Evaluation Strategist, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry
Scott Randol, Research & Evaluation Associate, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry

The World of Qualitative Inquiry
Elee Wood, Associate Professor of Museum Studies, Director of the Museum Studies Program, and Public Scholar of Museums, Families, and Learning, Indiana University, Randy Roberts, Assistant Director, Museum Administration and Operations, Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem Museum of Art

An Introduction to Phenomenology
Elee Wood, Associate Professor of Museum Studies, Director of the Museum Studies Program, and Public Scholar of Museums, Families, and Learning, Indiana University, Randy Roberts, Assistant Director, Museum Administration and Operations, Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem Museum of Art

Integrating Evaluation into your Daily Practice using Team-Based Inquiry
Sarah Cohn, Evaluation & Research Manager, Science Museum of Minnesota
Scott Pattison, Research & Evaluation Strategist, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry
Scott Randol, Research & Evaluation Associate, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry

Hotel Albuquerque: Alvarado A

Hotel Albuquerque: Alvarado B

Hotel Albuquerque: Alvarado A
**Wednesday, July 16**
**Pre-Conference Workshops, Evening Events**

**Registration is required**

### Full Day Workshop  
**9 a.m. – 4 p.m.**

**A Fresh Look at Using Experiments to do Visitor Studies**
Ross Loomis, Professor Emeritus of Psychology, Colorado State University

Hotel Albuquerque: Alvarado A

### Half Day Workshop  
**1 – 4 p.m.**

**Use of Validated Scales from the Social Sciences in Measuring Institutional Impact**
Linda Wilson, Evaluation & Impact Assessment Consultant

Hotel Albuquerque: Alvarado C

### Half Day Workshops  
**9 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

**Using Interviews as a Program Development and Evaluation Tool with Children and Youth**
Karen Sullenger, Professor, University of New Brunswick

Hotel Albuquerque: Alvarado F

**Survey Design: Writing Effective Questions**
Al Onkka, Evaluation & Research Associate, Amy Grack Nelson, Senior

Hotel Albuquerque: Alvarado F

### Half Day Workshop  
**1 – 4 p.m.**

**Interactive Data Collection Techniques for Informal Learning Environments**
Amy Grack Nelson, Senior Evaluation & Research Associate, Zdanna Tranby, Evaluation & Research Associate, Science Museum of Minnesota

Hotel Albuquerque: Alvarado G

### April Award Celebration at Seasons Grill  
(2031 Mountain Road Northwest)

**Wednesday, July 16  5:00 – 6:30 p.m.**

$20 - $40

You don’t want to miss this event! Kick off the 2014 VSA conference in Albuquerque with an award celebration to remember. Each year, the April Award welcomes and honors one outstanding new professional to the field. The reception was so much fun last year, we’re doing it again! Come toast this year’s award recipient, meet up with friends and colleagues old and new, and support a longstanding VSA tradition. Additional donations get you extra drink tickets. This is a fundraiser to keep the April Award fund alive, so please give generously if you can.

**Sponsored by the Albuquerque Museums**

### Opening Reception at Explora Science Center and Children’s Museum

**Wednesday, July 16  7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

$45

Join VSA at Explora for a festive conference kick-off event. Explora is a new kind of learning place, providing real experiences with real things that put people’s learning in their own hands. Explora’s mission is to create opportunities for inspirational discovery and the joy of lifelong learning through interactive experiences in science, technology and art. Explora’s exhibits, designed to engage visitors of all ages, are scaled small – most fit on tabletops. The parts are hand-sized and made for handling, with the intention that both the exhibit and the user are changed by the encounter.

Pre-registration is required. Event includes heavy appetizers and refreshments. Due to New Mexico regulations, alcohol will not be served at the museum. More information will be provided regarding drink tickets at Registration Desk. The museum and exhibits will be open for attendees.

**Event hosted by Explora Science Center and Children’s Museum.**
Half Day Workshop
2 – 5 p.m.

Interpretation, Presentation, and Application of Tracking-and-Timing Data

Beverly Serrell, Director, Serrell & Associates

Hotel Albuquerque: Alvarado A
### Presentation Formats

This year’s conference features a variety of presentation formats. Please review the list below to learn more about the different types of presentations you can attend:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conference Theme</th>
<th>While we are excited about all of this year’s sessions, this mark indicates the sessions that are especially aligned with the conference theme as determined by the 2014 Program Co-Chairs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Panel Presentations / Forum Discussions Panel</td>
<td>These presentations are full sessions on a single theme. Each session includes several panelists who examine an issue, topic, problem, or theme from a variety of perspectives. Panel discussions reserve sufficient time in their sessions for audience discussion about the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper Presentations</td>
<td>These sessions include 3 presentations on separate, but related, topics. Each speaker gives a 15-20 minute presentation about his/her project. Presenters reserve time for audience discussion about the topic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Innovative Sessions</td>
<td>Sessions of this type have proposed alternative, innovative formats for their presentations, with the goal of increasing audience participation in support of furthering discussion of a key topic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roundtable Sessions</td>
<td>These sessions feature two or more small group discussions between presenters and attendees. The discussions will take place concurrently and attendees are welcome to rotate between conversations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poster Presentations</td>
<td>Individual presenters provide graphic displays and are present for one-on-one discussions about specific studies or projects. All posters will be presented during a single session that will take place in the North Atrium on Friday, July 18 from 3:15 – 4:15 p.m.</td>
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### Conference Schedule

**Thursday, July 17**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>8:00 – 9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Coffee Break</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>North Atrium</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Sponsored by</strong> RK&amp;α, Rockman et al, SolverLinett <strong>Research &amp; Evaluation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>9:15 – 9:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Welcome from VSA and President’s Address</td>
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<td>Join conference attendees and the VSA President in hearing about recent VSA activities and welcoming all to the conference.</td>
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<td><strong>Alvarado D</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>9:45 – 10:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Opening Keynote Dr. Ricardo Millett</td>
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<td><strong>Alvarado D</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Sponsored by</strong> Lifelong Learning Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Concurrent Sessions – I</td>
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<td><strong>Research Agendas and Field-Wide Capacity Building</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Room Alvarado A</strong></td>
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<td>Jessica Luke, University of Washington, James Bell, Center for the Advancement of Informal Science Education (CAISE), Joe Heimlich, Ohio State University</td>
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<td></td>
<td>A growing number of research agendas are under development across informal learning sectors. Why are these research agendas being created, for whom, and what role can they play in building field-wide capacity for research and evaluation? Explore these issues within the context of three specific research agenda efforts being developed by the Center for the Advancement of Informal Science Education (CAISE), the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), and the Association of Children's Museums (ACM).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CASCADING INFLUENCES: Long-Term Impacts of Informal STEM Experiences for Girls
Room Alvarado B

Dale McCreedy, The Franklin Institute, Lynn Dierking, Oregon State University

What are potential long-term impacts of informal STEM programs for girls? What did we learn about the process itself? This study documents women’s retrospective reflections and perceptions about participation in girls-only STEM programs 5 to 25 years ago, and explores the potential long-term influences on young women’s lives beyond STEM.

Building Capacity to Support Diversity in Visitor Studies
Room Alvarado C

Lisa Newton, The Lawrence Hall of Science, Patricia Campbell, Campbell-Kibler Associates, Inc.

New data and resources inform an overview of cultural competence in visitor studies, strategies for going beyond rigor in evaluation practice, and updates about the VSA affinity group to support pathways for diverse talent in visitor studies. Attendees will participate in an activity to inform future VSA resources and activities.

Theme: Applying Theory to Practice
Room Alvarado F

Theory of Intentionality: Supporting Impact-Driven Work
Randi Korn, Randi Korn & Associates, Inc.

The Cycle of Intentional Practice is an ideal work cycle. To live on the Cycle requires significant individual and organizational behavior change; yet when followed, all will know the ways in which they have grown and changed, and what they have learned so they can improve their work moving forward.

Developmental Evaluation Builds Program Staff Capacity at Urban Advantage Denver
Maggie Miller, Maggie Miller Consulting on behalf of Denver Museum of Nature and Science

With Developmental Evaluation, the evaluator works with the client as facilitator and strategic learning partner; the evaluation process is one of constant learning. Learn how DE was used successfully with Urban Advantage Denver, a partnership among several museums and school districts designed to improve science literacy among middle-school science students.

Roundtables
Room Alvarado D

An Open Discussion of Design-Based Research in Visitor Studies
Scott Pattison, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, Chris Cardiel, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, Josh Gutwill, Exploratorium, Joyce Ma, Exploratorium, David Kanter, Kanter Learning Design & Research

Over the last 20 years, design-based research (DBR) has emerged as an important and influential research approach in education. Come join this open conversation to share your experiences with DBR and discuss the potential for using this innovative approach in visitor studies and informal science education.

Measuring 21st Century Skills in Informal Learning Environments
Amy Grack Nelson, Science Museum of Minnesota, Emily Craig, Randi Korn & Associates

Much has been written about the importance of 21st century skills, but there are few tools and little guidance for measuring them. This roundtable will provide a forum for evaluators and researchers to discuss strategies they’ve used, instruments they’ve found, and challenges they’ve encountered in measuring these skills.

12:15 – 2:15 p.m.
Lunch on Your Own

12:15 – 1:45 p.m.
Professional Development Committee Meeting
Alvarado A

Communications Committee Meeting
Alvarado B

Membership Committee Meeting
Alvarado C
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session Title</th>
<th>Speaker(s)</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2:15 – 3:30 p.m. | **Concurrent Session - II**                                        | **Developing the Evaluator Pipeline: A Look at Teaching Visitor Studies**   | Room Alvarado A  
Elee Wood, Indiana University-Indianapolis Museum Studies Program, Angie Ong, Spotlight Impact, LLC., Jill Stein, Lifelong Learning Group  
Over the past decade, Museum Studies and Museum Education programs have expanded to include courses in visitor studies practices and skills. Take a closer look at how students are being prepared for our field; compare teaching strategies; learn about applied training programs; share your thoughts and help shape future programs. |
|              | **Math Engagement in Exhibits: What are We Learning?**            | Room Alvarado B                                                             | **Scott Pattison, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, Cecilia Garibay, Garibay Group, Josh Gutwill, Exploratorium, Andee Rubin, TERC**  
This session explores findings from two recent math exhibit studies—Geometry Playground and Design Zone—that are helping us understand what math engagement looks like in designed informal learning environments, identify salient characteristics of visitor conversations that foster mathematical reasoning, and learn about strategies for assessing math engagement. |
An increasing number of evaluators are training or mentoring practitioners in evaluating their own programs or practice. This session will feature evaluation capacity building efforts in national and regional networks, divisions within an institution, and a single project across multiple institutions. Approaches and tools will be shared. |
| 3:30 – 4:00 p.m. | **Coffee Break**                                                   |                                                                             |                                                                                                                                            |
| 3:30 – 4:00 p.m. | **Theme: New Technologies for Evaluation**                          |                                                                             |                                                                                                                                            |
|              | **Room Alvarado F**                                                |                                                                             |                                                                                                                                            |
|              | **Co-Opting an App to Build Evaluation Capacity**                  | Fran Mast, John G. Shedd Aquarium                                            | “Hands-on” is the combination of education and entertainment with great learning potential. This presentation discusses the challenges inherent in studying this combination and describes how Shedd Aquarium co-opted an app designed for animal behavior observations and used it to expand the capacity of the Audience Research Department. Methods, analysis, and findings of this innovative study are discussed. |
| 4:00 – 5:15 p.m. | **Concurrent Sessions – III**                                      |                                                                             |                                                                                                                                            |
|              | **Evaluation Capacity Building Models for Non-Evaluator Museum**  | Room Alvarado A                                                             | **James Hammerman, STEM Education Evaluation Center (SEEC) at TERC, Inc.**  
This paper describes how an interactive observation protocol tool, and novel analytic methods contributed to the rigorous evaluation of group interactions at an interactive touch-table exhibit on evolution and common ancestry. Hierarchical modeling showed group size associated with dwell time which was, in turn, associated with increased knowledge. |
|              | **Got Choice? A Game-Based Model for Learning Assessments**       | Doris Chin, Stanford Graduate School of Education, Daniel Schwartz, Stanford Graduate School of Education | The presenters are creating online games as assessments of learning processes. These games, called “choicelets,” highlight the importance of the choices children make as they decide when and how to learn. The presenters describe two games targeting different design- and science-focused learning skills: seeking feedback and data visualization. |
Research on Organizational Change In and Across Science Museums
Room Alvarado B


There are several trains of thought on the nature of change in museums but few empirical studies of the contexts and practices that facilitate or derail change. Researchers from three institutions present case studies of circumstances that facilitated or deterred change in and across a variety of science organizations.

Theme: Understanding Visitor Experience in Art Museums: from the whole visit to gallery design
Room Alvarado C

Old Masters to Remastered: Renovations at the Worcester Art Museum
Amy Cota-McKinley, Worcester State University

With the desire to improve traditional linear art displays, the Worcester Art Museum pursued an alternative design approach to encourage visitor interaction. Evaluation was conducted pre and post reinstallation of the Old Masters Gallery to determine effectiveness based upon tracking data and interviews.

Whole Visit Study at the Asian Art Museum
Steven Yalowitz, Audience Viewpoints Consulting

This session describes a whole visit study at the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco, providing a baseline understanding of the visitor experience. It included 150 whole visit timing and trackings paired with surveys and interviews; plus five focused exhibit studies looking in more detail at specific experiences.

New media use in art exhibitions: enriching or annoying?
Silke Kristin Dutz and Stephen Schwan, Knowledge Media Research Center (KMRC), Tübingen, Germany

This paper explores the question, “What effects does the type of information presentation (a wall text next to a painting, an audio guide or a portable multimedia guide) have on visitors’ behavior in an art exhibition, on cognitive aspects (knowledge acquisition, memory capacity) and on aesthetic judgment of the artwork?”

Working Session
Room Alvarado D

Deconstructing practice to build resources for the field
Joe Heimlich, Ohio State University, John Baek

A partnership project is leading to a need to deconstruct informal educational program evaluation. This session provides an opportunity for participants to critically reflect on their own work by considering micro-components necessary for a resource series for field-based educators, providing advice on the structure for the series, and potentially authoring documents.

6:30 – 9:00 p.m.
An Evening at the National Museum of Nuclear Science and History - Reactions Welcome

$45

Join VSA at the National Museum of Nuclear Science and History. The Nuclear Museum is the nation’s only congressionally chartered museum in its field and an intriguing place to learn the story of the Atomic Age, from early research of nuclear development through today’s peaceful uses of nuclear technology.

Evening includes heavy appetizers and refreshments. Due to New Mexico regulations, alcohol will not be served at the museum. More information will be provided regarding drink tickets at Registration Desk. The museum and exhibits will be open for attendees.

Transportation to and from the Museum will be provided.

Buses will leave promptly at 6:00 pm from the Hotel Albuquerque entrance.

Event hosted by the National Museum of Nuclear Science and History.
8:00 – 9:00 a.m.
**VSA Business Meeting**
*Alvarado D*

Join fellow members and colleagues for the latest VSA news to find out what is in store for the organization in the coming year and vote on matters of importance to the Association. VSA President Joe Heimlich will discuss recent changes at VSA, including the work in organizational and strategic planning and growth for the future.

9:00 – 10:15 a.m.
**The State of the Field: An Invited Panel Discussion on Building Capacity for Evaluation in the Informal Learning Field**
*Alvarado D*

Sponsored by

**Joe E. Heimlich, Ph.D.**

**Rockman et al**

Research & Evaluation

VSA has invited a panel of speakers to join a dialogue aimed at generating a “topographical map” of current evaluation capacity and capacity-building efforts across the informal learning field. Panelists representing a range of organizations focused on capacity building in the field will describe their organization’s philosophy and current efforts toward capacity building. The moderator will then encourage dialogue between members of the panel as well as between the panel and audience members with the ultimate goals of determining areas of the museum field where capacity-building efforts are concentrated and where there may be gaps, how the efforts at the level of member organizations are trickling down to the individual level (or not), and how those efforts are further shaping the museum field.

**Joe Heimlich**, Professor of OSU Extension at COSI and President of the Visitor Studies Association, will act as moderator for the panel discussion.

**Panelists:**

- **Christine Reich**, Director of Exhibit Development and Conservation at the Museum of Science, Boston and immediate past chair of the Committee on Audience Research and Evaluation (CARE) at the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), will discuss the work of an established group within a field-wide member organization.

- **Jamie Bell**, the Project Director and Principal Investigator of the Center for Advancement of Informal Science Education (CAISE), will present the perspective of an organization focused on generating resources for widespread use.

- **Nette Pletcher**, the Director of Conservation Education at the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), will contribute the perspective of a member organization working to build capacity through both member professional development and the establishment of a research agenda.

- **Ivonne Chand O’Neal**, the Director of Research and Evaluation at the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts and the chair of the Arts and Culture TIG for the American Evaluation Association (AEA), will speak to evaluation capacity building at the level of the arts and culture field.

10:30 – 11:45 a.m.
**Concurrent Session – IV**

Explore the BISE database of evaluation reports from informalscience.org
*Room Alvarado A*


The Building Informal Science (BISE) project has coded over 600 evaluation reports on informalscience.org and we are ready for you to explore our database! Come learn about the project, the coding structure we developed, and how you might use the freely available database for your own work.

Creating organizational change through embedded evaluation
*Room Alvarado B*

Elaine Horr, Center for Research and Evaluation Associate at COSI, Rita Deedrick, Center for Research and Evaluation at COSI, Joe Heimlich, OSU Extension@COSI

How can evaluation be used to affect change in a museum beyond a single exhibit? How can organization-wide change occur without a large evaluation staff? This session engages the audience in an exploration of embedded evaluation to build organizational capacity – not for evaluation skills per se – but for organizational change.
Comparing and Contrasting Digital and Paper-based Modes of Visitor Observation

Room Alvarado C

Jennifer Borland, Rockman et Al, Beverly Serrell, Serrell and Associates, Steven Yalowitz, Audience Viewpoints Consulting, Camellia Sanford, Rockman et Al

In recent years, digital technologies have created opportunities for researchers to collect observation data digitally via handheld, wireless devices. This session explores the benefits and challenges of digital data collection through a variety of examples exploring the benefits and challenges in comparison to paper-based modes of data collection that have been a long-time staple of visitor studies.

Action Research in Zoos and Aquariums: Reflections from Multiple Perspectives

Room Alvarado F

Amy Niedbalski, Saint Louis Zoo, Lynn Dierking, Oregon State University, Jim Kisiel, California State University, Wayne Warrington, Phoenix Zoo

The Zoo and Aquarium Action Research Collaborative is an NSF-funded collaboration among staff at six zoos and aquariums, who carried out action research projects, and informal science education researchers, who acted as mentors. This panel discussion features reflections on the project from the perspectives of two mentors and two participants.

Using an indoor positioning system to automate visitor tracking

Joyce Ma, Exploratorium

This roundtable presentation describes the lessons learned in year one of a two-year project investigating ways an indoor positioning system can automate the collection of visitor movement data in an interactive science center.

Evaluation Toolkits: Passing Trend or Promising Progression?

Joy Kubarek-Sandor, John G. Shedd Aquarium, Ardice Hartry, University of California Berkeley

How many times this year have you heard the phrase “evaluation toolkit?” Have you used such a toolkit? This roundtable will explore different toolkit models, content, successes, challenges, and potential next steps. What needs to be included in a toolkit? How can toolkits improve access to high-quality evaluation?

11:45 a.m. – 1:45 p.m.
Lunch on Your Own

Visitor Studies Editorial Board Meeting

Alvarado G

12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Conference Planning Committee Meeting

Alvarado A

12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Board Development Committee Meeting

Alvarado B

12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Development Committee Meeting

Alvarado C

Rethinking the Language of Evaluation to Promote Inclusion of Diverse Audiences

Room Alvarado A

Jill Stein, Lifelong Learning Group, Shelly Valdez, Native Pathways, Joe Heimlich, Lifelong Learning Group

This innovative session explores the “language of evaluation” and how language can foster (or hinder) the relationships we build with communities and other stakeholders, including the validity of our work. Presenters will share examples of language used in evaluation and lead a reflective, participatory activity to help advance the field.

Creating Systems that Support Evaluation of Institutional Outcomes

Room Alvarado B

Claire Thoma, Children’s Museum of Indianapolis, Elee Wood, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, Sheila Brommel, Minnesota Historical Society, Erica Orton, Minnesota Historical Society

Panelists will discuss how the identification of institutional outcomes has supported systems of evaluation— including coordinating program and exhibit development, generating staff buy-in, building evaluation tools, and reporting (and using) findings. Participants will be invited to discuss models that could be useful for their own institutions or clients.
1:45 – 3:00 p.m.
Concurrent Session – V

**Sharing Results Internally: Infusing Your Discoveries Into Your Institution**

*Room Alvarado C*

Stephen Ashton, Thanksgiving Point Institute

We often discover great findings from our research and evaluation studies, but how often do our findings get shared within our own institutions? This session will not only look at how information can be shared internally, but session attendees will participate in a mock community of practice “share out” session.

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**Theme: Exploring Projects and Theories in Pursuit of Global Relevancy**

*Room Alvarado F*

**A Case Study in Globally Relevant Programming and Evaluation Metrics**

Ellen Bechtol, Hurvis Center for Learning Innovation and Collaboration, Lincoln Park Zoo

The Observe to Learn program utilizes a freely available app that facilitates animal behavior (ethology) studies. Lincoln Park Zoo has partnered with seven institutions throughout the world to deliver this program and develop consistent evaluation metrics. We will present recent results and reflect on the processes/outcomes of this program.

**Using Evaluation to Develop New Adult Learning Approaches in Museums**

Ruth Cohen, American Museum of Natural History, Jennifer Borland, Rockman Et Al

The American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) and Rockman Et Al will present and engage VSA participants in evaluation results of recent museum-designed initiatives in adult learning.

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**Findings will be put in context of implications for the broader field both programmatically and for further research.**

**3:15 – 4:15 p.m.**

**Coffee Break**

*North Atrium*

Sponsored by

**3:15 – 4:15 p.m.**

**Poster Session**

*North Atrium*

**Understanding Visitors’ Nostalgic Responses and Long-term Memories in Museums**

David Anderson, University of British Columbia, Hiroyuki Shimizu, Kobe Gakuin University, Makiko Yuasa, Hokkaido University Museum

This session reports research about visitors’ nostalgic responses to museum experiences and objects, and will discuss a) the kinds of museum objects/experiences that evoke visitors’ nostalgic responses, b) how the object type influences the nostalgic response and their recalled memories.

**Application of John Falk’s Museum Visitor Identities at Thanksgiving Point**

Stephen Ashton, Thanksgiving Point Institute

For the past two years, Thanksgiving Point Institute has been collecting data from its guests regarding the guests’ museum visitor identities as described by John Falk (explorer, facilitator, experience seeker, professional / hobbyist, and recharger). The results have shown interesting guest trends at Thanksgiving Point’s museums, gardens, and farm.

**Camera Traps and Teens – An Introduction to Partners in Fieldwork**

Ellen Bechtol, Hurvis Center for Learning Innovation and Collaboration, Lincoln Park Zoo

The Partners in Fieldwork initiative provides high school students the opportunity to collect data from a field station they set up at their school. Learn more about this collaborative partnership between Chicago-area schools and Lincoln Park Zoo’s Urban Wildlife Institute and Hurvis Center for Learning Innovation and Collaboration.

**Outcomes and Lessons Learned from Evaluation of Explore Library Program**

Marti Canipe, Planetary Science Institute

This presentation will share the outcomes and lessons learned from the evaluation of the Explore Library Program, an in-person and online training program designed to support librarians in bringing Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) programming to all ages, including results from a follow-up survey of ten years of participants.

**CASNET: Exploring Evaluation Capacity-Building within a Complex Adaptive System**


How and why does evaluation capacity spread (or fail to spread) across interconnected organizations and institutions? Team members on the NSF PRIME-funded Complex Adaptive Systems as a Model for Network
Evaluations (CASNET) project will discuss the work being done to help answer this increasingly vital question.

**Exploring Gender Differences in a Science & History Gallery**  
Allison Cosbey, Conner Prairie Interactive History Park

This poster presentation focuses on the ways we have explored differences in behavior among children of different genders in a history and science gallery at Conner Prairie. This project has informed our interpretive strategies in the gallery and has allowed a graduate fellow to build her capacity to conduct evaluation.

**Playdates: How Evaluation Helped us Better Engage our Youngest Visitors**  
Lynn Courtney, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

This poster presents a survey of adult participants in Playdates, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston’s program for toddlers. The study provided insight into learning and engagement of our youngest visitors, raised questions about appropriate teaching strategies for toddlers, and led to actionable strategies for improving an already popular program.

**Knowledge Management Project: Maximizing the Impact of Evaluation**  
Emily Craig, Randi Korn & Associates, Dana Burns, The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

This poster presentation addresses one approach to how institutions can build capacity for utilizing existing evaluations. Citing the work of RK&A and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, this project asks the question: What greater meanings can an institution take away from more than 20 years of research and evaluation?

**Interpretation and Visitors: Building a Body of Institutional Knowledge**  
Lynn Courtney, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

This presentation draws on recent studies of visitor response to interpretive resources in a large encyclopaedic art museum to prompt discussion of how building a body of institutional knowledge through evaluative studies can build capacity for evaluation by increasing demand among institutional stakeholders and creating efficiencies through generalizable study results.

**A Framework for Evaluation Quality: Evidence for its Viability**  
Alice Fu, SK Partners

The authors will present empirical evidence bearing on the viability of our quality framework for summative evaluation. They will discuss the implications of findings from a case study of an exemplary evaluation and its uses, interviews with leaders in the field, and a review of evaluation reports.

**Working with Volunteers to Create Institutional Buy-in for Implementing Results**  
Andrea Giron, Denver Museum of Nature & Science

This poster will focus on how the Evaluation Department at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science took a unique approach to sharing evaluation results with volunteers, creating an action plan to engage the volunteers in implementing the results, and creating space for the volunteers to provide staff with feedback.

**Full Spectrum Science: Successful Strategies in Engaging Latina Girls in STEM Programs**  
Ivel Gontan, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry

This poster explores effective programmatic strategies for providing science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) content for underrepresented girls in informal learning environments. The findings yielded strategies that were effective in developing curriculum and building internal capacity that science museums could emulate in efforts to become more accessible to underrepresented audiences.

**Perception of Contemporary Art in Younger and Older Adults**  
Andrea Granell, Boston College

This study evaluates younger and older adults’ response to contemporary art under two viewing conditions: without labels; and with labels and the opportunity to discuss their reactions to the work with a partner. It is hypothesized that responses will be qualitatively different in the two conditions.

**New Challenges for Exhibit Evaluation: The Modern Medicine Show**  
Steven Guberman, Science Museum Minnesota, Gretchen Haupt, Science Museum of Minnesota, Maggie Sandford, Science Museum of Minnesota

We present three dilemmas that emerged in our work on a new exhibition intended to improve visitors’ ability to make informed healthcare decisions: (a) fun and exciting versus serious and personal, (b) using historical objects to address contemporary issues, and (c) science versus other ways of knowing.
Friday, July 18
Conference Schedule

3:15 – 4:15 p.m.

Poster Session
North Atrium

The Prairie Science Professional Network: Evaluating Professional Impacts
Gretchen Haupt, Science Museum of Minnesota

Prairie Science brings together staff from history and science centers to develop a model demonstrating how historic sites can integrate science-focused activities with the historical stories they interpret while creating a professional network that supports STEM at historic sites. This poster presents how the presenters measured professional impacts within the network.

Safari Adventure: Designing and Evaluating for Better Connections to Nature
Sarah Edmunds, Wildlife Conservation Society

The Wildlife Conservation Society has been working with an IMLS grant to support the development of a groundbreaking new family exhibit aimed at better connecting urban families to nature, as well as exploring the possibilities for zoo experiences to enhance intergenerational learning.

Why is this here?
Emily Izzo, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, Elizabeth Quay, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, Laura Weiss, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis

“Why is this here?” pilot tested a collections assessment process using objects from The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis to determine how the objects are of interest, importance and value to the family learning mission for the museum. Results indicated that memorable objects were more important than familiar ones.

Harbor Seal Exhibit Summative Evaluation at the Seattle Aquarium
Anna Johnson, University of Washington, Julia Miller, University of Washington, Kelley Staab, University of Washington, Lauren Marallo, University of Washington

This project is a summative evaluation of the Seattle Aquarium’s newly renovated Harbor Seal Exhibit. Students participating in the New Directions for Audience Research Initiative at the University of Washington are implementing the evaluation with the goal of describing visitors’ use of the exhibit and awareness of conservation messages.

Math Attitudes and Identities of Adults in Science Center Programs
Anna Johnson, University of Washington

This research explores the math attitudes and math identities of participants in adult programs at science centers. This work is being conducted by a graduate student as thesis research for the Museology Master’s Program at the University of Washington.

Building Capacity through Interdisciplinary Cooperation: Experimental Research on Reception Practice
Annette Loeske, Museum Consultant

Content- or visitor-centered research categories do not seem fully appropriate to address currently changing reception practices. Instead, we need experimental research methods to evaluate cognitive as well as non-cognitive dimensions of reception and fully engage in developing new products and formats that respond to changing reception practices of today’s audiences.

The Value of Early Childhood Professionals in Research and Evaluation
Stacy Niemiec, John G. Shedd Aquarium, Erikson Institute

The purpose of this poster is to highlight museums, zoos, and aquariums as early learning spaces and to underscore the importance of researching young visitors’ experiences. At Shedd Aquarium, child development knowledge coupled with research and evaluation methodology allows for a deeper understanding of the early learning experience.

Parent-Child Interactions that Foster Science Interest before School
Scott Pattison, Oregon State University, Lynn Dierking, Oregon State University

Interest development is a growing focus of attention in informal science education and visitor studies. In this poster presentation, we report on a mixed-method research study to explore parent-child interactions and discourse across a range of settings, including museums and science centers, that contribute to early childhood science interest development.
**Science on the Move: Design-Based Research Outside Institution Walls**
Scott Pattison, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, Marcie Benne, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, Chris Cardiel, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry

Thinking of taking your informal learning experiences outside the walls of your institution? Stop by to hear about a project that focused on creative evaluation and research strategies in nontraditional contexts and explore some tools and resources that might be useful in your own work!

**Designing a Tablet Support Tool for Interpreters**
Brian Slattery, University of Illinois at Chicago

The authors present findings from the iterative design of a novel tablet support tool (TST) that they have created to support interpretation of an interactive exhibit at Brookfield Zoo in Chicago, IL. This includes using the TST for collaborative meaning-making and inquiry, and we discuss the TST’s potential range of uses.

**Drawing on prior experience to catalyze evaluation capacity building**

In order to build evaluation capacity in more inviting ways, we must consider the skills and knowledge potential evaluators have developed through previous professional, and life, experiences. At this poster, a new evaluator will share his pathway into the field, and the role prior experience plays in his work.

**Building Capacity Through Academic Partnerships**
Amelia Robinson, Science Museum, London

In a time when resources are stretched conducting research and evaluation can be challenge. This presentation explores the benefits for the Science Museum in London in forming academic partnerships in order to conduct rigorous research.

**Getting to Know Family Audiences: Evaluating Family-Oriented Programming at MOHAI**
Emily Schmierer, University of Washington, Amanda Dearolph, University of Washington

When the Museum of History and Industry moved to a new location, they acquired a new audience: family groups. To better understand these groups, our evaluation studied their motivations for visiting the museum and how they access and engage with new resources made available to them.

**The Role of Front-end Research to Increase Capacity**
Amelia Robinson, Science Museum, London

Front-end research at the Science Museum has shown that science can often be a subject audiences find challenging. This session will explore how research has led to the Museum taking innovative approaches from the start of a project to overcome barriers to engagement for their audience.

**Henry Art Gallery Formative Evaluation of Lobby Experience and Resource Materials**
Emily Shin, University of Washington Museology Graduate Program, Taline Kuyumjian, University of Washington

University of Washington Museology graduate students developed this evaluation to understand the effectiveness of the Henry’s lobby resources in orienting visitors to the museum, providing visit information about admissions & exhibitions, and providing additional information about program offerings. Results will inform design and structure of future resources at the Henry.

**Conversations with Elementary Age Children about History and STEM**
Amanda Santesson-DeGidio, Science Museum of Minnesota, Al Onkka, Science Museum of Minnesota

Methodology in measuring and assessing children’s understandings of the nature of science is generally reserved for standardized testing. This poster will showcase a series of family interviews and rich conversations at an innovative exhibit called Create. Connect, which combines STEM-based activities with a historical context and historical interpretation.

**Calorie Counting Bikes and Talking Toilets: a children’s museum exhibit**
Christina Zarcadoolas, City University of NY School of Public Health

The authors studied the Children’s Museum of Manhattan’s EatSleepPlay™ exhibit to better understand children’s engagement and learning. Methods included videotaping, ethnography, exit interviews with 87 children (4-8) and parent surveys. Findings revealed opportunities to improve child learning through more purposeful parent mediation, reframing function of signage, and extending reach through post-visit digital communications.
3:15 – 4:15 p.m.

Poster Session
North Atrium

Instrument Development and Validation: A Tool for More Rigorous Evaluation
Lei Zhao, John G. Shedd Aquarium

Evaluators, particularly internal ones, often need to develop instruments to measure program and exhibit outcomes. The current poster will address the process of instrument development and validation, which ensures quality of measuring evaluation outcomes at Shedd. Besides internal consistency, construct validity of an instrument was examined to fulfill validation needs.

5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Get to Know VSA Happy Hour
QBar Lounge, Hotel Albuquerque

Free (pre-registration is required)

VSA’s Membership Committee invites new attendees and all members for a happy hour at the Hotel Albuquerque. This is an informal way to meet and chat with other members and VSA leaders to learn about VSA committees.

Pre-registration is required for this event. Hors d’oeuvres provided, cash bar available.
Welcome to the 2014 Visitor Studies Association Conference!

Indianapolis awaits you in 2015. We invite you to visit The Children's Museum of Indianapolis while you are there.

It is easy for a museum to get objects - it is hard for a museum to get brains

John Cotton Dana, 1920

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8:30 – 9:00 a.m.
Coffee Break
North Atrium

SAVE THE DATE:  Ed U. Cation and Reese Urch are getting married!
Room Alvarado B

9:00 – 10:15 a.m.
Concurrent Sessions – VI

“Everything looks different!”
Embracing complexity in multi-sited projects
Room Alvarado A

Dolly Hayde, Lifelong Learning Group, Shelly Valdez, Native Pathways, Cecelia Garibay, Garibay Group, Juli Goss, Museum of Science Boston, Jill Stein, Lifelong Learning Group

Collaboration can lead to great outcomes—and also great complexity. Presenters discuss how using flexible, holistic approaches in multi-sited projects has helped maintain evaluative focus and meaningful stakeholder involvement while respecting the particularity of individual communities and contexts. Attendees then discuss their own perspectives, examples, and questions in breakout groups.

SAVE THE DATE:  Ed U. Cation and Reese Urch are getting married!
Room Alvarado B

Nette Pletcher, Association of Zoos & Aquariums

The Association of Zoos & Aquariums cordially invites you to celebrate the wedding of Ed U. Cation and Reese Erch. The celebration will include toasts honoring the seven questions this happy couple explored together and an opportunity to wish them a prolific future.

Strategies for Professionalizing the Field of Visitor Studies
Room Alvarado C

Barbara Butler, Larry Bell, Museum of Science Boston, Nick Visscher, University of Washington Museology Graduate Program

The intellectual value and practical worth of the work in our field would be advanced if we could move collectively toward a more professional state, with standard competencies for informal education evaluators and a voluntary registry system for professionals designed to build the capacity of the visitor studies field.

Growing Up Isn’t Easy: Developing Systems to Grow Institutional Capacity
Room Alvarado E

Lindsay Maldonado, John G. Shedd Aquarium, Nicole Rivera, North Central College, Joy Kubacheck-Sandor, John G. Shedd Aquarium

How can we build evaluation capacity within our institution when resources are limited? This session will explore three strategies commonly used in developing institutional capacity, how these have been applied at Shedd Aquarium, and investigate the potential for use in other institutions. Three areas will be discussed: Academic partnerships; volunteer recruitment & training; and empowering internal staff.

10:30 – 11:45 a.m.
Concurrent Sessions – VII

Understanding Institutional Culture: Tools for Cultivating a Welcoming Visitor Environment
Room Alvarado A

Azuka MuMin, COSI, Andrea Moto, Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History, Joe Heimlich, OSU Extension @ COSI, Steve Yalowitz, Audience Viewpoints Consulting

How do we create an internal culture where staff feels valued, respected, and confident; and in turn cultivate welcoming environments for diverse audiences? This interactive workshop will encourage reflection, discussion, and analysis to challenge our institutional habits and learn from each other to support diverse needs of staff and visitors.

Building evaluation capacity in museums through university partnerships
Room Alvarado B

Nick Visscher, University of Washington Museology Graduate Program, Jim Kisiel, California State University Long Beach, Theano Moussouri, University College London Institute of Archaeology

Professionals from four universities describe courses that engage museums and similar institutions to provide graduate students with real-world evaluation experience. Panellists will discuss underlying goals, constraints and shared challenges; attendees will be invited to consider how such collaborations might be improved to better build individual and institutional evaluation capacity.
Theme: Novel Avenues of Visitor Studies
Room Alvarado C

Micro-experiments for fast, actionable data about the museum experience
Erin Gong, Independent Consultant, Michelle Maghari, Crocker Art Museum

Museums increasingly see the value of formative evaluation. This presentation takes the next step by exploring options for light-weight experiments. Our goal is fast and simple data collection that drives actionable insights. Drawing on lessons learned from many experiments, this presentation shares practical principles for making the most of micro-experiments.

Perceived Atmosphere: a novel way for characterizing exhibition environments
Regan Forrest, University of Queensland

This paper describes the development of a quantitative instrument for eliciting how visitors perceive individual exhibition environments. Based on techniques successfully piloted in retail environments, Perceived Atmosphere offers a novel and easy to administer research tool for characterizing exhibition environments in meaningful ways.

Co-Creation and Evaluation: measuring the internal impact of public engagement
Kayte McSweeney, Science Museum London

At the Science Museum London, the response from visitors to co-creation is paramount but much research has been done looking inward and assessing the impact of the approach on the institution. Can Visitor Research successfully adapt its methodologies to meet the demand for evaluation that’s inevitably for visitors, but not with them?

Telling the visitor story: Bringing UX design techniques into Evaluation
Room Alvarado E
Stephanie Mabadi, Dallas Museum of Art, Perot Museum of Nature and Science

This session will present an important tool common in the User Experience field for telling user stories called the affinity diagram, or affinity wall, and discuss the value of using this tool for visitor studies and evaluation - how to create and use it. We will discuss multiple ways to use the affinity diagram to tell visitor stories, disseminate data internally, brainstorm new or improved experiences for your visitors, and as a demonstration of the value of evaluation in a public, interesting, utilitarian format.

12:00 – 1:30 p.m.
Closing Luncheon & Plenary

Free (pre-registration is required)
Room Alvarado D
Sponsored by newknowledge.org

Join colleagues for a last hurrah and an opportunity to gather your thoughts after several scintillating days of presentations. Speak with colleagues about your own reflections on ideas related to building capacity for evaluation and hear about potential next steps that conference conversations have sparked for a few of VSA’s leaders. As lunch is served, attendees will be invited to reflect on their conference experience and next steps they are interested in taking to build capacity with those around their tables.

Each of the following individuals will spend 5-7 minutes reflecting briefly on key personal insights from the conference and then reflecting on ways in which the conference proceedings have sparked or informed next steps for VSA from her point of view.

Dale McCreedy, VSA Past President
Kimberly Kiehl, VSA President-elect
Marcie Benne, Chair VSA Membership Committee
Elisa Israel, Chair VSA Professional Development Committee

Pre-registration is required for this event. Event includes food and refreshments.

NEW!
Post-Conference Workshop

Half Day Workshop
2 – 5 p.m.
Interpretation, Presentation, and Application of Tracking-and-Timing Data
Beverly Serrell, Director, Serrell & Associates

Hotel Albuquerque: Alvarado A

Competency A: Principles and Practices of Visitor Studies
Competency B: Principles and Practices of Informal Learning Environments
Competency C: Knowledge of and Practices with Social Science Research and Evaluation Methods and Analysis
### VSA Conference Team

Special thanks to our conference team, whose time, energy, and dedicated service has enabled VSA to present such a fantastic event.

#### 2014 Conference Team

- **Eli Bossin**, Association Manager
- **Rita Deedrick**, Development Committee Liaison
- **Jen DeWitt**, Workshop Team Member
- **Valerie Grabski**, Abstracts Editor
- **Tamara Grybko**, Local Host Coordinator
- **Gretchen Haupt**, Workshop Team Member
- **Dolly Hayde**, April Awards Subcommittee Member
- **Elisa Israel**, Professional Development Committee Liaison
- **Amy Grack Nelson**, Workshop Team Chair
- **Michelle Maghari**, April Awards Subcommittee Member
- **Sara Martinez**, Membership Committee Liaison
- **Leah Reisman**, April Awards Subcommittee Member
- **Camellia Sanford**, Conference Planning Committee Chair
- **Kathleen Tinworth**, April Awards Subcommittee Chair
- **Claire Thoma**, Program Co-Chair
- **Rachel Veracka**, Local Host Committee
- **Linda Wilson**, Program Co-Chair
- **Elee Wood**, Conference Planning Committee Vice-Chair

#### 2014 Workshop Proposal Reviewers

- Elsa Bailey
- Karyn Bertschi
- Steve Bitgood
- Jennifer Borland
- Sarah Cohn
- Rita Deedrick
- Amy Grack Nelson
- Jennifer Holland
- Kim Kiehl
- Anna Lindgren-Streicher
- Dale McCreedy
- Nick Visscher
- Linda Wilson

#### 2014 Session Proposal Reviewers

- David Anderson
- Stephen Ashton
- Marta Beyer
- Stephen Bitgood
- Lindzy Bivings
- Minda Borun
- Donna Braden
- Sheila Brommel
- Sharisse Butler
- Chris Cadenhead
- Lynne Carmichael
- Tammy Cherry
- Lynn Courtney
- Rita Deedrick
- Mike Flynn

#### 2014 Workshop Proposal Reviewers

- Ly Foor
- Susan Foutz
- Ellen Giusti
- Kate Haley Goldman
- Steve Guberman
- Preeti Gupta
- Joshua Gutwill
- Dolly Hayde
- Tiffany Leason
- Jerry Luebke
- Jessica Luke
- Kayte McSweeney
- Lisa Newton
- Sigrid Norris
- Jan Packer
- Phyllis Robineau
- Leah Reisman
- Michael Rose
- Camellia Sanford
- Jessica Sickler
- Matt Sikora
- Rebekah Sobel
- Jill Stein
- Nicole Stutzman
- Theopisti Stylianou-Lambert
- Mary Jane Taylor
- Loreen Trainer
- Maia Werner-Avidon
- Kari Williams
- Karen Wizevich
- Mary Ann Wojton
- Elee Wood
- Steve Yalowitz
- Renae Youngs

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**VSA**

Visitor Studies Association

[www.visitorstudies.org](http://www.visitorstudies.org)
The 27th Annual Visitor Studies Association Conference is supported by businesses, organizations, and individuals committed to understanding and serving visitors in informal learning environments. Please support those whose work furthers VSA’s vision of a world where lifelong learning is embraced, and where learning in informal settings benefits individuals, communities, and society at large.

Local Host Organizations

iexplora!
Ideas You Can Touch
Ideas que puedes tocar

New Mexico Museum of Natural History & Science

Joe E. Heimlich, Ph.D.

Center for Research and Evaluation
Lifelong Learning Group

RK& a
Randi Korn & Associates, Inc.

RLMG
Richard Lewis Media Group

Research & Evaluation

slovenlinett
Audience Research
VSA Board of Directors and Committees

Special thanks to the following volunteers whose time, energy, and dedicated service have enabled VSA to increase the scope and quality of its service to the field.

THE VSA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2013 – 2015

OFFICERS
President – Joe Heimlich, The Ohio State University
President-Elect – Kimberlee Kiehl, Smithsonian Early Learning Center
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Vice President, Professional Development – Jessica Luke, University of Washington
Vice President, Outreach – Robert Breck, Minneapolis Public Radio
Corporate Compliance & Secretary – Randy Roberts, Crocker Art Museum
Treasurer – Sarah Cohn, Science Museum of Minnesota
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Saul Rockman, Rockman et al
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Gina Navoa Svarovsky, Science Museum of Minnesota

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE
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BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Chair: Laura Huerta-Migus
Vice Chair: Anna Lindgren-Streicher
Members: Betty Dunckel, Julie Johnson, Rebekah Sobel, and Janet Rassweiler

The Board Development Committee is charged with ensuring effective board governance of the Association. The committee is responsible for overseeing elections, monitoring and assessing board processes, structures and roles, and providing board members with the tools and support needed to fulfill their board duties.

Specific responsibilities include: developing a board slate that meets the strategic needs of the organization; reviewing board and committee structures and related policies; planning on-going professional development for new and existing board members; and recognizing board members for their contributions.

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Chair: Randi Korn
Vice Chair: Lynn Courtney
Members: Rita Deedrick, Kim Kiehl, Robert “Mac” West, and Mira Zirgani

The Development Committee is charged with raising money to support the work of VSA. The Development Committee works with other committees to understand resource needs so it can raise dollars accordingly. Committee members design, manage, and execute fund raising strategies to encourage charitable donations, advertising, and conference sponsorships.
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Vice President: Jessica Luke

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
Chair: Camellia Sanford
Vice Chair: Elee Wood
Members: Ly Foor

This group is the major workforce behind the annual conference. The Conference Planning Committee (CPC) is responsible for ensuring that the annual conference is designed to serve VSA’s mission, strategic direction, and members. The CPC oversees the direction and logistics of planning for VSA’s current and future annual conferences. The CPC also oversees and advises the annual Conference Team as they prepare for each conference. A new Team is created for each year’s conference, consisting of the Association Manager, Program Co-Chairs, local VSA members, and representatives from other VSA committees. The CPC provides guidance and continuity between each year’s planning processes.

NON-CONFERENCE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Chair: Elisa Israel
Vice Chair: Jennifer Borland
Members: Elsa Bailey, Lindzy Bivings, Jen DeWitt, Michelle Maghari, Amy Grack Nelson, Gretchen Haupt, Dolly Hayde, Jennifer Holland, Leah Reisman, Saul Rockman, Kathleen Tinworth, and Nick Visscher

The Professional Development Committee is responsible for providing training and growth opportunities for VSA members and other informal learning professionals. Specifically, the committee is charged with the following responsibilities: pre-conference workshops; regional workshops; awards and scholarships; and professional standards.

OUTREACH
Vice President: Robert Breck

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE
Chair: Gina Svarovsky
Vice Chair: Elizabeth Bolander
Members: Sarah Cohn, Jim Kisiel, Lesley Langa, Andrea Michelbach, Amy Niedbalski, Carrie Plank, and Liz Rosino

The Communications Committee is charged with developing compelling information about the Visitor Studies Association as well as content about the overall field of visitor studies for members and the broader visitor studies community. The committee comprises three working groups: website and publications; interactive/social media; and strategic communications. The committee also provides a liaison to the editorial board of VSA’s journal, Visitor Studies.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE
Chair: Marcie Benne
Vice Chair: Maia Werner-Avidon
Members: Patience Baach, Andrea Giron, Sara Martinez, Lindsay Maldonado, Patty Montaño, Lisa Newton, Meghan Schiedel, Renae Youngs

The Membership Committee strives to create accessible and inclusive pathways for joining and engaging with VSA. The committee co-develops a variety of resources and activities to help members get acquainted with each other, share expertise, develop VSA competencies, create VSA experiences, and collaborate to advance the field.
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In Memoriam: Alan J. Friedman

15 November 1942 - 8 May 2014

Leader in informal learning
Mentor to the field
Friend to us all

You will be missed, Alan.
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- Museum of Indian Arts and Culture
- Museum of International Folk Art
- New Mexico History Museum / Palace of the Governors
- New Mexico Museum of Art
- Bosque Redondo Memorial at Fort Sumner
- Coronado Historic Site
- El Camino Real Historic Trail Site
- Fort Selden Historic Site
- Fort Stanton Historic Site
- Jemez Historic Site
- Lincoln Historic Site

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