From the Secretary

Affiliates are a critical part of the Smithsonian’s work across the nation. More than 30 million people visit the Smithsonian each year; there are many more who do not have that opportunity. Our 200+ Affiliate organizations in nearly all states, Puerto Rico, and Panama—museums, libraries, universities, and cultural organizations—serve those who are not able to travel to our museums in Washington, D.C. and New York. Together, our Affiliates engage additional millions of people and introduce them to the Smithsonian through exhibitions, scholarly programming, educational activities, and more. Affiliates not only connect their visitors with the Smithsonian, but also inspire their communities to deepen their understanding of critical issues and become more informed and curious learners. As we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Affiliations program, we are grateful for the collaboration of the Affiliate network. We look forward to continuing our work together in connecting communities near and far to the Smithsonian.

Lonnie G. Bunch III
Secretary
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From the Director

As Smithsonian Affiliations celebrates its 25th anniversary, I reflect on the collaborations we have enjoyed with Affiliate organizations across the U.S. and Panama and in partnership with the Smithsonian’s museums, research centers, and zoo. Together, we have reached millions of people through educational programs, traveling exhibitions, scholarship, and community engagement initiatives, while also working to build capacity at our respective organizations and among our professional communities. The Affiliations program is a wonderful example of true collaboration, where all parties benefit. Affiliates not only receive content, resources, and expertise from the Smithsonian, they also give it back—to us and to one another. Through this incredible network, we are able to strengthen connections between the Smithsonian and museums and cultural organizations—and their communities—to inspire a deeper understanding of our world and how it can be changed for the better. We look forward to the next 25 years and working with our Smithsonian and Affiliate colleagues to extend and deepen the Smithsonian’s impact and spark curiosity among learners of all ages.

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Director
Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service and Smithsonian Affiliations

The Smithsonian is a gatekeeper of a vast wealth of culture and knowledge. The Arizona Historical Society and the Arizona State Museum bring the best of the Smithsonian to Arizona....As we commemorate the 175th anniversary of the Smithsonian and the 25th anniversary of the Smithsonian Affiliations, we celebrate our shared history and humanity.

REP. RAÚL GRIJALVA (D-AZ 3rd District)
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In 1996, on the occasion of the Smithsonian's 150th anniversary, I. Michael Heyman, then Secretary of the Smithsonian, announced the Smithsonian Affiliations program as one of several outreach initiatives introduced to fulfill the recommendations of the Commission on the Future of the Smithsonian and expand the Institution's national reach. “The Smithsonian of the future must provide access to its collections and its vast resources. There is no value in being just the largest if we do not share the Smithsonian with as many people as possible. It means making sure those who cannot travel to Washington can somehow experience and enjoy the Smithsonian.” The first Affiliate joined the program in early 1997. By the end of that year, there were 21 Affiliate collaborators across the U.S. As we entered the 21st century, more than 50 mission-aligned organizations made up the Affiliate network and were collaborating with the Smithsonian to bring its resources to their communities. In these first years, the Affiliations program was primarily envisioned as a way to reach communities across the nation with objects from the Smithsonian's collections. Affiliate organizations could borrow objects on long-term loan, connecting the Smithsonian with their audiences in ways that were meaningful, relevant, and accessible. Over its 25-year history, Affiliations has grown far beyond its initial mandate to share objects with Affiliate organizations. We have lived up to the Institution's ambition to educate beyond the National Mall and build collaborative relationships with other museums and cultural organizations. Today, with more than 200 Affiliates in nearly every state, Puerto Rico and Panama, the Smithsonian is able to engage communities across the nation and beyond in myriad ways. As a network, we are able to spark curiosity and learning, inspire a deeper understanding of our world, and work together to create a better tomorrow. We know that we are stronger together.

The racehorse Lexington's skeleton, on loan from the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History to the International Museum of the Horse in Lexington, Kentucky. Courtesy of Cincinnati Museum Center.

Our History


Right: Evan Keeling, Smithsonian Exhibits, leads a comic book workshop at the Cincinnati Museum Center, Cincinnati, OH. Courtesy of Cincinnati Museum Center.
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Milestones

1996
Smithsonian Board of Regents formally approves Smithsonian Affiliations

2002
Professional development collaboration in Puerto Rico with the Museo y Centro de Estudios Humanisticos at Universidad Ana G. Mendez

1997
Organizations become Smithsonian Affiliates

2010
National Youth Summit partnership with the National Museum of American History engages Affiliates and their local students in critical conversations linking history to today

2012
Youth Capture the Colorful Cosmos, first collaboration with the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, brings astronomy and STEM education to Affiliate communities

2017
Destination Moon: The Apollo 11 Mission, featuring the Apollo 11 command module Columbia, opens at Space Center Houston, the first of 5 Affiliate venues

2018
Cohort-based Visiting Professionals Program supports Affiliates in building skills and expertise to broaden access to collections through digital technologies

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Smithsonian Affiliations celebrates its 25th anniversary with 214 Affiliates in 46 states, Puerto Rico, and Panama

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Since 2012, with generous support from the Smithsonian’s Youth Access Grant program, Smithsonian Affiliations and Affiliates have collaborated with the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory to bring astronomy education to their communities through the Youth Capture the Colorful Cosmos program (YCCC).

YCCC introduces audiences, especially students, to the wonders of the universe. Participants can access robotic telescopes, take images of the cosmos, and manipulate the photographs to produce their own artistic and scientific interpretations of the stars and galaxies. Along the way, they gain important technology skills and engage in—and apply—science, technology, engineering, art, and math.

Since 2012, YCCC has grown to include 29 Smithsonian Affiliates and has reached more than 7,000 participants across the nation. Each Affiliate brings its expertise to adapt Smithsonian resources and create programs uniquely connected to their own audiences. For example, arts educator Annette Eschelman from the Springfield Museum of Art (Springfield, OH) was able to combine visual arts and astronomical imaging techniques to engage incarcerated youth.

Smithsonian Affiliations extends our reach beyond the National Mall, helping us serve as a national museum, and it fosters dialogue among museums big and small, bringing us together as a museum community. An interconnected network of museum professionals committed to engaging diverse audiences nationwide is a powerful force!

BENJAMIN FILENE, Associate Director for Curatorial Affairs, National Museum of American History
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Through YCCC, Affiliates have helped to broaden access to Smithsonian resources and magnify its reach, all while engaging learners in Affiliate communities in astronomy. Together with the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, Affiliates have created a community of practice which supports open exchange of ideas, collaborative problem-solving, and meaningful peer-to-peer learning.

ENGAGING STUDENTS IN CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS

In 2010, Smithsonian Affiliations partnered with the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History to launch the National Youth Summit. The first Summit commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Freedom Rides, a series of political protests against segregation. Affiliates brought together students and teachers from their communities to watch a livestream of noted scholars and activists, and augmented the rich Smithsonian content with their own programming and speakers. Since 2010, Affiliates and the National Museum of American History have organized eight highly successful National Youth Summits, on topics such as women’s suffrage, systemic racism, and Japanese American incarceration, with featured speakers like the late Congressman John Lewis (D-GA) and documentarian Ken Burns.
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Fifty years after Neil Armstrong took his famous first steps on the moon, the Smithsonian and its network of Affiliates looked back at the legacy of the Apollo program and helped lead a national celebration. Exhibitions and programs across the Smithsonian and in Affiliate communities sparked national conversations about the past, present, and future of innovation and exploration. Plans for celebrating the 50th anniversary began in 2017, when the Apollo 11 command module Columbia and other artifacts left the Smithsonian’s National Air and Space Museum as part of the traveling exhibition Destination Moon: The Apollo 11 Mission. Organized by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service in collaboration with the Air and Space Museum, the national tour traveled only to Smithsonian Affiliate museums. Beginning at Space Center Houston (Houston, TX), the exhibition traveled to Saint Louis Science Center (St. Louis, MO), Senator John Heinz History Center (Pittsburgh, PA), The Museum of Flight (Seattle, WA) — where it was displayed on the anniversary of the actual lunar landing — and Cincinnati Museum Center (Cincinnati, OH). In each city, Affiliates complemented the exhibition with local stories of astronauts, engineers, and other innovators who played crucial roles and helped bring the exhibition to life for their communities. The exhibition reached more than 750,000 people in these five Affiliate cities.

The extravehicular (EV) gloves made for and worn by astronaut Buzz Aldrin on the lunar surface during the historic Apollo 11 mission in July, 1969. Photo by Eric Long, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

The Affiliate museums are key to us...sharing our collections and expertise far beyond the walls of our museum. From artifacts on loan that inspire a child in Kansas at the Cosmosphere to our amazing historians and researchers speaking to audiences across the country to the partnership of museums like the San Diego Air and Space Museum.

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INTERPRETING THE 1960S AT GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL

In May 2014, 11 Smithsonian Affiliates came together to provide artifacts for A Look Into the Sixties: An Exhibition on the Decade That Changed the World, which was showcased in New York City’s historic Grand Central Terminal. Smithsonian Affiliations worked with CNN to develop the exhibit in collaboration with Affiliates. Four seats from the Greensboro Woolworth Lunch Counter, loaned by the Greensboro History Museum (Greensboro, NC), a bench from Martin Luther King, Jr.’s jail cell provided by the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute (Birmingham, AL), a life-size figure of Mr. Rogers from the Senator John Heinz History Center, and artifacts from the Gemini space missions from the Cosmosphere (Hutchinson, KS) all helped visitors remember, reflect, and understand life in 1960s America, a decade marked by extraordinary social and political change. Throughout the four-day exhibition, more than 500,000 people visited the exhibition, which helped to launch THE SIXTIES, a 10-episode CNN documentary series.

Above: A visitor views the Destination Moon exhibition at the Senator John Heinz History Center, Pittsburgh, PA. Photo by James Kegley.

Below: Senator John Heinz History Center Director, Andrew Masich, and SITES and Smithsonian Affiliations Director, Myriam Springuel.

Destination Moon: The Apollo 11 Mission was made possible by the support of Jeff Bezos, Joe Clark, Bruce R. McCaw Family Foundation, The Charles and Lisa Simonyi Fund for Arts and Sciences, John and Susann Norton, and Gregory D. and Jennifer Walston Johnson. Transportation services for Destination Moon were provided by FedEx.
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In 2018, with support from the Getty Foundation, Smithsonian Affiliations introduced a new VPP built on a cohort, rather than an individual, model and was able to double the number of Affiliate professionals who could be served through the VPP each year. In 2018 and 2019, Affiliations brought together a group of mid-career Affiliate staff to focus on how they could use digital tools and technologies to broaden access to their Affiliate’s art collections. Participants each brought a challenge or project to the VPP and, throughout the two-week program, with support, insight, and guidance from Smithsonian leadership and other staff, refined the project and developed a strategy to implement a solution.

“Thanks to my experience with VPP, I feel prepared, as I help my staff shift from delivering in person museum experiences to focusing on digital engagement.... Promptly shifting to digital delivery of educational programs is impacting our ability to provide staff with meaningful work during this unique time [of Covid-19].

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**SHARING BEST PRACTICES IN PUERTO RICO**

Since 2002, Smithsonian Affiliations has collaborated with the Museo y Centro de Estudios Humanísticos at Universidad Ana G. Mendez (Gurabo, PR) to bring professional development to Puerto Rico. Funded by the Smithsonian Latino Initiatives Pool, the hands-on training for aspiring museum professionals aims to increase the representation of people of color in the museum field. The Smithsonian Latino Center, the Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative, and other Smithsonian colleagues have partnered to develop and deliver this in-depth and high-impact training for Puerto Rico’s university students.

Above: Participants in the 2018 Smithsonian Affiliations Visiting Professionals Program.
Below: 2018 Visiting Professional Program participants at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden.

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SENATOR JOHN BOOZMAN, (R-AR)

During the 2007 Smithsonian Affiliations National Conference in Washington, D.C., Affiliates marveled at a red sandalwood carving on display in the Ripley Center on the Smithsonian’s campus. The structure was a one-fifth scale model of the Ten Thousand Springs Pavilion, a celebrated classical Chinese pavilion that stands within the Forbidden City in the heart of Beijing.

The director of Lakeview Museum (now Peoria Riverfront Museum in Illinois) had been exploring ways to connect with the museum’s Chinese American community and inquired about the availability of the exhibition. After a series of conversations with staff from the Smithsonian’s Museum Conservation Institute, the exhibition was approved for travel. This simple inquiry sparked a national tour that reached diverse Affiliate communities and connected with thousands of visitors.

Made by Chinese artisans using traditional Chinese carving and fine furniture techniques, the Ten Thousand Springs Pavilion captures the beauty of the original pavilion and is an outstanding example of traditional Chinese carving. Artisans at the China Red Sandalwood Museum constructed the model of red sandalwood, treasured for its dark glossy color.
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and musty floral fragrance. No nails are used; the entire structure is put together with mortise-and-tenon joinery. The China Red Sandalwood Museum in Beijing donated the model to the Smithsonian Museum Conservation Institute.

In each Affiliate city it visited, the Ten Thousand Springs Pavilion provided an opportunity for Affiliates to connect with their community in deep and meaningful ways. The exhibition became a gathering place where citizens could come together to learn about the Pavilion, as well as Asian and Asian American culture, traditions, and more. For many Affiliates, the exhibit was a springboard for connecting with new audiences and served as the starting point for sustained and meaningful community connections.

**BRINGING BEETLES TO THE WORLD**

Since 1999, the University of Nebraska State Museum (UNSM) (Lincoln, NE) has been home to the National Museum of Natural History’s scarab beetle collection, which is made up of more than 300,000 specimens. In the past 22 years, the University has improved and enhanced the collection scientifically and physically. UNSM’s staff have curated, identified, documented, and loaned thousands of specimens from the Smithsonian’s national collection. This has ensured the specimens and their scientific data is readily available to a broad community of scientists from around the world.

"Being a Smithsonian Affiliate means so much more to The Rockwell Museum than just branding and name recognition. Having the opportunity to connect our communities in Upstate New York with the collections, exhibitions, resources, people and personalities of the Smithsonian in D.C. is a major boon to the work we do across the region. Our community truly appreciates all the opportunities our relationship with the Smithsonian brings to the museum. The Rockwell loves being an Affiliate because it affords us the ability to add exceptional benefits to the museum experience for our students, members and visitors.

BRIAN LEE WHISENHUNT, Executive Director
The Rockwell Museum
Corning, NY
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and musty floral fragrance. No nails are used; the entire structure is put together with mortise-and-tenon joinery. The China Red Sandalwood Museum in Beijing donated the model to the Smithsonian Museum Conservation Institute.

In each Affiliate city it visited, the Ten Thousand Springs Pavilion provided an opportunity for Affiliates to connect with their community in deep and meaningful ways. The exhibition became a gathering place where citizens could come together to learn about the Pavilion, as well as Asian and Asian American culture, traditions, and more. For many Affiliates, the exhibit was a springboard for connecting with new audiences and served as the starting point for sustained and meaningful community connections.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affiliates</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>States, Puerto Rico, and Panama</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smithsonian educational publications distributed by Affiliates</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Smithsonian objects on display at Affiliates</td>
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With the support of Emerson Collective, the Smithsonian and its Affiliate partners hope this pilot internship will create future museum advocates and change leaders by helping students understand the role museums can play in addressing our biggest challenges and continue to inspire them to improve the world around them.

LONNIE G. BUNCH III, Secretary, Smithsonian Institution

In 2019, Smithsonian Affiliations and the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) came together to form a single organization, SITES | Smithsonian Affiliations. Through our collective work, we underscore the importance of local stories in understanding national stories, contribute local perspectives on national and global issues, inspire lifelong learning, connect and strengthen the nation’s rich and diverse museums and cultural organizations, and promote innovative and best practices for museum professionals.

As the African proverb says, “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” As Smithsonian Affiliations celebrates its 25th anniversary, we look forward to many more years of moving forward together with our Affiliate collaborators and Smithsonian partners. We are eager to continue the Institution’s important work to engage and to inspire more people, where they are, with greater impact.
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Front Cover: 2018 Visiting Professional Program participants at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden.