

Fall 2020

# gam *essenger*

Georgia Association of Museums

## Museum Events Safely Return



*Georgia naturalist Jack McKey discusses his hand-carved paddles with a guest during an event at ABAC's Georgia Museum of Agriculture & Historic Village*

# From the President

GAM Members,

I hope this message finds you well as we all continue to navigate these unprecedented times. As we continue to live and work through the COVID-19 pandemic and evaluate various issues of systemic racism and needed societal changes, I hope that we all take a moment to also take care of ourselves.

Museum professionals, by and large, are usually “a work until the work is done” crowd and often do not vocalize their needs as well as they should. As we all go through this extraordinary period, I would urge all of us to take a pause to reflect on the events happening around us, take a day and do something that you have a passion for, or volunteer with a group or cause that you support. Self-care is a necessity at this time and I urge you all to take the time you need to care for yourselves.

Your GAM Board is working hard on developing program content for our members through our new virtual professional development series and developing plans for our upcoming 2021 conference in Statesboro. Information on these events as well as information on our annual GAM awards and service opportunities within our organization can be found in this issue.

Brighter days are ahead and I am so proud to be a part of our state’s museum community. Please let me know if I can be of any service to each of you, and I hope you all remain safe and well as we continue forward through these times.

Sincerely,

Matthew S. Davis  
President  
Georgia Association of Museums



# Museum Events Safely Return



As Georgia museums continue to reopen and outdoor temperatures cool down, some museums are experimenting with in-person events reimagined for the COVID era. The Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC) Georgia Museum of Agriculture successfully conducted an exhibition opening on September 19, making smart use of outdoor spaces and social distancing.

“Blood, Bone, and Stone” featured Jack McKey, a master craftsman of Naturalistic and Early Indian Technology and South Georgia native. The event included the world premiere of McKey’s biographical film, which was created by an ABAC professor and team of journalism students. McKey, 78, has spent a lifetime developing the natural skills needed to build tools and weapons in the styles of the original people of North America.

The day began with a film premiere under a covered open-air shelter. Seating for the premiere was socially distanced and limited to 50 people. After a brief Q&A with the filmmakers, guests walked to the GMA Gallery for the opening of McKey’s exhibit, which features several hundred hand-crafted artifacts.

McKey and GMA Curator Polly Huff hosted a gallery “walk and talk” during which the artist demonstrated some of his pieces and answered questions. Tours inside the Gallery were limited to 10 people at a time to maintain social distancing, with groups invited in throughout the afternoon on a rotating basis. Popular demand necessitated a second showing of the film for those who arrived in the afternoon, but staff sanitized all outdoor chairs first. Masks were also required at all times for staff and attendees, whether inside or outdoors.

McKey’s work will remain on display inside the GMA Gallery until July 2021, and the film will be projected in the Gallery daily. Congratulations to the GMA and ABAC for working together to present a dynamic and safe exhibition opening/film premiere!

Is your museum experimenting with new ways to host in-person events? Let us know your story, and you could be featured in a future GAMessenger! Email Rebecca Bush, Newsletter Chair, at [rbush@columbusmuseum.com](mailto:rbush@columbusmuseum.com).

# GAM Conversations Series

On July 27, 45 people took part in the first-ever GAM Conversation! The GAM Board has developed this new virtual programming series to help members better connect during the COVID-19 pandemic and to facilitate honest dialogue about topics that matter to you right now. Kudos to new board member Marcy Breffle for spearheading the first event and to our speakers for sharing their perspectives and expertise: Matt Davis, Didi Dunphy, Tommy Gregors, Christa McCay, and Jessica Vanlanduyt.



After a members' survey, we've developed a robust slate of programming for the months ahead. Take a look and let us know if you'd be interested in being a speaker for a future presentation.

October: Join awards committee members Virginia Howell, Christa McCay, April Moon, and Holly Wait for the inside scoop on the GAM Awards program: what it is, what a good nomination looks like, and why you should apply this year to celebrate Georgia museums' excellent work!

October 12, 2-3 p.m.: Discussion of Patron, Business/Corporation, Advocacy, Institution, Volunteer, Professional and Lifetime Achievement Awards

Save the link to join: <https://zoom.us/j/97110171435?pwd=bIVOZ3JGY3MrQnBlek5aRHBjWmdBdz09>

Meeting ID: 971 1017 1435, Passcode: 951212

October 19, 2-3 p.m.: Discussion of Education, Exhibition, Multimedia, Special Project, Student Project, and Creativity During Crisis Awards

Save the link to join: <https://zoom.us/j/99514114438?pwd=dGM1MWxzY0NxbXN5dGZlR29lZz09>

Meeting ID: 995 1411 4438, Passcode: 577221

November 9, 2-3 p.m.: Save the date for a discussion of DEAI best practices and first steps.



# DEAI: What's It All About?



The summer of 2020 brought a new abbreviation into the consciousness of many museum professionals: DEAI. This group of letters stands for Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, [and] Inclusion. Many of us have read or talked about these topics in different settings, but they've taken on new urgency in the museum field this year. As many museum leaders grapple with these ideas, we thought it would be helpful to provide basic definitions of DEAI that can be shared with your boards, staff members, and colleagues. These definitions were written by the American Alliance of Museums' DEAI Working Group in 2018. You can access the working group's report, and other DEAI resources, for free on AAM's website: <https://www.aam-us.org/programs/diversity-equity-accessibility-and-inclusion/>

**DIVERSITY** is all the ways that people are different and the same at the individual and group levels. Even when people appear the same, they are different. Organizational diversity requires examining and questioning the makeup of a group to ensure that multiple perspectives are represented.

**EQUITY** is the fair and just treatment of all members of a community. Equity requires commitment to strategic priorities, resources, respect, and civility, as well as ongoing action and assessment of progress toward achieving specified goals.

**ACCESSIBILITY** is giving equitable access to everyone along the continuum of human ability and experience. Accessibility encompasses the broader meanings of compliance and refers to how organizations make space for the characteristics that each person brings.

**INCLUSION** refers to the intentional, ongoing effort to ensure that diverse individuals fully participate in all aspects of organizational work, including decision-making processes. It also refers to the ways that diverse participants are valued as respected members of an organization and/or community. While a truly "inclusive" group is necessarily diverse, a "diverse" group may or may not be "inclusive."

We'll be diving into these topics in greater detail during a GAM Conversations webinar on Nov. 9, so stay tuned for more information!

# And the Winner Could Be... YOU!

GAM is accepting nominations for our annual awards program. Every year we honor and celebrate the innovative, meaningful, and important work done by individuals and museum organizations across the state. Awards address the scope of work done by institutions of all sizes, and you are encouraged to “toot your own horn” and nominate your organization – or another! – for recognition!

This year GAM is awarding a special "Creativity in Crisis" award. This award recognizes the creative ways individuals and departments at institutions have adapted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Nominations can include projects, programming, or activities that were only implemented or produced in response to this worldwide crisis.

The GAM Awards Committee encourages all museums to participate. The work being done in our museum community is impressive! Are you worried it's too hard to apply? Not sure where to begin? A webinar, GAM Awards: Easier to Apply for than a Grant will be held on October 12 and October 19 to talk you through the process and answer any questions you may have. From helping you find the right category for a nomination to reviewing what is needed with an application, the Awards Committee is here to help!

Nominations for the following awards are being accepted through Tuesday, December 1st:

## Awards about people:

- Patron
- Business/Corporation
- Advocacy
- Museum Volunteer
- Museum Professional
- Lifetime Achievement

## Awards about projects:

- Institution
- Education
- Museum Exhibit
- Multimedia
- Special Project
- Student Project
- Special Award: Creativity During Crisis



For the criteria for each award category, please see the GAM 2021 Call for Nominations document at <http://www.gamg.org/conference.html>.



## GAM 2021 Conference Update

In a typical year, conference workshops and sessions would already be selected, and the GAM Conference Committee would be checking on projectors and timing travel between progressive dinner locations. But this is 2020, so we are all anxiously awaiting the end of a pandemic while hoping murder hornets or asteroids don't get us first.

We know you have questions, and we have a few answers!

### ***Let's be honest: Is there going to be a 2021 GAM conference?***

YES! We know it's more important than ever that we connect with each other as GAM members, museum professionals, and fellow humans. A few months ago, we chose to postpone the 2021 conference from late January to late April, which we believe gives us our best chance of being able to meet in-person. The Conference Committee is also developing contingency plans for an all-virtual or hybrid conference.

### ***Huh, that's actually encouraging. Remind me where we're going again?***

STATESBORO! We're thrilled to be partnering with the good people at Georgia Southern University and the Statesboro Convention & Visitors Bureau, who continue to pivot and plan a great event for us with the generosity of the Statesboro-area museum community.

### ***That's great! I always love visiting the host city's museums during evening events and special excursions...are those still happening?***

YES! Statesboro's museums are excited to welcome us, and the Conference Committee is preparing for fun evening events and optional behind-the-scenes experiences, just like in years past.

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***This is exciting, but I just remembered that my professional development budget has been cut. Will the conference be affordable?***

WE GET IT: Your GAM Board is comprised of museum professionals, and we're all experiencing the financial realities of the COVID era, too. We are discussing ways to offer special discounted registration this year while still making the conference a great value. If we move to a virtual-only event, rest assured that pricing will also be adjusted accordingly.

***OK, I'm ready! How can I get involved now?***

We're so glad you asked!

**1. SUBMIT SESSION AND WORKSHOP PROPOSALS:** Some great proposals have already been submitted, but there's room for more! Even if you're not sure about traveling in April, don't be afraid to submit that great idea you have. The priority deadline is December 1, so get to thinking and collaborating.

**2. SUBMIT AWARD NOMINATIONS:** We could all use some good news! Help us honor the great work Georgia's museums are doing in 2020 by submitting award nominations. More information can be found in this newsletter and online. Submissions are due December 1.

**3. CONSIDER BOARD SERVICE:** We are actively looking for new GAM Board members, who will be voted on during the conference. See this newsletter for more information, and consider nominating yourself or a colleague. Board service is one of the most rewarding and fun ways to be a part of GAM!

**Keep an eye on [www.gamg.org/conference.html](http://www.gamg.org/conference.html) for more updates!**



**2021 Georgia Association of Museums Conference  
Statesboro, Georgia  
Monday, April 26 – Wednesday, April 28**

# *“Coastal Crossroads”*

## **Call for Conference Proposals**

*Please download and complete a form and submit it to Ephraim Rotter at [ephraim@thomascountyhistory.org](mailto:ephraim@thomascountyhistory.org) by Tuesday, December 1, 2020.*

*For questions, email or call Ephraim at 229-226-7664.*

All presentation rooms will be equipped with a Windows-based computer, wireless internet, projector, and screen. All projectors will be equipped with HDMI and VGA cables. If you choose to bring your own computer, you are responsible for your own adapters if your computer is not HDMI or VGA enabled. All presenters should be prepared to present Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday April 26-28, 2021. If you can only present on one of those days, please note that in your proposal and all considerations will be made to accommodate should your proposal be selected.

**Workshop:** Hands-on activities and practical solutions to specific challenges or issues that will engage audiences for as few as two or as many as six hours are encouraged. The most successful presenters also prepare handouts for workshop participants.

**Roundtable:** A short presentation by the chair and/or co-chairs, followed by a moderated discussion about the topic for 75 minutes.

**Session:** Focus on a theme or issues that will engage audiences for 75 minutes. The most successful sessions involve three presenters representing a range of perspectives and case studies with practical strategies that have broad applications.

**Download the Conference Proposal Form here:**

**<http://www.gamg.org/conference.html>**



# New & Renewing Members

*Since June 2020*

## **Institutional**

Booth Western Art Museum   Bowdon Historical Society  
Coffee County Historical Society   Morris Museum of Art  
Crawford Long Museum   Carrollton Cultural Arts Center  
Dalton Convention & Visitors Bureau   Hay House  
Elachee Nature Science Center   Historic Augusta  
Fort Valley Downtown Development Authority  
Georgia World Organization of China Painters Museum  
Georgia Writers Museum   Grady County Historical Society  
Historic Banning Mills   Historic Columbus   Historic Macon  
Lowndes County Historical Society   Historic Oakland  
Historic Savannah   Monroe Museum   Historic Macon  
Jack Hadley Black History Museum   Fernbank Science Center  
Kingston Woman's History Club   Marietta Cobb Museum of Art  
Collectible & Antique Chair Gallery  
Museum of History and Holocaust Education

## **Sponsor**

ArtsGeorgia

## **Individual**

Donald O. Davis   Hillary Brown   Marty Mulinix   Erin Zaballa





# **CALLING ALL VENDORS!**

Interested in becoming a vendor or sponsor for the 2021 GAM conference? Curious about what our in-person or virtual conference might look like?

Contact Michele Rodgers at [gamg@gamg.org](mailto:gamg@gamg.org) to learn more about how you and your services can be highlighted.

Do you have institutional news or notes on happenings in the museum field you'd like to share with fellow GAM members? Submit your items of 100-500 words to Rebecca Bush, GAM Newsletter Chair, at [rbush@columbusmuseum.com](mailto:rbush@columbusmuseum.com)



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Contact Administrative  
Director Michele Rodgers  
at [gamg@gamg.org](mailto:gamg@gamg.org)  
for pricing.***

# Board Nominations

Have you ever wanted to do more with GAM?

Are you interested in service and helping museum professionals across the state of Georgia?

Have you ever been curious what it takes to plan a professional conference?

Would you like to meet and work with more members of our state's great museum community?

Then you might be interested in serving on the GAM board!

Nominations are now being accepted for candidates for our 2021 nomination slate. Any institutional representative or individual member in good standing is eligible to serve for a two-year term. GAM board members meet four times a year (currently via Zoom, but usually at museums around the state) to conduct business and discuss ways to keep GAM moving forward. They also play a key role in running the annual conference and charting the organization's future.

If you are interested in learning more or submitting a name for nomination, please email Matt Davis at [matt.davis@gcsu.edu](mailto:matt.davis@gcsu.edu). Self-nominations are welcome.

*We look forward to having you as part of our team!*

# Board Members 2020

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