



Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service
Smithsonian Affiliations

YEAR IN REVIEW 2023





A NOTE FROM THE ADVISORY BOARD CHAIR

The Smithsonian, under the leadership of Secretary Lonnie G. Bunch III, is launching a new capital campaign, the Smithsonian Campaign for Our Shared Future. I can think of no better name for this effort. Our future depends on collaboration to better understand our history, to be the catalyst for community forums around the country to discuss current issues and develop solutions that will lead to a country where we can all thrive, together.

The Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service | Smithsonian Affiliations (SITES | Affiliations) is an integral part of Our Shared Future. SITES | Affiliations brings the resources and capabilities of the Smithsonian to communities across the country. In recent years, we have unveiled striking new programs and exhibitions, welcomed new Affiliate collaborators, and developed plans for future projects that we hope will continue to inspire conversations. These projects will focus on topics and Smithsonian initiatives from science and Life on a Sustainable Planet to social justice and the American experience.

We have been able to do this because of the generosity and commitment of our supporters and donors, Affiliate collaborators, Smithsonian colleagues, exhibitors, state Humanities Councils, and so many more. I want to thank you all for enabling the work you will see in this latest highlights report and ask that you continue to be part of the SITES | Affiliations community in the years to come.

I especially want to thank the tremendous dedication of our director for her vision and leadership and the SITES | Affiliations staff who bring these projects to life. Because of their talent and expertise, the Smithsonian is able to share exhibits, knowledge, and programs with local communities. For example, the creation of the Leadership for Change Internship program has been integral to unlocking the potential of young people across the country—fostering their curiosity in facilitating real, lasting, positive change in their communities in the arenas of women's history, climate change, race and social justice, and the changing American narrative as paid interns. Their work will reverberate throughout the Smithsonian community for years to come.

Finally, as chair, I want to acknowledge and express my appreciation to the members of our advisory board who have demonstrated time and again a commitment to the organization and to our shared mission. We would not be where we are today, or continue our outreach, without you.

I wish you all the best as we continue to shape and build Our Shared Future.

Brenda J. Gaines



Photo by Doug Coombe / MSU Museum



A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

SITES | Affiliations, along with the unwavering support of our collaborators, continues to bring the Smithsonian to communities everywhere. We work every day in your community to make a positive impact in the lives of those we serve. We inspire a deeper understanding of our world and how it can be changed for the better. We have witnessed stories of transformation, hope, and resilience that reaffirm the importance of our collective efforts.

Our work in 2023 was broad, ranging from affirming the importance of a sustainable planet to telling a more complete American story. All of this work happens with collaborating organizations around the country, which in turn, reach audiences in their communities. For example, I am heartened by the conversations, educational resources, and projects that have grown from our work with Affiliates to train and encourage high school students to address the effects of climate change. Evaluations of our Earth Optimism Youth Action and Leadership program show that by identifying a local problem, creating a solution, and recruiting other teens in their community to implement the solution, participating teens at Affiliates are developing leadership skills as well as strengthening their ability to write persuasively, analyze data, and organize projects. Other teens at Affiliates used resources developed by the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory and the NASA-funded Tropospheric Emissions: Monitoring of Pollution mission and public outreach to track and monitor air quality in their community, learning about the impacts of air quality on personal health and the health of their community. This program is integral to the student's understanding that air quality affects not just themselves but their immediate community's unique ecosystem.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to all of you who played a role in our journey. From our staff who create these projects to our collaborators who bring them to their audiences, and from those who serve on our board to those who contribute financially, your contribution has been invaluable.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Myriam Springuel



SITES | Affiliations

CHANGEMAKERS IN THE COMMUNITY



LEADERSHIP FOR CHANGE INTERNSHIPS

The **Leadership for Change Internship** continued to bring together rising college sophomores, juniors, and seniors who are committed to helping communities, are passionate about social justice, and are driven to accelerate positive impact in our world. This year, we were joined at various points for conversations with three wonderful leaders. Smithsonian National Board Chair Jorge Puente, SITES | Affiliations Advisory Board member Nanci Nishimura, and Smithsonian Education Working Group member Deborah Santana spoke with the intern cohort about their own individual paths and how they navigated their professional journeys to become who they are. The internship received funding support from the Emerson Collective and the Do A Little Foundation.

EARTH OPTIMISM YOUTH ACTION AND LEADERSHIP

The Earth Optimism National Educator Summit, held at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center on the Chesapeake Bay in Edgewater, Maryland, brought together educators from seven Smithsonian Affiliate organizations and their local high school teacher partners for four days in August for learning, sharing, and fellowship. All are collaborators in the **Earth Optimism Youth Action and Leadership** program, a place- and project-based model in collaboration with the World Wildlife Fund for supporting youth action for the environment in ways that build students' leadership skills. The program is made possible with generous support from the Smithsonian's Youth Access Grant, the Chesapeake Bay Trust, in part by the Jeff Bezos gift to the National Air and Space Museum, and with additional support from Brenda J. Gaines.

STORIES FROM MAIN STREET PODCAST

Season two of the Smithsonian's **Stories from Main Street** features three miniseries. Listen in as people from all over America share the good memories and the hard times and reflect on how change has affected their hometowns. Later in the season, we'll hear stories from everyday Americans about their experiences

with democracy and what it means to them. We'll also learn how innovation in small towns helps communities meet challenges and seize opportunities that have an impact on local life and sometimes reach far beyond. Catch up on season one, and join us for season two!

PARTNERSHIP WITH 4-H

In June, the Smithsonian announced a new partnership with the National 4-H Council to increase access to civic and cultural experiences for thousands of teens. Teens can participate in a variety of local and online project-based learning programs that promote civic engagement, including Museum on Main Street's **Stories 4-History**. With support from Smithsonian experts and 4-H leadership, youth will explore broader themes of American democracy. They will develop an action plan for a local history or civic engagement project that amplifies stories of democracy from their hometown. Their final projects will take many forms, including video documentary, curated exhibition, juried art show featuring youth voices, or some other expression that reflects the insights and creativity of these 4-H'ers. Projects are currently underway in three states: Arkansas, New Jersey, and Oklahoma. Project themes include food insecurity and legislation, the impact of a severe tornado on the agricultural community, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its local implications, and explorations of local historical sites.



Photo by Norwood Photography



**BRINGING
THE SMITHSONIAN
TO COMMUNITIES ACROSS
THE NATION**
In FY2023, SITES |
Affiliations collaborated
with **28 Smithsonian
offices** on more than
800 projects

NEW AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS

We are thrilled to welcome three new Affiliate organizations to the Smithsonian family!



Denver Botanic Gardens connects people with plants, especially plants from the Rocky Mountain region and similar regions around the world, providing delight and enlightenment to everyone.



The Mayborn Museum Complex on the Baylor University campus in Waco celebrates the natural science and cultural history of Central Texas.



The Muskegon Museum of Art in Michigan is renowned for its fine permanent collection of American and European paintings, sculpture, prints, and drawings as well as its studio glass collection.

OUR REACH IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Our exhibitions have provided opportunities to continue fostering conversations in your backyard.

Spark! Places of Innovation started its tour throughout the rural United States, kicking off simultaneous statewide tours in Idaho, Illinois, Kentucky, and Michigan. This Museum on Main Street exhibition explores the unique combination of places, people, and circumstances that sparks innovation and invention for every rural community. Gathered through crowdsourcing in rural communities, photographs, engaging interactives, objects, videos, and digital stories bring a multilayered experience to reveal the leaders, challenges, successes, and future of innovation in each town.

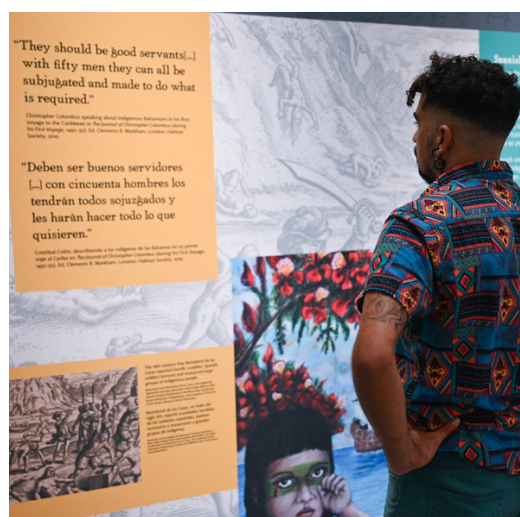


Photo by James Kegley

The exhibition is an opportunity for communities to come together in conversation, reflection, and exploration of invention and innovation around them. Inspired by the work of the Smithsonian's Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation, ***Spark!*** will travel to up to 144 small towns across 24 states over the next six years.

Caribbean Indigenous Resistance / Resistencia indígena del Caribe ¡Taíno Vive!

tells the captivating story of the endurance and courage of the Indigenous peoples of the northern Caribbean islands known as the Taíno. Through stories, contemporary crafts, musical instruments, and utilitarian objects, it explores the rich and enduring cultural legacies of the region and the impact and legacy of Caribbean Indigenous knowledge throughout the world. Presented in English and Spanish, the exhibition is organized in collaboration with the National Museum of the American Indian and the National Museum of the American Latino. It received federal support from the Latino Initiatives Pool managed by the National Museum of the American Latino.



Museum of Arts & Sciences, Daytona Beach, FL

After debuting at the National Museum of American History, ***Girlhood (It's complicated)*** began a national tour at Minnetrista Museum & Gardens in Muncie, Indiana. The exhibition explores the diversity of girls' experiences over more than two hundred years and through approximately two hundred objects. It examines the ways American girls have influenced politics, education, work, health, and fashion. Throughout history, girls have spoken up, challenged expectations, and been on the front lines of social change. Although definitions of girlhood have changed, what it means to grow up female in the United States has always been part of the American conversation.



Minnetrista Museum & Gardens

Girlhood is supported by the Smithsonian's American Women's History Initiative, a program of the Smithsonian American Women's History Museum.

KNOWING NATURE

Stories of the Boreal Forest  Historias del bosque boreal

Knowing Nature launched a national tour at the Michigan State University (MSU) Museum, a Smithsonian Affiliate in East Lansing, Michigan. The exhibition focuses on the biodiversity and global importance of our northernmost forests through first-person stories, authentic objects, interactive experiences, and exquisite photography and videography.

In a creative collaboration, a multidisciplinary team of MSU students worked with the Smithsonian to test a new approach to accessible design with the development of a digital concierge service that leverages radio-frequency identification (RFID) technology. This digital concierge service empowers visitors with visual impairment to self-identify their preferences for accessible options to the content in the exhibition. In addition to the RFID-based digital concierge service, another team of MSU students has created an engaging exhibition-based game that not only fosters learning but also amplifies visitor engagement.

Knowing Nature is made possible by the National Audubon Society with additional support from the Anders Foundation, Charlie and Nancy Hogan, and Anne C. Madison.

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Myriam Springuel

Director, SITES | Affiliations

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New Members



SITES | Affiliations

Board members visit the Affiliate Michigan Science Center to learn about their collaborations with the Smithsonian and the many ways they inspire curious minds of all ages to discover, explore, and appreciate science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) in a creative, dynamic learning environment.

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Emeritus

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Alumni

OUR DONORS

We are so grateful to our donors for the 2023 Fiscal Year*—thank you for making our work possible!

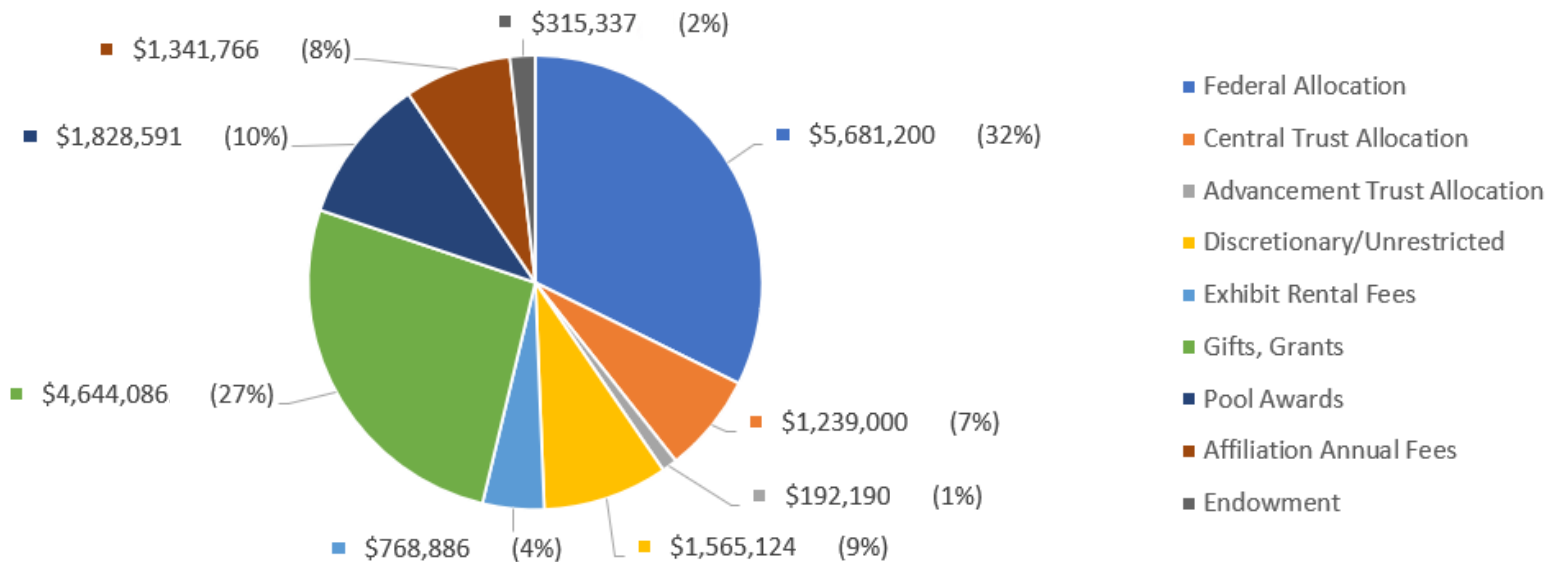


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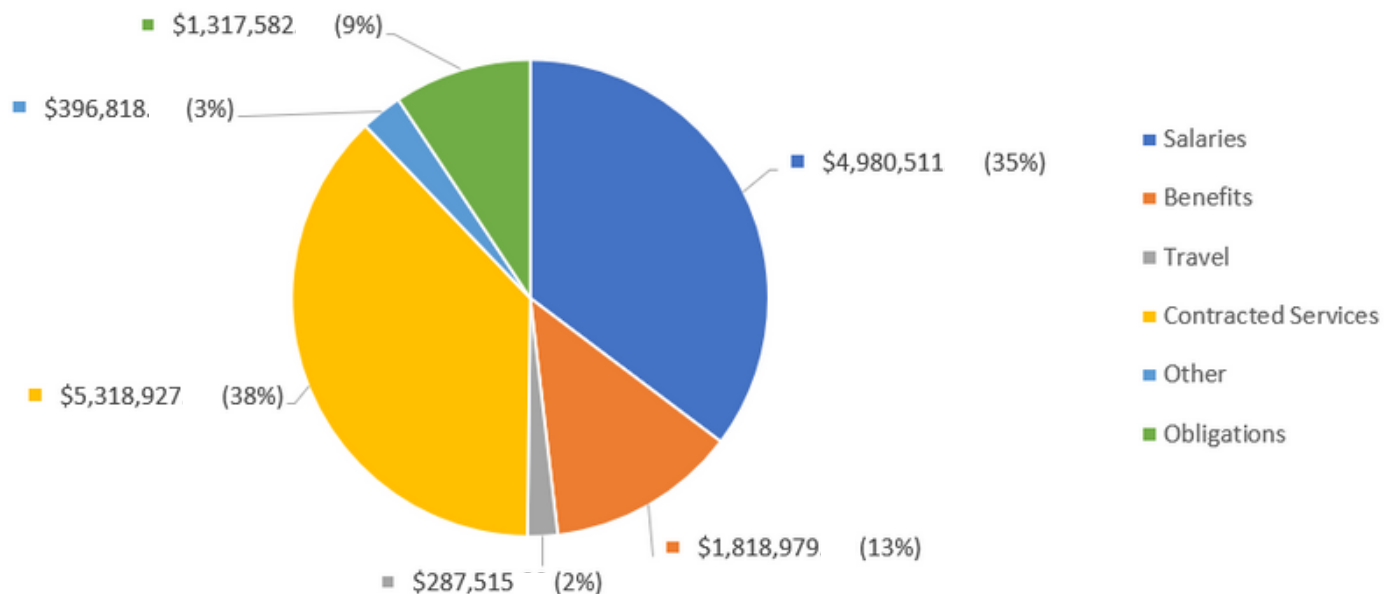
*Gifts of \$1,000 or more from October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS: FISCAL YEAR 2023*

Resources: \$17,576,180



Expenses: \$14,120,332



*From October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023

THANK YOU

We look forward to seeing you beyond Washington, DC, in 2024!



Photo by Steve Minor (Creative Commons License)



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sites.si.edu

museumonmainstreet.org

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