

YOUTH AND FAMILY PROGRAMS

CALGARY HAINES-TRAUTMAN

This year, engagement at the museum through programming and outreach at offsite events were key focuses of OI Youth and Family Programs. We sought to build community, attract new attendees to our family programs and field trips, and reach new audiences.

FIELD TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

Interactive field trip programs are among the most popular offerings at the OI, serving over 2,100 students during the 2018–19 academic year. For groups coming to the OI for a guided field trip experience, 58.5 percent of visits were for interactive field trip experiences led by University of Chicago student facilitators. In the 2018–19 academic year, five new facilitators, Andres Cruz Leland, Katherine Hodge, Rami Kablawi, Noa Soloman-Auger, and Alexandra Warminski, were trained to lead programs alongside returning facilitators Sophia Lubarr and Sarah Mason.

Four interactive field trip programs are offered to K–12 groups: Ancient Innovators, Artifact Analysis, Junior Archaeologist, and Time Travelers. Junior Archaeologist, which teaches about archaeology using the Kipper Family Archaeological Discovery Center, was the most popular facilitated program, with 50 percent of all interactive program visits. Ancient Innovators, our newest field trip offering, was the next most popular program, at 22.4 percent of interactive program visits.

Our work with Amplify, the collective of University of Chicago arts organizations who offer K–12 programming, continues to be an important venue for outreach for field trip programs. This year, 640 students from nine schools visited the OI across ten visits through an Amplify program. 11.2 percent of all student visitors came to the OI through this Amplify collaboration. In addition to visiting the OI, students on Amplify programs also took tours at the Smart Museum, Robie House, and/or with University Admissions.

This year was also the first full year of offering Field Trip Funding Applications, which allow school groups to waive or reduce fees for visits to the OI. Twenty schools had fees waived or reduced through this program out of 273 K–college visits.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Family programs continue to be an important avenue for outreach and engagement in the Education Department. This year, youth and family programs and workshops served 1,717 children and adults, a 12.2 percent increase from last year. We focused on developing our large-scale programs, Mummies Night, the Nowruz Celebration, and Ancient Game Day, while also offering a variety of paid hands-on workshops.

In 2018, Mummies Night was funded in part by a \$1,500 grant through the Campus-Wide Inclusive Climate RFP, supported by the Vice Provost for Academic Leadership, Advancement, and Diversity. With this funding, we were able to offer a variety of high-quality activities and entertainment for families, engaging with our Egyptian collection while offering a fun, welcoming way to visit the museum (figs. 1–3). With 638 visitors throughout the three-hour event on Saturday, October 27, 2018,



this was the largest Mummies Night at the OI ever! 46 percent of visitors reported that Mummies Night was their first time visiting the OI, continuing to demonstrate the effectiveness of this event as an outreach tool. The Office of the Provost renewed their support for Mummies Night in the fall 2018 Campus-Wide Inclusive Climate RFP, this time at \$2,000. These funds will be used to maintain the many successful aspects of the program, while adding features that allow us to meet the needs of our growing audience.

The fourth annual Nowruz Celebration on March 9, 2019, also was the largest yet, attracting 275 attendees. Visitors celebrated the coming Persian New Year with tours of the Persian Gallery with museum curator Kiersten Neumann (fig. 4), a haft-seen table, Persian tea and cookies, and performances by the Donya Dance Ensemble and children from the Chicago Persian School (figs. 5–8). This event was made possible by our ongoing collaboration with the Zoroastrian Association of Chicago and the Federation of Zoroastrian Associations of North America, who provide funding, planning assistance, materials, and staff at the event. We look forward to many future Nowruz Celebrations!

A year of family programs was capped off with Ancient Game Day on June 8, 2019, during the University of Chicago's Alumni Weekend. Over 160 attendees played games like Senet, the Royal Game of Ur, and Mancala on the OI lawn (figs. 9–10). This Ancient Game Day was the largest in recent years, and it also engaged kids with a make-your-own-game activity and brought visitors into the galleries on an Ancient Fun and Games tour.

A total of eleven free drop-in programs and twelve paid hands-on workshops were offered in the 2018–19 fiscal year. Workshops offered included the ever-popular Junior Archaeologist program (which makes use of the simulated Tell in the Kipper Family Archaeological Discovery Center), Intro to Hieroglyphs, Ancient Animals, All Bones About It, and Time Travelers (fig. 11). Time Travelers, traditionally a field trip program, was again offered for the first time in several years as a paid family workshop, to great success. Time Travelers offers engaging programming for children as young as four, while programs like Intro to Hieroglyphs and All Bones About It are geared for kids ages 8 and up.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Figure 1. Docents Stephen Ritzel and Darren Vilmin lead a mummy simulation at Mummies Night. Figure 2. Docent Debby Halpern shows a tour group the Predynastic burial during a mummy tour at Mummies Night. Figure 3. Docent Carole Yoshida reads a story to a captivated audience at Mummies Night. Figure 4. Dancers from the Chicago Persian School perform onstage in Breasted Hall during the Nowruz Celebration. Figure 5. Singers from the Chicago Persian School children's choir perform a song at the Nowruz Celebration. Figure 6. Kiersten Neumann leads a tour of the Persian gallery during the Nowruz Celebration. Photos 1–3: David Turner, Photos 4–6: Steven Townshend.



In 2018, a new drop-in family program was created, *Nubia: Land of the Bow*, which spotlights the Nubian collection with tours, storytimes, scavenger hunts, and an opportunity to touch and try out replicas of Nubian artifacts. The Ancient Earth Day program was also redeveloped, offering kids and families ancient recycling-themed tours, crafts, scavenger hunts, and ancient earth-related stories (fig. 12). Both of these programs will continue to be offered in the coming year.

Another important program to be redeveloped are OI Birthday Parties. This year, a Birthday Party program was piloted, offering a celebration that included a simulated archaeological dig, mini-tour,



scavenger hunt, mummy simulation, and mummy wrap race. The pilot was a success, and we look forward to formalizing this offering in the coming year.

All of these programs could not be possible without our amazing Public Program Volunteers. In 2018, five new Public Program Volunteers joined the Education Team: Ariadne Argyros, Anna Berlekamp, Stephanie Reitzig, Luiza Silva, and Tiffany Wang. Public Program Volunteers assisted with 14 programs, serving over 1,500 OI visitors and volunteering over 220 hours. Special thanks also goes to Catie Witt and Kiersten Forsberg, PhD candidates at the University of Chicago who volunteered to be our experts at Intro to Hieroglyphs and All Bones About It, respectively. Catie Witt joined the Education Department as the

LEFT COLUMN, TOP TO BOTTOM: Figure 7. A spontaneous dance party breaks out in the aisle during a break between performances at the Nowruz Celebration. Figure 8. Dancers from the Donya Dance Ensemble perform at the Nowruz Celebration. Photos: Steven Townshend. RIGHT COLUMN: Figure 9. Kids play Senet outside the OI at Ancient Game Day. Figure 10. University of Chicago students try out a game of Mancala at Ancient Game Day. Figure 11. Facilitators Kate Hodge and Alex Warminski show animal bones to families at an Ancient Animals program. Photos: Calgary Haines-Trautman.

Education Program facilitator lead in June 2019, and Kiersten Forsberg and Stephanie Reitzig will be Education Program facilitators in the 2019–20 academic year.

OUTREACH

Offsite events continue to prove valuable for reaching audiences who may have never heard of the OI. This year, Youth and Family Programs focused on increasing our outreach efforts with a variety of programs.

In July 2018, the OI hosted a week of activities for the Millennium Park Family Fun Festival. Over 2,673 visitors came through the Family Fun Tent and had the opportunity to take part in interactive mummy simulations and a different craft each day as part of our “Inside a Mummy Workshop” program (figs. 13–14). OI Education and Membership also participated in the annual Silver Room Block Party in downtown Hyde Park, offering family activities during this popular event.

In December 2018, the OI co-hosted a booth and workshop with the Society for American Archaeology, the Archaeological Institute of America, and the Society for Historical Archaeology at the National Council for the Social Studies in downtown Chicago. The booth and workshop shared Project Archaeology materials, which offer elementary- and middle-school teachers high-quality curricula that use archaeology to teach a variety of subjects and skills. The OI engaged over 230 teachers through the conference and workshop.

In March 2019, the OI deepened its relationship with the Girl Scouts by offering activities at the Girl Scout’s annual STEMapalooza event, which celebrates girls in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) and showcases STEM resources and related cultural institutions throughout the city. Over seventy-five girls learned to write their name in hieroglyphs and received information about OI programs. Girl Scouts continue to be an engaged audience, often coming with their troops to OI workshops that offer fun patches for their vests.



TOP TO BOTTOM: Figure 12. A parent and child show off their recycled materials house model at the Ancient Earth Day program. Figure 13. Public Program volunteer Tiffany Wang guides a family through writing their names hieroglyphs at the Millennium Park Family Fun Festival. Figure 14. Facilitator Rami Kablawi helps a child remove the bandage from our dummy mummy during a mummy simulation at the Millennium Park Family Fun Festival.