



Advocacy Panel

Advocacy Panel Theme

How do we build our case and cultivate relationships with our legislators, government agencies and funding community in general to foster support for the preservation of collections in Washington's cultural organizations (including libraries, museums, archives and historical societies). The theme of this session is organizing for influence, and influencing elected officials at both the local and state levels, including an overview on the state budget and how it works, insight into working with your legislators, working with advocacy groups, and organizing at the local level.

Panel Moderator: Mary Thompson, Co-Principal, Thompson Consulting

Mary Thompson is well known to the Washington preservation community. Continuing her work in preservation as a consulting partner with husband Dick in Olympia, Thompson Consulting provides services in historic preservation, planning, public policy, and project management. Mary is a Trustee for the National Trust for Historic Preservation and an advisor and former Interim Executive Director of the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation. Ms. Thompson was a Statewide Coordinator of the Washington Downtown Revitalization Program, a Program Associate for the National Main Street Center and served as the former Washington State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO).

Rep. Patricia Lantz, 26th Legislative District

Rep. Lantz has had an abiding interest in libraries, education, historic preservation and museums for many years. As Co-Chair of the Legislature's Heritage Caucus, Rep. Lantz has been a staunch supporter of funding for heritage projects and preservation. Completing her sixth term in office this year, Pat is retiring from the Legislature to explore personal interests and volunteer opportunities beginning with a newly appointed term as a trustee for the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation.

Dick Thompson, Co-Principal, Thompson Consulting

As the former head of government affairs at the University of Washington, former director of the Office of Fiscal Management (OFM) for Governor Locke, and former chief-of-staff for Governor Gardner, Dick brings a real world perspective to the issues of advocacy, fundraising, and working with government at all levels. Dick, and wife Mary, manage Thompson Consulting, which provides services in historic preservation, planning, public policy, and project management. Dick is currently working with 4Culture on the Maritime Heritage Task Force on Lake Union in Seattle.

Scott Merriman, Deputy Director, Washington State Association of Counties

As Deputy Director of WSAC, Scott works with counties across the state and is familiar with preservation issues as well as the 2005 legislation setting a recording fee surcharge that allows counties to award funds toward document preservation and other heritage-related activities. The Washington State Association of Counties is a voluntary, non-profit association serving all of Washington's 39 counties. Created in 1906, the Association is headquartered in Olympia and provides a variety of services to its member counties, including advocacy and liaison with the Legislature and statewide elected and appointed officials.

Eric Taylor, Heritage Lead, 4Culture

Eric Taylor began his museum career at the Western Heritage Center in Billings, Montana; moved to Washington in 1979, joining the staff of the Whatcom Museum of History and Art in Bellingham. Relocating to Seattle in 1983, he opened his museum consulting firm, Taylor'd Exhibits, serving a clientele of primarily community-based heritage organizations in King County and statewide, often in collaboration with the Washington State Heritage Resource Center. Eric was director at the Museum of Snohomish County History in Everett, before assuming his current position as Heritage Lead at 4Culture. He holds a degree in Museum Exhibit Design from Western Washington University and a Certificate in Genealogy and Family History from the University of Washington.

Connecting to Collections

Project

Our Washington coalition of partner organizations was one of 19 states to receive a \$40,000 Institute of Museum & Library Services [IMLS] National Leadership preservation planning grant, Connecting to Collections, to address issues raised in the 2005 Heritage Health Index (HHI), “the first comprehensive survey to assess the condition and preservation needs” of U.S. cultural collections of all kinds.

Purpose

The grant project will draw preservation communities together to develop a statewide plan for the preservation of Washington’s heritage and cultural arts collections. The plan will primarily focus on four areas of need:

1. Collaborative disaster planning
2. Building sustainable institutional preservation programs
3. Advocacy; and
4. A sustainable (statewide) preservation program. A successful project will position our coalition to apply for future IMLS grant funds for implementation of the plan statewide.

Partners and Steering Committee

The Project Partners are: Washington State Library, University of Washington Libraries, Washington State Archives, Washington State Historical Society, Washington Museum Association and Washington Library Association and the Tribal Libraries of Washington. The Steering Committee is comprised of representatives of the partner organizations. The Project Manager’s and Steering Committee’s role is to provide information and gather input for the statewide plan. This will occur through the conferences and work groups as noted.