

MUSEUMS HELPING MUSEUMS

A NATIONAL RELIEF EFFORT FOR THE GULF REGION

As a result of the 2005 hurricane season, communities along the Gulf coast have suffered a tremendous loss of natural and cultural heritage. Some museums have been destroyed and many others have experienced damage to or loss of collections. There continues to be an urgent need to not only assist these institutions to reconstruct and stabilize their collections but also to provide support until their communities can be rebuilt and financial support systems re-established.

In light of this great tragedy, the American museum community is joining together to support our colleagues as they work to care for damaged collections and to restore the vital educational, cultural, and economic roles of their museums. Eighteen national, regional and state museum associations are collectively sponsoring an initiative which asks their member museums to participate in "Museums Helping Museums" through the month of December.

Museums are asked to consider:

- Donating a portion of the admissions
- Offering visitors the option to add a contribution to the regular admission fee
- Erecting a donation box for contributions from the public
- Donating a percentage of the museum shop sales
- Participating in another way

All funds collected will go to an assistance fund established by the Southeastern Museums Conference (SEMC), and will be distributed to museums and museum professionals according to policies established by the SEMC Board of Directors. More information about the grants program, including applications, is available at <http://www.semcdirect.net/>.

Assistance will be available to museums of all types, including art, history, science, children's, zoos, aquaria, and gardens. To reduce the administrative burden, funds cannot be designated for a specific type of museum. This is an opportunity for the entire museum field to recognize the irreplaceable contribution that all museums make to their communities and to assist in the long recovery process.

It is recognized that some museums will not be able to participate due to their own financial challenges or legal restrictions on their ability to collect funds. In addition, many museums throughout the country have offered to provide support in the form of personnel and supplies to affected institutions. Those offers are being catalogued by American Association of State and Local History (AASLH) while we await information from affected institutions about their needs.

How Museums Participate

- 1 Access a sample press release at www.aam-us.org/sp/mhm/press.cfm and use it to prepare your own announcement for distribution to local media outlets.
- 2 Register your institutions name and method of participation in an on-line form at www.aam-us.org/sp/mhm. AAM will publicize to national media outlets the list of participating museums across the country. To be recognized in this publicity effort, please register your museum before October 31, 2005
- 3 Send all contributions in the form of a check made payable to:
SEMC - (with Hurricane Katrina Fund on the memo line)

And mail to:

SEMC
P.O. Box 9003
Atlanta, GA 31106-1003

Associations jointly sponsoring this initiative include:

American Association of Museums
American Association for State & Local History
American Public Gardens Association
Association of African American Museums
Association of Art Museum Directors
Association of Midwest Museums
Association of Science Museum Directors
California Association of Museums
Council of American Jewish Museums
Mid-Atlantic Association of Museums
Mountain-Plains Museums Association
Museums Association of New York
Museum Store Association
New England Museum Association
Oklahoma Museums Association
Texas Association of Museums
Virginia Association of Museums
Western Museums Association

For more information about museums in the affected area, please visit AAM's website at www.aam-us.org.