

The Florida *Connecting to Collections* Assessment

The 2005 Heritage Health Index (HHI), produced by Heritage Preservation and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), found that American museum, library, archive, and archaeology collections are at risk of damage. Seventy-seven percent of institutions do not allocate funds for preservation of their collections. The condition of 30% of artifacts is not known.

The Florida Association of Museums Foundation (FAMF) was awarded an IMLS Connecting to Collections state level planning grant to develop this survey in collaboration with Florida Art Museum Directors Association, Florida Library Association, Florida Public Archaeology Network, Florida Trust for Historic Preservation, Department of State, and Society of Florida Archivists.

The primary goal is to prepare a broad collections needs assessment that will allow museums, libraries, archives and archeological collections to determine which Heritage Health Index recommendations need to be addressed and in which order.

The attached FAM assessment is reduced and modified from the 2004 HHI survey. The assessment should take no more than an hour to complete if you preview it first and gather preliminary information on the size of collections in your institution.

Please fill out in its entirety. Collection sizes can be estimated. Also, the "don't know" category is an acceptable answer.

Your participation is strongly urged and genuinely appreciated. Your institution should be positively impacted as we implement the second primary goal of educating legislators and other elected officials about their responsibilities to preserve and conserve collections held in trust across the State of Florida.

If you have further questions, please contact (Graig and Myriam?, graduate student?)

Confidentiality: We will keep your individual responses completely confidential. Only the aggregate data will be reported; your individual responses will never be published or identified by anyone cooperating on this project.

Florida Connecting to Collections Assessment

A. Institutional Information

A.1. Name of Institution _____

B. Description of Collecting or Holding Institution

B.1. For purposes of comparing you with your peers, which of the following most closely describes your **primary function** or service? (*select one*)

- a. Archives
- b. Public library
- c. Academic library
- d. Independent research library
- e. Special library
- f. Historical society
- g. Historic house / site
- h. History museum
- i. Art museum (including art gallery, art center, or arts organization)
- j. Children's / youth museum
- k. Natural history museum
- l. Science / technology museum
- m. General museum (collection represents 2 or more disciplines)
- n. Museum with one narrowly defined discipline, please specify:

- o. Archaeological repository or research collection
- p. Agency or university department with scientific specimen / artifact collections
- q. Arboretum or botanical garden
- r. Aquarium
- s. Nature center
- t. Planetarium
- u. Zoo
- v. Other, please specify one function _____

B.2. Which **additional functions or services** do you provide? (*select all that apply*)

- a. Archives
- b. Library
- c. Historical society
- d. Historic house / site
- e. Museum (including art gallery, art center, or arts organization)

- f. Archaeological repository or research collection
- g. Agency or university department with scientific specimen / artifact collections
- h. Aquarium, Zoo, Arboretum, Botanical Garden, Nature Center or Planetarium
- i. Other, please specify: _____
- j. None

C. Environment

- C.1. Do you use environmental controls to meet **temperature** specifications for the preservation of your collections? (*select one*)
- a. Yes, in all areas
 - b. In some, but not all areas
 - c. No, in no areas
 - d. Don't know
 - e. Not applicable
- C.2. Do you use environmental controls to meet **relative humidity** specifications for the preservation of your collection? (*select one*)
- a. Yes, in all areas
 - b. In some, but not all areas
 - c. No, in no areas
 - d. Don't know
 - e. Not applicable
- C.3. Do you control **light levels** to meet the specifications for the preservation of your collection? (*select one*)
- a. Yes, in all areas
 - b. In some, but not all areas
 - c. No, in no areas
 - d. Don't know
 - e. Not applicable

C4. What estimated percentage of your collection is stored in areas you consider to be **adequate** (large enough to accommodate current collections with safe access to them and appropriate storage furniture, if necessary)? (*select one*)

- a. 0%
- b. 1-19%
- c. 20 - 39%
- d. 40 - 59%
- e. 60 - 79%
- f. 80 - 99%
- g. 100%
- h. Don't know

D. Preservation Activities

D.1. Does the **mission** of your institution include preservation of your collection? (*select one*)

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Don't know

D.2. Does your institution have a **written, long-range preservation plan** for the care of the collection (a document that describes a multi-year course of action to meet an institution's overall preservation needs for its collection)? (*select one*)

- a. Yes
- b. Yes, but it is not up-to-date
- c. No, but one is being developed
- d. No, but preservation is addressed in overall long-range plan
- e. No
- f. Don't know

D3. Has a **survey of the general condition** of your collection been done (an assessment based on visual inspection of the collection and the areas where it is exhibited or held)? (*select one*)

- a. Yes
- b. Yes, but only of a portion of the collection
- c. Yes, but it is not up-to-date
- d. Yes, but only of a portion of the collection, and it is not up-to-date
- e. No
- f. Don't know

D.4. Does your institution have a **written emergency/disaster plan** that includes the collection? (*select one*)

- a. Yes
- b. Yes, but it is not up-to-date
- c. No, but one is being developed
- d. No
- e. Don't know

D.5. If you **have a written emergency/disaster plan**, is your staff trained to carry it out? (*select one*)

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Don't know
- d. Have no written emergency/disaster plan

D.6. Are copies of **vital collection records** (*e.g. inventory, catalog, insurance policies*) stored offsite? (*select one*)

- a. Yes
- b. Some, but not all
- c. No
- d. Do not have copies
- e. Don't know
- f. Do not have collection records

D.7. Do you have adequate **security systems** (*e.g. security guard, staff observation, intrusion detection*) to help prevent theft or vandalism of collections? (*select one*)

- a. Yes
- b. In some, but not all areas
- c. No
- d. Don't know

E. Collections and Holdings

E.1. What estimated percentage of the collection is accessible through a **catalog** (*research tool or finding aid that provides intellectual control over collections through entries that may contain descriptive detail, including physical descriptions, provenance, history, accession information, etc.*) (**select one**)

- a. 0%
- b. 1-19%
- c. 20-39%
- d. 40-59%
- e. 60-79%
- f. 80-100%
- g. Don't know

E.2. In the following chart, please indicate the estimated number for **each type of collection you hold**.

- Include only collections that are a permanent part of your holdings or for which you have accepted preservation responsibility.
- Estimate your total holdings in each category. For types of collections not listed, record under the "other" category. If possible, please specify what you have included.
- **Do not leave any category blank**; where applicable, check "have no holdings" or "quantity unknown."

Approximations are OK and better than no response at all.

	Have no holdings	Approximate # of Units	Quantity unknown	% Preservation Worthy
Books and Bound Volumes <i>(record in volumes)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Unbound Sheets	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Photographic Collections <i>(record in items)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Moving Image Collections <i>(record in items, e.g. reel, can, cassette)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	

Recorded Sound Collections <i>(record in items, e.g. reel, cassette, disc)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Digital Material Collections <i>(record in items, do not include moving images or recorded sound)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Art Objects <i>(record in items)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Historic and Ethnographic Objects <i>(record in items)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Archaeological Collections, Individually Cataloged <i>(record in items)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Archaeological Collections, Bulk <i>(record in cubic feet)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Natural Science Specimens <i>(record in items)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other * <i>Please specify type</i> _____ _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	

* Holdings in "lots," indicate each lot as one unit. Holdings in linear feet, indicate each linear foot as one unit

E.3. Percentage of **collections on exhibit or available to the public:**

- a. Less than 15%
- b. Between 15 and 50%
- c. Between 50 and 85%
- d. Greater than 85%

E.4. Percentage of collections available to researchers:

- a. Less than 15%
- b. Between 15 and 50%
- c. Between 50 and 85%
- d. Between 85 and 100%

E.5. Collections inaccessible to the public (check all that apply):

- a. Rarity
- b. Fragility
- c. Staffing/volunteers
- d. Space
- e. Funding

E.6. What other collection issues affect your institution?

Please limit your response to 100 words or less.

F. Institutional Priorities

F.1. What is your institution's most critical collection priority? (Select one)

- a. Security
- b. Space/storage
- c. Current Emergency Plan
- d. Training staff to activate emergency plan
- e. Network to assist in an emergency
- f. Full-planned-for staffing/volunteers
- g. Funding
- h. Knowledge about resources for collections care
- i. Documentation and cataloguing
- j. Public accessibility of collections
- k. Other: _____

F.2. What are additional **critical collection priorities**? (Select up an additional three)

- a. Security
- b. Space/storage
- c. Current Emergency Plan
- d. Training staff to activate emergency plan
- e. Network to assist in an emergency
- f. Full-planned-for staffing/volunteers
- g. Funding
- h. Knowledge about resources for collections care
- i. Documentation and cataloguing
- j. Public accessibility of collections
- k. Other: _____

G. Professional Development

G.1. Please rate the importance of each of the following methods for staying current on professional practices for your organization. Use a 1 to 5, where '1' means NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT and '5' means EXTREMELY IMPORTANT.

	<u>Not at all</u> <u>Important</u> 1	<u>Not very</u> <u>Important</u> 2	<u>Somewhat</u> <u>Important</u> 3	<u>Very</u> <u>Important</u> 4	<u>Extremely</u> <u>Important</u> 5
Local training (100-mile radius)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In-state regional meetings/networks (multi-county)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
State conferences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regional conferences (multi-state)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
National conferences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Magazines/professional journals/newsletters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mentoring by peers outside your organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classes provided by nearby college/university	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information via the Internet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online classes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Network of resources and people to help	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

G.2. How much did your organization pay for training opportunities for your staff in 2008?
Please include travel to conferences, subscriptions, memberships, workshop fees, etc.

- a. \$0
- b. \$1 - \$1,000
- c. \$1,001 - \$5,000
- d. \$5,001 - \$10,000
- e. \$10,001 - \$25,000
- f. Over \$25,000

G.3. Please fill in the **TWO** greatest obstacles that prevent you from authorizing or participating in off-site training opportunities.

- a. Leaves the museum/organization without staff
- b. Lack of funding
- c. Lack of time
- d. Lack of board support
- e. Over (Specify: _____)

Thank you for your cooperation and support. Please periodically check the FAM website (www.FLAMUSEUMS.org) for Connecting to Collections information and survey results.

1. Cover Sheet - attached

2. Project Title: Florida Connecting to Collections

3. Partners: Not applicable

4. Project Summary

The goal of this planning grant was: (1) to plan a broad collections needs assessment to determine which Heritage Health Index (HHI) recommendations need to be addressed in Florida, and (2) to educate elected officials about their responsibility to preserve collections held in public trust by Florida's government and non-profit organizations.

A Steering Committee representing the museum, archive, library, historic preservation, and archaeology fields guided the development of three Forums held in Miami, Orlando, and Tallahassee during which professionals with responsibilities for collections identified collections-related issues. The Forums led to a commitment to collaborate beyond the implementation of the survey instrument among the 169 participants. Each Forum was followed by a reception and educational event for elected officials to communicate the critical role of collections in creating community and a sense of place.

The College of Information, Florida State University will implement the survey instrument developed by the Steering Committee.

5. Describe the project activities (and quantify them using Part 2 of this form).

IMLS funded three parts of this five-part project. The IMLS planning grant included:

- The work of a **Steering Committee** tasked with developing **the parameters for a state-wide survey** to assess the state of Florida's collections
- Three **Forums** held in different Florida regions to gather information on collections issues in Florida
- Three **education sessions for elected officials** in three different regions to help officials understand the importance of preserving collections held in public trust by Florida's government and non-profit organizations

Florida Association of Museums (FAM) and its Foundation funded

- A series of **workshops on collections care** – providing opportunities for training in conjunction with the Forums.
- A **web page** to document the development of the project

Project Overview

The **goal** of this IMLS planning grant was two-fold: (1) to plan a broad collections needs assessment to determine which Heritage Health Index (HHI) recommendations need to be addressed in Florida and in what priority, and (2) to educate elected officials about their

responsibility to preserve collections held in public trust by Florida's government and non-profit organizations.

A statewide Steering Committee guided the development of three Forums held in three regions of the state – Miami, Orlando area, and Tallahassee. Professionals with responsibilities for collections were invited to identify collections-related issues. Each Forum was followed by a reception for elected officials.

The Steering Committee guided the development of a survey to assess the state of Florida's collections.

Steering Committee

The fourteen-member Steering Committee represents the leadership of Florida's statewide organizations with responsibilities for collections, including

- Florida Association of Museums and FAM Foundation
- Florida Art Museum Directors Association
- Florida Department of State
- Florida Library Association
- Florida Public Archaeology Network
- Florida Trust for Historic Preservation
- Society of Florida Archivists

Steering Committee responsibilities included:

- Develop a survey to assess the state of Florida's collections
- Participate in and spread the word about the three Forums (this included list-serves, e-mail announcements, articles in professional newsletters, and sessions at professional conferences)
- Use feedback gathered at the Forums to develop a survey to assess the state of Florida's collections
- Participate in the education sessions for elected officials
- Inform the membership of each member's respective organization about the upcoming collections survey

The Steering Committee used the national Heritage Health Index questionnaire to draft the proposed Florida survey. They also gathered input through the discussions at the Forums.

The Committee Chair and Program Manager researched Florida organizations who participated in the original HHI survey, ways in which to conduct the survey, and the cost of working with the survey company that designed the HHI survey. They researched pros and cons of including historic houses, living collections, federal collections, state parks or privately held collections.

A Steering Committee member identified the College of Information at Florida State University to conduct the survey. Dr. Paul Marty, Associate Professor was invited to meet with the Committee to discuss his participation, along with a graduate student who will conduct much of the work. The Committee endorsed this proposal.

The College of Information at FSU will refine the draft survey developed by the Committee. It was agreed it would be distributed to all the members of the organizations represented on the Steering Committee.

Forums

One hundred sixty nine archaeology, archives, historic house, library, natural history, art and history museums, and special collections professionals attended the three Forums. We provided background information about the national and Florida's Connecting to Collections initiatives and showed the IMLS 4-minute *Connecting to Collections Video*.

Participants were asked to identify priorities and brainstorm solutions, working in small groups and reporting to the full Forum. They were encouraged to reach consensus through various facilitated activities.

The first Forum was held at the Lowe Art Museum, University of Miami, the day before the Florida Association of Museums annual conference. Fifty people registered to attend. Despite hurricane warnings with Miami as landfall, forty people attended. The Forum was followed by a session at the Florida Association of Museums annual conference.

The second Forum was held at DeBary Hall Historic Site in the town of DeBary centrally located near Orlando, Daytona, and Jacksonville. The third coincided with the long-standing annual Museum and Historic Preservation Day in the Capitol building in Tallahassee.

The Director of Legislative Affairs at the Florida Department of State provided training on how Forum participants can help convince their elected officials that collections matter and that their care and preservation deserves federal, state, county, and municipal funding.

Education Events for Elected Officials

Each forum was followed by a reception and education event for area elected officials to help them understand the importance of preserving collections as a community resource. The invitation included information about the Florida Connecting to Collections project, so even those who did not attend were provided information. Press releases were sent to local media inviting them to attend. Invitations acknowledged IMLS and the national context of Connecting to Collections.

Invitations were sent to 54 elected officials at the state, county and municipal level in the Miami area for the first reception at the Lowe Art Museum, University of Miami. The event coincided with the threat of a Category 4 hurricane landfall in Miami; elected officials were literally in emergency meetings at the time of the event and none attended.

The second Forum initially was planned for December 2008 in the Orlando area. It was rescheduled for February 2008, because of the state's financial crisis; additional committee meetings and possibly a special session were slated for December and January. The chair of the appropriations committee responsible for cultural affairs offered to issue invitations from his office, extending the profile of the event. Four elected

officials in leadership positions attended. Others regrettably declined, as they still were in Tallahassee.

The third Forum and legislator event was scheduled to coincide with the long-standing annual Museum and Historic Preservation Day held in Tallahassee. The event included presentation of an award to Florida's Secretary of State for outstanding work on behalf of cultural institutions in Florida. Fifteen elected officials and their staff attended.

Each reception included the showing of the IMLS 4-minute *Connecting to Collections Video*. The President of the Florida Association of Museum discussed the importance of collections, thanked those in attendance for their support and for taking this important message to their colleagues. Forum participants held one-on-one conversations with elected officials and their staff.

The Society of Florida Archivists and the Florida Association of Museums ran articles in their newsletters about the Forums and reception, with photos of elected officials. We sent copies to them, with a note of thanks for their participation.

Plan survey to assess the state of Florida's collections

The Steering Committee drafted a statewide collection assessment, using the HHI survey as a model as well as input provided at the Forums. Dr. Paul Marty, Associate Professor in the College of Information at Florida State University will conduct the survey, along with a Ph.D. candidate during summer and fall 2009.

FAM professional development workshops to coincide with the Forums

While the professional development workshops are not funded through the IMLS planning grant, they were held in tandem with the Forums to ensure broad participation at both. The workshops were designed for entry and mid-level museum staff and volunteers who might not have attended the Forum, but stayed because they participated in the morning workshop. This allowed us to gather input from small museums where volunteers are often responsible for the bulk of collections care, and from institutions whose staff might not have considered themselves "senior" or "experienced enough" to participate in a statewide information gathering session. Discounted hotel rooms were available, encouraging people from further afield to participate.

- "Connecting to Collections – Collections Care 101: So Many Hats, So Little Time" workshop at Vizcaya Museum and Gardens
- "Managing an Archival Collection without an Archivist on Staff" was advertised as appropriate for volunteers and staff, and held at DeBary Hall Historic Site.
- "Collections Care 101" was developed in collaboration with the Florida Park Service and held at Goodwood Museums and Gardens.

FAM Web Page to promote and record project planning

We created a page on the FAM website devoted to Connecting to Collections. It evolved as the project developed, first posting information about upcoming Forums and second, posting summaries of each discussion, and of the project as a whole. The website now includes

- A cover page with national context credits IMLS and Florida collaborators, and links to the IMLS Connecting to Collections website
- A project overview
- A summary of the findings at each Forum
- A summary of each Steering Committee discussion
- Resources including books and web links related to collections care, disaster preparedness and recovery, integrated pest management, and disaster mitigation for historic properties in Florida
- A list of institutions in Florida that have copies of the Connecting to Collections Bookshelf to use as reference material (while the grant application was open, we linked to the application)
- A discussion group open to any interested individual

6. Describe the project audience(s) (and quantify them using Part 2 of this form).

Steering Committee: 14 members (including FAM's Executive Director and the Project Manager)

Forums: 169 professionals from around the state attended, ranging from community librarians to collections care specialists, from curators at small house museums to directors of major collecting institutions, and from university archives to State of Florida managed historic museums and sites.

- Miami Forum: 40
- FAM session at the 2008 Conference: 19
- DeBary Forum: 51
- Tallahassee Forum: 59

Education Events for Elected Official: We sent descriptive materials and invitations to elected officials.

- Miami Event: 54 invited. Zero in attendance. (We were under threat of a Category 4 hurricane; emergency meetings being held)
- DeBary Event: 95 invited. Four in attendance (including two senior ranking legislators for cultural funding).
- Tallahassee Event: 150 invited. Fifteen in attendance.

7. Analyze your project. Using quantitative data as well as qualitative examples, highlights from your evaluation and compelling anecdotes.

We met the project's goal (1) to plan a broad collections needs assessment to determine which Heritage Health Index (HHI) recommendations need to be addressed in Florida and in what priority, and partially met the goal (2) to educate legislators and decision-makers about their responsibility to preserve collections held in trust by government entities and non-profits across the state.

Steering Committee

The statewide Steering Committee guided the development of the survey and identified the College of Information at Florida State University to produce the survey. Committee members were active participants in all three Forums and used the information gathered in the discussions to develop the draft survey instrument. Committee members are committed to carrying the project beyond the planning phase.

Forums

While the three forums clearly identified "lacks" across the state (funding, staff, training, advocacy, public access, the backlog on cataloguing, digitization and on-line access), the forums also identified a strong commitment to collaborate among the many organizations from different disciplines that attended.

A revelation for many participants was the similarity of issues whether you work in an archive, a library, or a museum, or have responsibilities for archaeological collections or historic houses. Steering Committee members and Forum participants noted that they tend to work within disciplines, and that this was a first opportunity to share information and concerns across disciplines. They were surprised at how many collections-related issues are shared across disciplines. The participants are hopeful that this new understanding will lead to collaborations.

Potential collaborations include:

- Sharing resources and knowledge
- Expanding training opportunities for professionals and for volunteers
- Helping each other assess the state of collections
- Exploring shared storage facilities
- Preparing for disasters
- Creating networks to help each other after a disaster
- Communicating to the public that collections are a state asset much like environmentally sensitive lands
- Advocating for funding for collections care at the local and the state level
- Documenting collections
- Providing public access to digitized and on-line collections-related resources

We had anticipated that Forum participants would identify collaborative projects they could start working on jointly after the Forum. Steering Committee members were surprised to learn that none of the participants could identify a host organization to start

those collaborations. Forum participants are looking for an organization such as FAM to create and manage local networks. FAM Foundation is looking at how to fund and facilitate such networks.

In the grant proposal we described a process in which the findings of each Forum would build on each other, so that by the third Forum, participants were reviewing the draft survey. At the first Forum, it was clear that people were working across disciplines for the first time and the process of discovery about shared issues was a genuine revelation to many. That process takes time and it was rewarding to see it develop at each Forum. The Steering Committee therefore drafted the survey, based on the discussions at the Forums.

Participants at each Forum identified somewhat different priorities. For instance, with a Category 4 hurricane bearing down on Forum participants in Miami, disaster preparation was identified as a major priority. Steering Committee members noted that this was also a geographic concern. Those in the Tallahassee region have not been under a direct threat in a long time.

Central Florida includes many small historical societies run primarily by volunteers. As we held a training workshop of interest to those volunteers the morning of the Forum, many stayed and talked about how hard it is for them to find basic collections care information.

Participants in Tallahassee identified documentation, cataloguing, and researching collections as a much higher priority than other Forums. Steering Committee members noted that we had strong representation from government agencies and state-run museums.

The commitment to work collaboratively, across disciplines, was reiterated at each Forum. Participants strongly endorsed a statewide survey. They believe results will allow each organization to build a stronger case for funding, and allow them to play a stronger advocacy role.

We had anticipated identifying significant Florida-related collections held in public or government organizations outside the state, so that we could monitor collections potentially at risk of being deaccessioned. There was simply not enough time during the Forums for this assessment. While the Steering Committee discussed it, they concluded that there were more important priorities at this time.

Education Events for Elected Officials

FAM has a long history of participating in advocacy activities. When the grant proposal was written, the State's economy still was healthy and we were poised to refine our message of support for cultural organizations to a more focused message of preserving collections.

The lack of elected officials at the Miami event came as no surprise. Emergency planning with a Category 4 hurricane takes precedence.

While the number of elected officials in attendance at the Central Florida event was low, we recognize that reaching key leadership is critical for support. By this time, legislators

in Tallahassee and County and City Commissioners were already looking at significant budget cuts. FAM and other cultural organizations were battling to maintain funds for culture in state and municipal budgets. While the message of the importance of collections was delivered, the broader message of support for collecting institutions was paramount. Those in attendance represented last year's leadership, as well as some rising potential leaders.

The Tallahassee event was well attended and coincided with the annual advocacy day. Museum and historic preservation staff from around the state make a point of coming to Tallahassee to meet with their legislators that same week. Again, the message was more focused on support for collecting institutions, than collections specifically. However, the critical role of collections in creating community and a sense of place was the focal point. Because of the workshop and Forum held earlier in the day, attendance represented a broader cross-section of professionals and volunteers with responsibilities for collections than in previous years. Each made a point of speaking with a legislator or legislative staff member.

We had planned to develop a PowerPoint presentation to make our case to elected officials. When we previewed the IMLS-produced 4-minute *Connecting to Collections Video*, we decided to show it instead. The presenters at the Central Florida and Tallahassee receptions thanked elected officials in attendance and recognized, in very personal ways, their consistent work on behalf of the state's cultural organizations. We believe that this personal approach is more effective than a more generic PowerPoint.

Plan survey to assess the state of Florida's collections

Dr. Paul Marty, Associate Professor at the College of Information at FSU and a doctoral graduate student, are finalizing the survey and will be disseminating it through the generosity of the College's resources. The survey will be distributed to all the members of the organizations represented on the Steering Committee. The College will analyze results and report to the Steering Committee.

Steering Committee recognized that the survey distribution process would leave out some small or all-volunteer run collections, thus skewing data. Any request to participate however will be welcomed. A second, simpler survey also is being planned for those institutions.

FAM Web Page to promote and record project planning

The web page includes a link to a discussion board, but that has not yet proved to be a useful mechanism to continue the discussions. We are developing a LinkedIn page, which will have broader cross-disciplinary appeal.

Project Impact

It is hard to assess the impact of a planning grant beyond the organization and initial delivery of the planning phase. However, the revelation that individuals within each discipline have a shared network well beyond their discipline is critical. It led to a commitment to working across disciplines, which we believe will be sustained long-term.

We can report anecdotally some thing that have already occurred or are in planning. The surveys should provide a foundation for a solid evaluation and sustainability plan.

Anecdotal information that show project achievements or lessons learned

Word of mouth: After the first Forum, we received multiple e-mails from people who heard about it informally through colleagues and who wanted to participate in subsequent Forums.

Despite Florida's **economic crisis**, we are hearing from collaborators and Forum participants that now, more than ever, we must continue to educate elected officials about the importance of the state's artistic, archival, archaeological, historic, cultural, and natural history patrimony.

Legislators: While we cannot point to the education events for elected officials as having an impact on Florida's budget process, we do believe that we reinforced support where it existed, and educated potential rising leadership about the importance of preserving collections. We suspect this served us well in the difficult budget cuts of this legislative session. At one point, zero funding was allocated for cultural organizations in Florida. We followed up on conversations with key officials who attended the education events in DeBary and Tallahassee. The extra educational opportunity allowed for continued dialogue. The final budget includes some funding for cultural affairs through the Department of State.

The **commitment of Steering Committee members** to continue the discussion is real. They have already presented sessions at their annual conferences, including the Society of Florida Archivists, the Florida Library Association, and ARLIS-SE. Several have agreed to participate on a panel at the fall 2009 Florida Association of Museums Meeting.

Continued training: The Steering Committee wants to continue the training workshops and identify venues and organizations other than museums to reinforce the message that we are all working together, regardless of discipline.

We conducted two **on-line evaluation surveys**. Response rate was low, thus the results are provided in the anecdotal section of the report.

- Steering Committee members reported that the process met or exceeded their expectations. One noted: "I thought the IMLS C2C initiative really helped raise the awareness of our grassroots cultural organizations in Florida, and laid a good foundation for future collaboration."
- Forum participants reported that the process met or exceeded their expectations in 90% of cases. 95% reported that the Forums justified their time and expense away from their institution. 77% reported that the Forums generated significant data or network opportunities. 100% advocate continuing the process.

8. What's next? Describe any plans to continue work in this area.

The Steering Committee has agreed to further its agenda by

- Continuing to work as a Standing Committee, review the final survey, review the data results, and, develop a strategic framework for the next phase based on those results.
- Presenting information about Connecting to Collections, the survey, and its results at respective professional conferences
- Exploring joint advocacy about collections during the 2010 legislative session
- Continuing collaborative training opportunities among the respective organizations
- Considering ways and means by which the survey can be repeated over time, with reports analyzing gains or losses from year to year. Perhaps data can be organized by county to reinforce the state of Florida's collections to local governmental officials.
- Exploring funding opportunities from the participating organizations to continue the services of a project manager to keep the project moving beyond the dissemination and analysis of the survey, in particular to implement recommendations that emerged during the planning process

Most significantly, the Steering Committee identified a collaborator and funding source to implement the survey. The College of Information at FSU is developing the final text for the survey, and finalizing decisions about mechanisms for distributing the survey, using the College's data collection tools. We anticipate the survey will be distributed in early fall 2009, with analysis of the data in 2009 and 2010.

FAM Foundation is exploring mechanisms to facilitate the creation and management of local information sharing networks – to both share information about collections care and to collaborate in preparing for and recovering from disasters.

LinkedIn Discussion Group: We are in the process of creating a Florida Connecting to Collections Group on LinkedIn. It is being developed by a member of the Steering Committee, in response to requests made at the Florida Library Association annual conference during a session she presented about Florida Connecting to Collections. We cannot yet report on the success of this discussion group as we still are in the process of inviting Forum participants to join. Our next step is to invite members of collaborating organizations to join the discussion.

9. Grant Products (attach 3 copies)

- Forum and Steering Committee Evaluations
- Florida Association of Museums and Society of Florida Archivists newsletters
- Florida Connecting to Collections web pages
- LinkedIn web page
- Draft of survey instrument