



October 26-28  
Independence, MO

**Schedule at a Glance** (full descriptions below)

**Thursday, October 26** (all events at Truman Presidential Library & Museum, 500 W US Hwy 24, Independence, MO 64050)

2:00-5:00 Registration

3:30-5:00 Tours and time on own in gallery

5:30-7:00 Reception

**Friday, October 27**

7:45-8:30 Registration

8:30-9:00 Welcome

- *Independence and the Jackson County Historical Society*, Erin Gray, Jackson County Historical Society

9:00-9:10 Break

9:10-10:10 Session 1

- *Reparative Description in the Archives*, Marcella Haggard, University of Kansas
- *Improving Labels, Reducing Harm*, Rachel Nicholson, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

10:20-11:40 Session 2

- *Out of the File Cabinet and onto the Wall: Using Archives Materials in Museum Exhibits*, Amanda Staley Harrison, University of Missouri
- *Escape! Reimagining Interpretation at Jefferson Landing State Historic Site*, Tiffany Patterson & Angela Wells, Missouri State Museum

11:45-1:00 Lunch (provided) and Keynote: J. Camille Hall, Ph.D., LCSW

1:10-2:30 Session 3

- *Say It Loud! I'm Black and I'm Proud: Where History and Current Reality Meet*, Dr. Carmalotta Williams, Black Archives of Mid-America
- *Addressing 'Difficult History' in Museum Exhibits and Public Programming*, Mark Adams & Sadie Troy, Truman Presidential Library & Museum

2:30-2:40 Break

2:40-3:50 Session 4

- *Crowdsourcing the Archives: Collaborations through the Missouri State Archives eVolunteer Program*, Liana Twente, Missouri State Archives
- *Iconic Joplin: Using LEGOS to Engage Teens in Local Historic Preservation*, Lisa Nelson, Landmark Builds

3:50-4:00 Break

4:00-4:45 MAMA Business Meeting and KCAA Meet-up

5:45-7:15 Tour at National WWI Museum & Memorial, 2 Memorial Drive, Kansas City, Mo

**Saturday, October 28**

8:30-9:00 Registration

9:00-10:30 Session 1

- *Where People and Collections Intersect: Creating an Inclusive and Welcoming Reading Room*, Lindy Smith & Anthony LaBat, University of Missouri Kansas City
- *Accessibility vs. Accessability: Helping Make Cultural Institutions Accessible to All Users*, Amy Nickless, Missouri State Archives

10:30-10:45 Break

10:45-11:50 Session 2

- *Digitizing Maps and Building Community*, Levi Cullifer, Missouri Historical Society
- *Unexpected Gifts: The History, Treasures, and Poisonous Books of the Marian Gault Collection*, Amelia Nelson & Stephanie Lawrence, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

12:00-12:45 Lunch

1:00-2:00 Session 3

- *Historic Districts as Public History*, Micaela Reiss, Truman State University
- *Field Report: Experiences Interning at the Missouri State Archives & Deuschheim State Historic Site*, Elizabeth Nahach, Truman State University

2:45-4:15 Tour Black Archives of Mid-America, 1722 E 17th Terrace, Kansas City, Mo



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## Full Session Descriptions

### Thursday, October 26

**3:30-5:00**

#### **Tour Truman Presidential Library & Museum**

After a major renovation that added a new museum entrance and permanent exhibition, the museum reopened in July 2021. This is your chance to see the updates, which incorporated more technology and archival materials in the exhibits. s of new exhibits and spaand time on own in gallery

**5:30-7:00**

#### **Reception at Truman Presidential Library & Museum**

### Friday, October 27

**8:30-9:00**

#### **Welcome**

- *Independence and the Jackson County Historical Society*, Erin Gray, Jackson County Historical Society

After a brief welcome from the conference organizers, Erin Gray will set the scene for our time in Independence with a brief introduction of the town's history and the Jackson County Historical Society.

**9:00-9:10**

#### **Break**

**9:10-10:10**

#### **Session 1**

- *Reparative Description in the Archives*, Marcella Haggard, Spencer Reference Library, University of Kansas

This session will provide a brief overview on recent efforts in the archival field to more respectfully describe individuals from and marginalized communities found in archives and special collections materials. Reparative description, as defined by the Society of American Archivists, consists of remediation of practices or data that exclude, silence, harm, or mischaracterize marginalized people in the data created or used by archivists to identify or characterize archival resources. Efforts toward reparative description in the United States have included harmful content statements on institutional websites, identifying outdated language in finding aids and other descriptions, and requesting public and community feedback on how to improve descriptive language through multiple approaches. This session will also include a discussion of Kenneth Spencer Research Library's beginning efforts in this area and provide opportunity for an interactive discussion regarding how other institutions can begin making their own efforts.

- *Improving Labels, Reducing Harm*, Rachel Nicholson, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

To remain relevant and vital to our communities, museums and archives must engage with critical conversations and apply frameworks that may exist outside of the field to our own practices. In the summer of 2020, with a renewed call for museums to focus on racial equity, the Interpretation team at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art decided to examine our current labels through the lens of reducing harm to people who have been historically underserved by our museum.

Public health policies often utilize harm reduction frameworks to lessen the negative social and/or physical consequences of human behaviors. In museums, harm reduction requires us to acknowledge the exclusionary and often colonial contexts in which our institutions and collections were built so we can make choices that do not reproduce these legacies. In the context of museum labels, harm reduction means recognizing that language has the power to exclude, dehumanize, and

uphold a system of power. Rather than simply including more voices or telling new stories, harm reduction requires us to challenge existing narratives and dismantle them to move forward.

This presentation will discuss our process, how we collaborated with colleagues across the museum including Curatorial, Design, Marketing, and Visitor Services, to define what we mean by harm, identify labels to replace, and imagine new solutions. It will also examine the implications for archival practices and the similarities between this framework and reparative description and what we can learn from one another.

**10:20-11:40**

### **Session 2**

- *Out of the File Cabinet and onto the Wall: Using Archives Materials in Museum Exhibits, Amanda Staley Harrison, Museum of Anthropology, University of Missouri*

Museums throughout the region have a rich stash of archive material which much of the time no one sees. These often include handwritten notes, photographs, details about an object from a first-hand voice, and many other pieces of valuable information that gives context and provenience to objects in our collections. This talk covers ways to pull that material out of our back rooms and into the light to enrich exhibits and give more story to our objects. Examples will come from previous and upcoming exhibits at MU's Museum of Anthropology.

- *Escape! Reimagining Interpretation at Jefferson Landing State Historic Site, Tiffany Patterson & Angela Wells, Missouri State Museum*

For years, staff of the Missouri State Museum have struggled to develop exhibits and programming at Jefferson Landing SHS that are engaging, interactive, and tell a fuller story of the site and the people who lived and worked there. Inspired by escape rooms, staff created their own escape room program. They also integrated challenges, based on primary resources related to Landing history, into updated interactive elements throughout the site. Learn about the ideas, stumbling blocks and next steps.

**11:45-1:00**

### **Keynote and Lunch**

- *Dr. J. Camille Hall, Vice Chancellor of Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives*

J. Camille Hall, Ph.D., LCSW serves as Vice-Chancellor of Diversity & Inclusion. Dr. Hall joined UMKC in June 2022. Prior to coming to UMKC, she was the Associate Dean of Equity and Inclusion and Professor in the College of Social Work, at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Dr. Hall completed a bachelor's and master's degree in social work at New Mexico State University, Las Cruces and a Ph.D. from Smith College, School for Social Work in Northampton, MA. She has 25+ years of experience in clinical social work practice and supervision. Her research focuses on multicultural competence and risk and resilience among Black Americans. Hall developed an evidence-based college-level multicultural competence course instruction model that is used throughout the United States.

**1:10-2:30**

### **Session 3**

- *Say It Loud! I'm Black and I'm Proud: Where History and Current Reality Meet, Dr. Carmaletha Williams, Black Archives of Mid-America*

In this session, we will look at a few historical events that defined the Black experience in Kansas City, then look at similar current events, discuss how they mesh, and what new steps are being taken.

- *Addressing 'Difficult History' in Museum Exhibits and Public Programming, Mark Adams & Sadie Troy, Truman Presidential Library & Museum*

The Truman presidency is not short of controversial topics. From the atomic bomb to the Korean War, from Civil Rights to the Steel Crisis. This session will examine the approaches to these difficult histories in the museum galleries and through a variety of educational programs.

**2:30-2:40**

**Break**

**2:40-3:50**

**Session 4**

- *Crowdsourcing the Archives: Collaborations through the Missouri State Archives eVolunteer Program, Liana Twente, Missouri State Archives*

The Missouri State Archives has employed volunteers to transcribe historic records since the eVolunteer program began in 1999. In this time, volunteers have indexed Missouri Death Certificates, Missouri State Penitentiary Registers, Missouri Marriages, and many other projects that have culminated in indexes available in-house and online for researchers. Our approach builds relationships with those interested in our records but may not otherwise have the means of volunteering in-person.

This already-robust program continues to grow thanks to our utilization of crowdsourcing platform [From the Page](#) on which we can develop templates for register-based indexing. The site allows us to be much more flexible in the projects that we make available to volunteers and provides a new means of attracting new volunteers and new partnerships.

- *Iconic Joplin: Using LEGOS to Engage Teens in Local Historic Preservation, Lisa Nelson, Landmark Builds*

Throughout 2023 Joplin, Missouri, is celebrating the 150th anniversary of its founding on March 23, 1873. The only official event of the Joplin Celebrations Commission to focus on teens was Iconic Joplin, a program that engaged teams of teens ages 12 to 16 in local history and STEM-career education as they built local landmarks from LEGOs. This session will share how Landmark Builds engages teens in local history to strengthen their ties to community through hands-on learning. It will explore the novel approach taken by Iconic Joplin to engage a hard-to-reach teen audience in ways that foster their natural curiosity and competitive spirit. Insights and lessons learned across the 6-month program will be unpacked.

**3:50-4:00**

**Break**

**4:00-4:45**

**MAMA Business Meeting and KCAA Meet-up**

**5:45-7:15**

**Tour at National WWI Museum & Memorial**

2 Memorial Drive, Kansas City, Missouri



In May, the National World War I Museum and Memorial opened its newly renovated Bergan Family Galley and Open Storage Center, relocated R.A. Long Learning Center, and reconfigured Edward Jones Research Center--the museum's most extensive renovation since it opened in 2006. We'll tour

these new and updated spaces, new exhibition areas in the main gallery and interactive digital table, and two interpretive areas that have been completely redone.

## **Saturday, October 28**

**8:30-9:00**

**Registration**

**9:00-10:30**

**Session 1**

- *Where People and Collections Intersect: Creating an Inclusive and Welcoming Reading Room, Lindy Smith & Anthony LaBat, LaBudde Special Collections, University of Missouri Kansas City*

Following the May 2020 murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer, a group of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) library workers at the University of Missouri-Kansas City wrote and distributed a document titled UMKC University Libraries BIPOC Workers Seek Equity. The document outlines a list of recommendations to improve working conditions in the library, including requests to [d]evelop a strong statement to minimize police presence in University Libraries and invest in de-escalation training and [r]equire that all departments develop an anti-racist action plan. LaBudde Special Collections, UMKC's rare book and manuscript repository, responded by working toward divestment from police involvement in incident resolution as well as the implementation of changes to access procedures to work toward an anti-racist and anti-oppressive reading room environment. This session will cover changes made both within the department and as part of larger University Libraries initiatives.

- *Accessibility v. Accessibility: Helping Make Cultural Heritage Institutions Accessible to All Users, Amy Nickless, Missouri State Archives*

When most think of accessibility, the availability of information on the internet is what comes to mind. True accessibility is making resources available to all users, regardless of ability. This involves incorporating universal design, a concept in which environments are designed to be usable by all people without the need for adaptation or specialized design. With this in mind, the session will begin with an overview of applicable laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, as they apply to cultural heritage institutions before bridging into ways to adapt practices to make resources equally usable for both those with and without disabilities. This will include tips for creating accessible facilities, handouts, websites, exhibits, and in-person and online programs. Examples of topics covered will include incorporating easy-to-read fonts and high contrast into signage, exhibits, handouts, and websites; tips for making in-person and online programs accessible; organizing an accessible webpage; and tips for making facilities accessible.

**10:30-10:45**

**Break**

**10:45-11:50**

**Session 2**

- *Digitizing Maps and Building Community, Levi Cullifer, Missouri Historical Society*

In 2022 the Missouri Historical Society Library was awarded a grant from the Missouri State Library to digitize 12 atlases and plat books that depict St. Louis City and County between the years 1829 to 1955. The Library has not done a digitization project of this magnitude since we implemented our current custom digital asset management system. In this presentation I will explain our selection criteria and share the obstacles we encountered including pipeline issues, bulk metadata management, file naming, and image loading failures. Besides this, I will share the value of digitization and the connection communities can make. Using digitized materials housed in libraries, archives, and museums will have a lasting impact on social justice, community history, and primary source research.

- *Unexpected Gifts: The History, Treasures, and Poisonous Books of the Marian Gault Collection, Amelia Nelson & Stephanie Lawrence, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art*

Donated materials and collections are essential for many libraries, museums, and archives, but what happens when these collections arrive unexpectedly? This session will explore a unique collection left to The Spencer Art Reference at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art upon the death of Kansas City Marian Lee Gault. Gault was a champion golfer, a Parsons trained Interior Designer and a bibliophile. Her collecting interests included travel, popular biographies, especially of royalty and presidents, and art – but her most comprehensive collecting was done around peerage and heraldry. In this session we will explore the many steps library staff have taken through the years to process this collection, the deep appreciation and insight that we have gained for the donor, and lessons learned along the way.

**12:00-12:45**

**Lunch** (provided)

**1:00-2:00**

**Session 3**

- *Historic Districts as Public History, Micaela Reiss, Truman State University*

Through the lenses of education, community cohesiveness, and preservation, we will examine the question of whether the establishment of a historic district in a city or town serves to promote public history. The presenter comes to the conclusion that although these three topics are rarely enough to promote public history individually, together the potential for education, the preservation of the buildings that make up the district, and the cultural community that the district creates demonstrate the success of historic districts as a form of public history.

- *Field Report: Experiences Interning at the Missouri State Archives & Deuschheim State Historic Site, Elizabeth Nahach, Truman State University*

In this presentation I will share my experiences interning as a history undergraduate at the Missouri State Archives, where I processed Missouri Supreme Court cases, and Deuschheim State Historic Site in Hermann, Missouri, where I gave tours about the house and local history. Both institutions focus on public history, but they come to it and accomplish it in very different ways, from their missions and respective focuses, to their collections, activities, structure, and resources. I will discuss the differences and similarities between the two and address the following questions: How does the mission of the institution change its goals and priorities? How does community involvement on the local level versus state level affect a cultural institution's mission? How can archives and historic sites mutually help each other? How does the level of resources each receive play into the legacy and narrative of the history that is then presented to the public? By adding my personal experience and drawing parallels between these institutions, I hope to highlight the importance of working together to further local and state history. Finally, I will share the lessons I learned about public history work and how they will shape my future career interests.

**2:45-4:15**

**Tour Black Archives of Mid-America**

1722 E 17th Terrace, Kansas City, Mo



The Black Archives of Mid-America collects, preserves and makes available to the public materials documenting the social, economic, political and cultural histories of persons of African descent in the central United States, with particular emphasis in the Kansas City, Missouri region. Will get a behind the scenes look in their archives and tour their permanent exhibition, *With My Eyes No Longer Blind*, which traces the story of African Americans in the Kansas City from the days of the Lewis and Clark expedition to the mayorship of Emanuel Cleaver II.



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