



Image: During an *Unpacking the Past* tour, Museum Educator Paul D. Best walks through the *Ancient Egypt: From Discovery to Display* exhibition with inquisitive middle-schoolers. Photo: Eddy Marengo for the Penn Museum. [Images available here.](#)

## *Unpacking the Past* Celebrates 10 Years at the Penn Museum

A Back-to-School Event Invites Philadelphia's K-12 Communities to Strengthen their Connections to Human History with a "Field Trip," Sept. 21

PHILADELPHIA, August 7, 2024—The Penn Museum is commemorating the 10th anniversary of its highly acclaimed educational program with *Unpacking the Past Turns10!*, a K-12 community celebration at the Penn Museum on **Saturday, September 21, 2024 from 10:00 am-1:00pm.**

An innovative partnership with the School District of Philadelphia since 2014, *Unpacking the Past* has brought archaeological collections to life for middle school students studying the ancient world. The multi-visit interdisciplinary program begins with an in-class lesson to prepare students for a museum field trip, which includes round-trip bus transportation. After the program, students receive a free family pass so they can return all year long. *Unpacking the Past* serves 6,000 sixth- and seventh- graders each year.

To mark its 10th year, **Philadelphia's K-12 teachers, administrators, students, and families can experience their very own "express field trip" to the Penn Museum through *Unpacking the Past Turns 10!***, with:

- **Hands-on activities based on an actual field trip to the Penn Museum, like paint-making from natural materials and a fiber-arts play space**
- **Complimentary *Unpacking the Past* tote bags for the first 500 registered attendees**
- **Free soft pretzels in a "snack zone"**
- **Teacher-parent/caregiver resource area**
- **Opportunities to plan field trips with the help of Penn Museum staff members and**
- **Family friendly tours every 30 minutes led by Museum educators.**

**Teachers and families will also meet with Museum educators and learn about the vast array of K-12 educational programs**, such as its Global Learning Lab, a K-12 initiative that cultivates global citizenship through intercultural understanding, among others.

*"Unpacking the Past* eliminates barriers to arranging field trips: the Museum handles the planning logistics and the cost of round-trip bus transportation," says Emily Hirshorn, Associate Director of School Programs at the Penn Museum. "This event not only celebrates 10 years of serving students across Philadelphia, it also opens up pathways for all K-12 teachers and families to connect with our collections, meet with Museum educators, and explore which educational opportunities might be a fit for them."

Looking ahead, the in-person "Teacher Talks" professional development series will resume this fall and in spring, an *Unpacking the Past* symposium will be held for K-12 educators and administrators across Philadelphia to showcase the importance of field trips.

"At the Museum, we make community involvement central to our mission because we believe the human story belongs to everyone. Educational programs like *Unpacking the Past* are one of the most important ways that we share this story," says Dr. Christopher Woods, Williams Director of the Penn Museum.

Museum admission with all-day gallery and exhibition access is included with the *Unpacking the Past Turns 10! anniversary celebration*. Teachers with identification receive free admission to the Penn Museum all year long.

## **ABOUT THE PENN MUSEUM**

The Penn Museum's mission is to be a center for inquiry and the ongoing exploration of humanity for our University of Pennsylvania, regional, national, and global communities, following ethical standards and practices.

Through conducting research, stewarding collections, creating learning opportunities, sharing stories, and creating experiences that expand access to archaeology and anthropology, the Museum builds empathy and connections across diverse cultures.

The Penn Museum is open Tuesday-Sunday, 10:00 am-5:00 pm. It is open until 8:00 pm on first Wednesdays of the month. The Café is open Tuesday-Thursday, 9:00 am-3:00 pm and Friday and Saturday, 10:00 am-2:00 pm. On Sundays, the Café is open 10:30 am-2:30 pm. For information, visit [www.penn.museum](http://www.penn.museum), call [215.898.4000](tel:215.898.4000), or follow @PennMuseum on social media.