NEWS FROM LEARNING PROGRAMS

Building Work-Ready Skills for High School Students

In an exciting new program this past spring, the Learning Programs Department organized work study projects with six high school students from the Mastery Charter School Shoemaker campus. Four seniors and two juniors joined the Penn Museum for paid positions with Learning Programs and the Museum Gift Shop.

This opportunity sprung from a partnership with the A.J. Drexel Autism Institute and Community Integrated Services, with the goal of empowering people with disabilities through individualized employment opportunities that foster self-sustainability, equality, and community. Community Integrated Services provided onsite job coaches at the Museum to help the students perform their daily tasks. Funding from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation provided the hourly wages for the students. Participants also received travel training, which taught them the best ways to get to and from work on public transportation. The work was considered part of the students’ school day and an opportunity to develop skillsets that will enable them to excel in future employment.

Students worked onsite during mornings from April through June. Some helped prepare classrooms for the K–12 school field trip groups, while others worked with the computerized cash register and pulled inventory from the stock room for the Gift Shop. Overall, the partnership has been a success and both departments will continue to provide work experiences for students with disabilities during the next school year.

Museum Hosts Eighth-Grade Students Affected by Hurricane Harvey

As a member of the Student Youth and Travel Association (SYTA), the Penn Museum was honored to host a group of 30 8th-grade students on June 1 from Henderson Middle School in Texas, which was destroyed in August 2017 by Hurricane Harvey. The SYTA Youth Foundation Silver Linings Program—which provides travel opportunities for young people that would otherwise be unavailable due to family economic hardship, budget cuts in school systems, or lack of access to or knowledge about travel as a learning experience—hosted these students in Philadelphia from May 30–June 1. The Museum was a highlight on the group’s final day. Students were welcomed and explored human stories within the Museum’s galleries during their visit. At a time of incredible hardship, the Henderson Middle School’s trip to Philadelphia and the Museum was certainly an experience that these students will never forget!
**Museum Supports Cyclists with Bike to Work Day**

The Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia teamed with the Penn Bike Committee and the Museum to celebrate the nationwide Bike to Work Day on May 19 with a South Street station for cyclists outside of the Museum. Cyclists on their way to work rolled up to the various booths to receive a number of great deals, free cycling gear and food, and photo opportunities. A group of Philadelphia cyclists, including local elected officials, assembled to bike from the Museum to Love Park for the annual Bike to Work press event.

The Museum provided touchable replica artifacts related to the new Middle East Galleries, along with props for fun photos and a special cyclist admission discount. Located on a major bike pathway from Center City to West Philadelphia, the Museum is proud to support and encourage the city’s cyclists.

ABOVE: Penn Museum bike commuters staff an interactive table of replica artifacts and photo props during Bike to Work day.

---

**Inquiry into China Offers East Asian Insights to Title I Schools**

As the Museum undergoes its groundbreaking *Building Transformation*, the Learning Programs Department will continue to serve K–12 classes throughout the renovations. The Department is developing new, exciting programs to maximize engagement within the impressive Rotunda on the 3rd floor.

Through the generosity of the Freeman Foundation, we will create new China programs for the International Classroom and a China-themed track for *Unpacking the Past*. The Freeman Foundation has been committed to deepening Americans’ understanding of East Asia for 25 years, seeking to expand appreciation of Asian arts and culture through the support of educational programs at United States institutions with significant Asian collections. The Foundation has launched a funding initiative to develop and strengthen educational outreach programs for Asian arts and culture exhibits to expand access and increase the number of American students learning about this subject.

The Penn Museum is deeply grateful for this support and is thrilled to provide object-based and inquiry-driven practices to thousands of K–12 students at Title I schools in the Philadelphia metro area. This project, called *Inquiry into China*, will increase student understanding of Chinese culture, art, and history, while promoting appreciation of traditions and influences present in students’ everyday lives.

ABOVE: The China & Japan Gallery will be the focus of increased programming for Title I K–12 students.