



**PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**



*Overleaf: Modern cylinder seal impression; (above) Hematite cylinder seal with modern impression. Mitanni period, 1600–1500 BC. Turkey, Tell Tayinat. Excavated by the Syrian Expedition of the University of Chicago, 1936. 2.1 × 1.1 cm. OIM A27494. D. 009194. Photos by Anna Ressler*

# PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Catherine Kenyon

Here we are as another successful, exciting, and enriching year has passed with the opportunity to reflect on our accomplishments, challenges, and new ideas on the horizon.

## Growth in Programming

One of the department goals for fiscal year 2013–2014 was to increase program attendance by 10 percent for adult, family, and teacher programs. To accomplish this goal, the Public Education Department launched four distinctly new programs in an effort to reach whole new audiences and made significant increases to two stagnant programs.

The total program attendance for this fiscal year has exceeded our goal for all three of these audience areas, which is an impressive achievement given that our walk-in visitor attendance dropped nearly 35 percent as a result of the University's construction in front of the Oriental Institute during this fiscal year (fig. 1).

### New Programs

**Epic Wednesday** targets the young professional and over-21 audience segment (fig. 2). Three programs have been produced with a total of 116 attendees. The significant metric for this program is the increase between the first program (14 attendees) and the third program (57 attendees). The increase represents a 69 percent increase in a seven-month period.

**Lunchtime Traveler** targets the University faculty, staff, and student audience, as well as docents and the Hyde Park community at large (fig. 3). Eleven programs have been produced with a total 293 people coming to the Museum for this midday program.

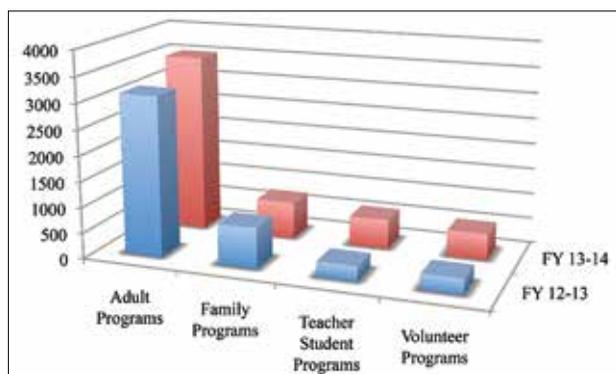


Figure 1. Public Education program growth chart

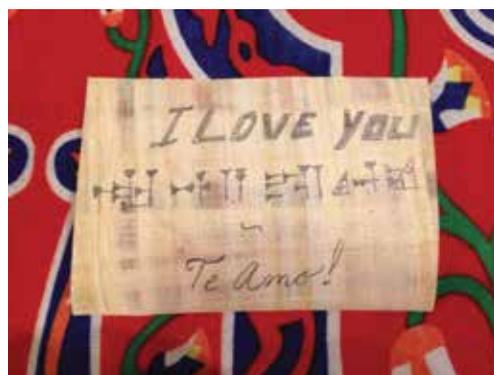


Figure 2. A Valentine's message written by one of the Epic Wednesday participants in February 2014 (photo by Catherine Kenyon)

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Figure 3. Lunchtime Traveler talk by Martha Roth (photo by Austin M. Kramer)

**Homeschool Programs** target the vast homeschool audience in the Chicago suburban area, northwestern Indiana, and southeastern Wisconsin. In this fiscal year we launched six programs and attended one outreach event. There is one more homeschool program planned for this fiscal year. We have reached a total of 162 people with these events.

**Drop-In Tours** is an experimental program established after the 2013 Docent Captain Luncheon with Gil at the request of the Captains. This program targets the walk-in Museum visitor. Unfortunately, we did not see the numbers of attendees that made the effort worth the docents' time. We believe the

harsh winter and construction were key factors for these low numbers. We offered eleven drop-in tours with a total attendance of fifty-seven people with an average of five people per program. After running this program for three months, we have placed it on hold until walk-in attendance improves.

**Deciphering the Past: Beginning Egyptian Hieroglyphs.** This fiscal year saw the development, production, and launch of a whole new online course — a language course. These online courses target an adult audience interested in continuing education and many online classes



Figure 4. Cover of the spring 2014 public programs brochure

include our members and docents. We had twenty-one participants for this new course. More analysis is needed to determine how to make this and future language-based courses successful, but this project marks a significant milestone for the Public Education Department in revamping the old correspondence course.

## Advances in Communication

This year the Public Education Department overhauled its quarterly brochure and created an integrated public programs brochure, which includes information about special exhibitions as well as member and other sponsored lectures (fig. 4).

### *New System for Tour Booking and Processing Payments*

The department has created a new computer-based tour booking process and created new procedures for processing payments for tours and all other fees taken in by the department. A new tour database was built that automatically sends communications to tour booking clients. These communications include: registration confirmation, tour reminders, and follow up e-mails encouraging clients to book future tours. We have initiated and completed approximately three-fourths of our new accounts receivable/invoice/receipt system to process payments more efficiently and with improved record keeping which is in line with the University's accounting requirements and systems (figs. 5-6).

### *Outreach*

This year we had a number of opportunities to bring the Oriental Institute into public and professional communities. We even reached the international community. This outreach included professional presentations at the University of Chicago's Faculty Technology Day, CPS Social Science Meeting, Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods Conference (CAA) in Paris (fig. 7), public speaking engagements for Montgomery Place Assisted Living Community, DePaul University business school students, Dominican University art history students, Chicago Volunteer Expo and public programs with the Assyrian Community,



Figure 5. The new Education Department FileMaker Pro tour database



Figure 6. Oriental Institute public programs online registration page — what the public sees

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Figure 7. *The Sorbonne, Paris, April 2014*

Hyde Park Arts Fair, Home School consortiums, and the 57th Street Book Festival.

## Adult Programs and Continuing Education Courses

This year we offered sixty-nine programs and reached out to 3,667 adult learners through our in-house, off-site, and online programs and courses. We also advanced our online communications through the new bi-monthly Adult Programs and Courses e-News, which reaches over 1,370 recipients.

In the three-part series *Ground to Gallery: The Secret Life of Museum Objects*, we engaged the scholars at the University of Chicago in examining the living histories of selected objects in the Oriental Institute Museum collections with our visitors. The topics and presenters in the series included “Hittite

Plaque, Megiddo,” with Dr. Theo van den Hout, professor of Hittite and Anatolian languages at the Oriental Institute; “Serving Statuettes from the Tomb of Nykauinpu, Giza, Egypt,” with Megaera Lorenz, PhD candidate in Egyptology at the University of Chicago; and “Mining the Nubian Gallery,” with Debora Heard, PhD candidate in anthropology at the University of Chicago (fig. 8). Visitors received a behind-the-scenes tour to places such as the Registration Office and Hittite Dictionary Office to explore the full spectrum about the presented objects.

In June 2014, we hosted the Graceland Cemetery Walk, led by Egyptologist Michael Berger (fig. 9). In this two-hour tour, twenty participants explored obelisks, mausolea, even a pyramid, and other Egyptian-style grave markers, followed by a lunch at a neighborhood eatery, Delece Restaurant.



Figure 8. *From Ground to Gallery. “Mining the Nubian Gallery,”* was given by guest presenter Debora Heard (far left), PhD candidate in anthropology at the University of Chicago (photo by Megaera Lorenz)



Figure 9. *Graceland Cemetery Walk* (photo by Carol Ng-He)

## Family and Youth Programs. *Moriah Grooms-Garcia*

Over 1,000 people took advantage of our youth and family programs this past year, a 23 percent increase from the year prior. Contributing to this progress were the offering of long-time favorite programs (*Secret of the Mummy* and *Junior Archaeologist*; fig. 10) on a regular basis, the creation of additional recurring and annual family programs, and the building of our homeschool workshop program.

### **Art and Archaeology**

The year started off with the Oriental Institute co-hosting the annual Be an Ancient Egyptian Artist Camp with the Lillstreet Art Center. Youngsters between the ages of five and eleven attended the week-long camp, which was offered for one session during summer 2013. For half the camp's duration our own Kipper Family Archaeology Discovery Center (KADC) facilitators filled the role of "artist-in-residence," facilitating the making of Egyptian-themed crafts. The camp culminated in a trip to the Oriental Institute and its simulated archaeology dig site, the KADC.

During the first part of the year our Boy Scout Archaeology Merit Badge Workshop went on hiatus while we revamped the program. The Scouts are now able to meet all their requirements for the badge by the end of the workshop. The simulated archaeology site family program *Junior Archaeologists* saw 60 percent increase in attendance.

### **Literacy**

This year we continued a story-time series hosted by the Museum's biggest bird of all, LamaSSu. This program, called LamaSeuss, pairs one of the Institute's most iconic artifacts with the most well-known American children's book writers — Dr. Seuss — for a fun and educational opportunity that teaches children about the ancient world. The lamassu, with his cuneiform inscription and colossal stature, makes the perfect entry point to learn about ancient writing, animals, money, hats, and more!

The program *Little Scribe* is a new addition to our recurring program offerings. An interactive presentation takes kids ages 9 through 12 through the evolution of writing from ancient pictographs to modern "text language" (i.e., "I <3 u. We hv 2 c Bieber"). Children also try their hand at Assyrian cuneiform and Egyptian hieroglyphs.

### **Family Fests and Events**

This past summer we hosted a large end of the exhibit event for families and instituted two new events that will return to the Oriental Institute annually.

Over 200 people came to the day-long bird-themed family event *Open Nest*, offered in conjunction with the special exhibit *Between Heaven & Earth: Birds in Ancient Egypt*. Among the many activities this final event for the exhibit offered, it invited families to make a bird-version of themselves and learn the staff-parody "The History of the Chicken" Dance about the origin of the chicken and its travels from Asia to Egypt (fig. 11, left). The Oriental Institute



*Figure 10. Kids and parents have fun digging up artifact replicas during the Junior Archaeologist program*

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Figure 11. Open Nest. Left: the “History of the Chicken” Dance was offered three times during the all-day Open Nest event in July 2013. Youth and Family Program coordinator Moriah Grooms-Garcia and intern Leila Makdisi lead the activity from the center of the ring of chicken dancers; Right: this little Hyde Park resident, Maya, found one of the GOOSE flyers for Open Nest and brought it in to get her free pharaonic rubber duck!

engaged the Hyde Park neighborhood in a “goose chase” of sorts through its flyer campaign leading up to Open Nest. Flyers with either the word “DUCK” or “GOOSE” were posted in the area, with the latter type of flyer offering a free pharaonic rubber duck to its finder. You can see this happy participant who found one of our GOOSE posters before she claimed her rubber duck (fig. 11, right). We would like to extend special thanks to those who supported this event, particularly our event sponsor La Petite Folie. Their support and yours helped the Oriental Institute offer this fun, educational event to families free of charge.



Figure 12. The Look. Left: Oriental Institute volunteer Isabella Anthony explains how to wear a linen like a woman in Old Kingdom Egypt versus in New Kingdom Egypt; Right: kids entranced with the loom activity

The Look got families investigating the science and process behind the fashions of ancient Egypt (fig. 12). Kids worked on a loom, created jewelry, examined minerals, and tried on ancient clothes in both Old Kingdom and New Kingdom styles. Families learned how archaeologists are able to use the fashions of ancient Egypt to date artifacts.

Every November, starting this past year, you can expect the Oriental Institute to host their annual family event in honor of International Game Day: Ancient Game Day. Families learned how to play the favorite board games of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia and created their own using the basic “rules” of how to make a game.

### ***Offsite Programs***

This year we focused on two highly successful off-site programs with area partners. The Children’s Book Fair (formerly known as The 57th Street Children’s Book Fair) has been an annual Hyde Park celebration of books and reading since its start twenty-six years ago. The Oriental Institute has the distinction of being the only community institution that has taken part in the fair since its inception. Families enjoyed the Oriental Institute’s booth at both the fall Children’s Book Fair and the spring 57th Street Art Fair. Parents and children were eager to make rubbing imprints of ancient Egyptian reliefs and Egyptian murals that follow the artistic “rules” of ancient Egypt. As in the past, the fairs let us introduce the Oriental Institute to families from around the city.

### ***Homeschool Programs***

This year we began hosting monthly workshops for the homeschool community. Homeschool programs offer a great opportunity to go in-depth on a specific topic for children ages 5 to 12. We experimented with a few program models this past year, taking our audiences’ feedback along the way. This has led us to a model that splits the large group into two smaller groups: ages 5 to 8 and ages 9 to 12. This past year we investigated the science of mummification (fig. 13), used ancient Egyptian math and math theory to learn place value and multiplication (and by extension, binary code!), and to find out how ancient Mesopotamians lived by investigating the dwelling at the site of Jarmo.

### ***On the Horizon***

The coming year will see further growth in our homeschool workshops with a focus on building relationships that foster a sense of community. In addition, we will continue to strengthen and grow our current family program offerings.



*Figure 13. Homeschoolers got to touch a 3-D print of a mummified eagle at Mummy Science*

## K-12 Teacher Programs. *Carol Ng-He*

Building upon the success of joint programming with the University's K-12 outreach, we continued to work with the Center for East Asian Studies, Center for East European and Russian/Eurasian Studies, Center for International Studies, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Center for Latina American Studies, Smart Museum of Art, and Committee on Southern Asian Studies/South Asia Language and Area Center. This year we had four major collaborative programs for K-12 teachers, including:

- Summer Teacher Institute — Natural Disasters and Social Responses: A Global Perspective in July 2013
- The sixth annual Chicago International Education Conference in November 2013 (fig. 14)
- Teacher Appreciation Night in May 2014 (fig. 15)
- Summer Teacher Institute — Energy and the Environment: Science, History, Politics in June 2014 (fig. 16)

The Teacher Advisory Council continued to consult with us to make K-12 teacher programming more effective to meet the needs of teachers and their students. In 2013-2014 we had six active members on the Council: Cory Schiffern, Mitchell Elementary School; Christine Gray-Rodriguez, Garvy Elementary School; Kayla Vigil, Namaste Charter School; Nashwa Mekky, Ivy Hill Elementary School; Nissa Applequist, Lane Tech High School; and Cindy Jurisson, University of Chicago Laboratory School. With their advice and support, we successfully offered new programs for teachers and assessed the need for new teacher curriculum and resources.

This year we launched a series of four CPS Arts Liaison Welcome Events in partnership with the Smart Museum of Art aimed to offer K-12 art teachers and liaisons museum collections as a teaching resource. The programs were: Context Matters! Exploring the Role of Archaeology in Art History, with a tour by Lisa Truex, PhD candidate in Near Eastern art and archaeology at the University of Chicago; Exploring the Oriental Institute's Integrated Database & the Museum's Architectural Design, with Foy Scalf, head of the Oriental Insti-



Figure 14. Carol Ng-He, K-12 and Continuing Education Program Developer, presented in a break-out session at the sixth annual Chicago International Education Conference (photo by Lisa Davis)



Figure 15. Representatives of the UChicago K-12 outreach offices participated in the Oriental Institute's first annual Teacher Appreciation Night in May 2013 (photo by Carol Ng-He)



Figure 16. Rozenn Bailleul-LeSuer, PhD candidate in Egyptology at the University of Chicago, represented the Oriental Institute at the Summer Teacher Institute organized by the Center for International Studies (photo by Carol Ng-He)



Figure 17. Oriental Institute Museum chief curator Jack Green, center, gave a gallery tour to teachers at the CPS Arts Liaison welcome event (photo by Carol Ng-He)

tute Research Archives; Who Owns the Past?, with Jack Green, chief curator of the Oriental Institute Museum (fig. 17).

The fee-based, quarterly Teacher Workshop Series engaged teachers in a more in-depth exploration of the Oriental Institute Museum collections and research materials while teachers learned how to use objects in their inquiry-based teaching pedagogy (fig. 18). The themes covered were: Teaching Ancient Egyptian Art and Architecture with the Oriental Institute Museum Collection, by Megaera Lorenz, PhD candidate in Egyptology at the University of Chicago; Teaching with Primary Sources, by Debora Heard, PhD candidate at the Department of Anthropology at the University; and Teaching the Arts, Science, and Archaeology of Ancient Food, by Oya Topçouğlu, PhD candidate at NELC and in collaboration with Atorina Zomaya of the Assyrian Kitchen.

In spring 2014, the Oriental Institute Museum participated in Envisioning China, a cross-departmental festival of arts and culture organized by UChicago Arts. The Public Education Department partnered with the Smart Museum of Art for a teacher workshop entitled Material Culture and Artistic Exchange: From the Silk Road to Slow Dance associated with the mini-exhibit: Silk Road and Indian Ocean Traders: Connecting China and the Middle East. Tasha Vorderstrasse, research associate and exhibit curator, led this program (fig. 19).

Additionally, this year we partnered with the Chicago Public Schools, Department of Literacy for the Social Science Academy, which was a year-long professional development program for classroom teachers. Through this program, three Chicago Public School teachers, from Orr Academy High



Figure 18. Teachers participated in a lesson planning activity at one of our Teacher Workshops (photo by Carol Ng-He)

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*Figure 19. Oriental Institute research associate Tasha Vorderstrasse spoke about the mini-exhibit Silk Road and Indian Ocean Traders: Connecting China and Middle East to a group of teachers in May 2014 (photo by Carol Ng-He)*

School, Gage Park High School, and Alcott East Elementary School, were engaged in a project focusing on the theme Defining Ancient Civilization and Connecting It to Today's World. Through an object-based approach, teachers learned how to incorporate primary-source materials — including maps, artifacts, and archaeological excavation documentation — into a classroom curriculum focused on contributions from the ancient world such as writing, urbanization, and economy systems. Building upon the scholarship of the Oriental Institute, and in alignment with the Common Core State Standards, teachers worked with Oriental Institute education staff to develop and implement a unit tailored to the needs of their

students. Through our K–12 teacher outreach initiatives and professional development programs, we reached out to a total of 534 teachers this year.

Our outreach extends cross the country and the world. Our educator blog From Ground to Gallery provides an additional space where educators can share their experience and ideas for teaching ancient civilizations in classrooms. From July 2013 to June 2014, the blog had 1,730 viewers, a fivefold growth from the previous year. In addition, e-Scribe, our monthly e-newsletter for educators, has reached over 1,360 people, a 60 percent growth from last year.

### **K-12 Student Programs**

Between October 2013 and February 2014, we piloted an after-school program: Telling My Family's Story, designed for grades 5–6 and implemented at two Chicago Public Schools (Mitchell Elementary School and John W. Garvy Elementary School) (fig. 20). This program was in conjunction with the special exhibit Our Work: Modern Jobs — Ancient Origins. Twenty-two students participated in the program and learned about the importance of conducting and recording oral history projects. More importantly, students drew inspiration from Our Work to examine modern professions with origins in the ancient Middle East. Students worked with Matthew Cunningham, videographer of Our Work, to develop questions and use digital recorders and cameras to record their interviews for their project. In February, students and their families were invited to attend a celebratory event for their creativity and success in the project.



*Figure 20. (left to right) Matthew Cunningham, Carol Ng-He, Christine Gray-Rodriguez (art teacher at Garvy Elementary School), and Cory Schiffen (social studies teacher at Mitchell Elementary School) at the Telling My Family's Story event in February 2014*

### ***Catherine J. Dueñas Transportation Scholarship Fund***

In 2013 we launched the Catherine J. Dueñas Transportation Scholarship Fund in recognition of Cathy Dueñas for her service in the Volunteer Program. This fund offers eligible local schools with a contribution of \$150 toward the cost of one school bus to visit the Museum. As of June 2014, awards have been made to nine schools; 506 students were served.

### ***On the Horizon***

Since fall 2013, the Oriental Institute is one of the certified Illinois State chapters of Project Archaeology, a joint program of Montana State University and the Bureau of Land Management. The program began in Utah in 1990 as a statewide project to combat the vandalism and looting of archaeological sites. The Oriental Institute Department of Public Education is honored to collaborate with Project Archaeology to advocate ancient cultural heritage preservation. In August we will launch a new three-day Summer Teacher Workshop — Exploring Archaeology with the Common Core — based on the Project Archaeology curriculum Investigating Shelter. Through modeling the investigation process, teachers will experience how archaeological inquiry can engage students and meet Common Core State Standards in literacy and mathematics. This workshop is open to all K-12 educators of all disciplines and recommended for teachers who teach grades 3-5.

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