

The 2012 Association of African American Museums Annual Conference

Commemorating Struggles: Claiming Freedom



The America of the 1860's was marked by extreme social strife between races and cultures, families and communities, the North and the South, all leading to a long and bitterly divisive war. The era however, also saw the creation of social, political and economic institutions which laid the foundations for modern day America.

The legacy of this tumultuous period revealed itself a century later in the 1960's, another time of great change in Ameri-

ca. War, protest, civil and racial unrest were accompanied by an expansion of new freedoms and concerns previously un-witnessed in our country. From draft resistance and sit-ins to demonstrations and protests, many of the phenomena which came to characterize the 1960's had its roots in the mid-19th century.

The Association of African American Museums' 2012 annual conference will examine this legacy through sessions and discussions that will inform and challenge attendees to explore the relationships

between these two dynamic periods of American history. Our goal is for those in attendance to gain an understanding of how the ending of 19th century slavery and 20th century racial segregation were important milestones in America's history and its pursuit of the democratic ideal.

The larger observations of the American Civil War's Sesquicentennial reveals how the Civil War era continues to shape and affect American history and popular culture — particularly in terms of government, modern politics, and ongoing race relations. With few exceptions, these topics have not been brought together as a single narrative that involves examining either the Civil War role played by African Americans or the social and political threads that run from the 1860's to the 1960's, and the inevitable impact of one era on the other. According to James McPherson, an eminent Civil War historian at Princeton University, speaking of commemorations of the war's centennial 50 years ago "In a way, the civil-rights movement eclipsed the centennial and was seen by many people as being more relevant than observation and commemoration of military battles. There was an idea that this war was about something that wasn't really talked about."

For museums, particularly African American museums, the challenges are as varied as the opportunities. Institutions will grapple with numerous topics and themes that may or may not relate to mission statements and held collections, such as the secession of the Southern states, slavery and wartime civil liberties, or political and constitutional demands during the war years.

Presenting clear, convincing exhibits and displays that make the not-so-obvious connections between the Civil War and the Civil Rights Movement will undoubtedly demand commitments of time and resources needed to encourage skeptical audiences that they should come to new exhibitions. Sessions at this year's conference will address how museum programs assess and meet the needs of audiences seeking to understand freedom; what resources are needed and available to conduct this work; what impacts and outcomes are possible for the broadest understanding of the American freedom narrative and the African American connection to it.

The 2012 Association of African American Museums Annual Conference will take place in Baltimore, Maryland, hosted by the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History & Culture over the weekend of August 22 – 25.

Claudine Brown to Deliver Keynote

Claudine Brown, the first Assistant Secretary for Education and Access at the Smithsonian Institution, will deliver the 2012 Association of African American Museums Annual Conference Keynote Address. The 2012 Annual Conference will take place in Baltimore, Maryland, and will be hosted by the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History & Culture over the weekend of August 22–25; this year's conference theme is "Commemorating Struggles: Claiming Freedom".

As Assistant Secretary for Education and Access, Ms Brown is responsible for defining the Smithsonian's education program and reports directly to Smithsonian Secretary Wayne Clough; her focus is the Institution-wide plan for educational initiatives, assessment strategies and funding for students in the K-12 range. Ms Brown also oversees two of the Smithsonian's educational organizations—the National Science Resources Center and the Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies—and coordinates 32 education-based offices in museums and science centers.



(Continued on page 6)

The Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture

“To be the premier experience and best resource for information and inspiration about the lives of African American Marylanders”.

With that statement, the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture seeks to realize its mission by collecting, preserving, interpreting, documenting and exhibiting the rich contributions of African American Marylanders from the state’s earliest history to the present and into the future.



The Reginald F. Lewis Museum is located at 830 Pratt Street in downtown Baltimore.

Originally designated as the Maryland Museum of African American History and Culture, the Museum’s beginning was the result of a statewide analysis of existing and potential state resources related to African American heritage tourism. The analysis concluded that there was a substantial need and significant potential for a statewide museum to protect and interpret Maryland’s African American history and culture.

In 1998, the Maryland African American Museum Corporation was formalized as a 501 (c)(3) organization and as an independent unit of the executive branch of the State of Maryland. The 32 member Board of Directors brought an Executive Director on board to help guide the Museum to fruition.

While the State of Maryland committed \$30 million toward the design and capital construction costs of the institution, the City of Baltimore donated the land on which the Museum is located. In June 2002, the Reginald F. Lewis Foundation awarded the Museum a \$5 million endowment to be used in conjunction with all educational programs.

In gratitude for the gift, the Museum was renamed the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture; Reginald F. Lewis was a native Marylander who became the first African American to own a Fortune 500 corporation, TLC Beatrice Foods.

An exciting and dynamic 82,000 square foot facility, the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture is the largest African American museum on the East Coast and includes over 13,000 square feet of permanent and temporary exhibition space, an oral history recording and listening studio, a 200 seat theater, a conservation lab, an information resource center, storage facilities, two classrooms, a museum shop and café, and flexible public program areas, all of which provide preservation and interpretation of Maryland’s world renowned African American history and culture. The Freelon Group is the building’s award-winning architectural team.



Finally, the Museum is an important venue that has shared Maryland’s African American history with over a million visitors since opening its doors in 2005; it is situated just two blocks east of one of the state’s most popular attractions, the Baltimore Inner Harbor.



REGINALD F. LEWIS MUSEUM
of Maryland African American
History & Culture

The Museum’s permanent exhibition explores the diversity of the African American experience in Maryland as told through a multitude of individual stories, from historical perspectives to insights on today’s contemporary era. It includes three permanent gallery spaces.

BUILDING MARYLAND, BUILDING AMERICA

Explores three major types of work in which free and enslaved people of African descent engaged: work on the water, tobacco cultivation, and iron working; these endeavors were essential to building first, the colony, and later, the state of Maryland.

THINGS HOLD, LINES CONNECT

Shows how African American families and community organizations provided comfort and support in the face of oppression, while creating environments in which resistance to oppression could be planned and nurtured.

THE STRENGTH OF THE MIND

Features stories about the creative spirit of Maryland African Americans by focusing on their accomplishments in the arts and education. It highlights the experiences of famous and not-so-famous African Americans from Maryland and reveals untold stories and little known facts about the lives of Frederick Douglas, Harriet Tubman, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper and Benjamin Banneker. The Museum’s exhibition also explores the lives and times of such 20th century personalities as Thurgood Marshall, Juanita Jackson Mitchell, Esther McCready and Kweisi Mfume.

AAAM at the 2012 American Association of Museums Conference : The Africa-US Cultural Heritage Strategic Partnership

By Dr. Deborah Mack

In early 2011, AAAM joined an U.S.- Africa Cultural Heritage Strategic Partnership as an inaugural partner. The Partnership was initiated to collaboratively explore collaboratively shared needs in the museum and cultural heritage sectors of the United States and Africa.

The Partnership consortium is led by the following institutions/organizations: the Association of African American Museums/AAAM; the American Association of Museums/AAM; the International Council of African Museums/AFRICOM; the Institute of Museum and Library Services/IMLS; Michigan State University (MSU Museum; MATRIX; and the African Studies Center); the Smithsonian Institution (National Museum of African Art, National Museum of African-American History and Culture, and the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage).

In meetings held in Johannesburg, in Dakar and in Washington D.C., partners have worked to identify and clarify priority areas of need, developing a draft “Big Framework” that delineates these needs and articulates specific actions and strategies to address them.

The conference theme for the recent 2012 American Association of Museums Annual Meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota (April 29-May 2) was Creative Community. The Partnership presented four panels during AAM, as well as Partner-focused orientation and evaluation sessions. AAAM was prominently represented among the panels that included leading museum professionals from both Africa and the United States.

The four panel presentations focused on proposed Partnership priority areas:

US and African museum exhibits in a digital age: creating and linking local and global communities

American and African museums are collaborating on new ways to create and link communities — in their own geographic areas and across the Atlantic — through

the development and physical and virtual distribution of exhibitions. In a panel presentation, teams of experts from American and African museums that have recently engaged in or are in the planning stages of innovative collaborations will share their perspectives and experiences. Topics for discussion include: fostering and negotiating shared ownership and management, understanding and incorporating cross-cultural differences and interests into planning and implementation, building content contributors and users, assessment of impacts, resource sharing, and using new digital tools.

Endorsed by ICOM-US and AAAM, this panel was simultaneously interpreted in Mandarin, Spanish, Arabic and French.

Trauma: creating shared communities in cultural/natural heritage risk management

In Africa — as in other places around the globe, trauma situations - whether brought about by armed conflict, natural disasters, or other causes - present a host of health, economic, social, and cultural challenges to museums, governments, and communities. A panel of experts will present case studies of cultural/natural heritage risk management challenges with the goal of fostering an international cadre of cultural/natural heritage museum professionals equipped with the cultural and technical expertise required to map heritage resources, and who can be mobilized quickly in the event of a disaster and/or its aftermath in order to identify, assess, avert or remedy actual or impending threats to critical cultural and natural heritage resources.

Endorsed by ICOM-US, AAAM and sponsored by TARGET, this session was simultaneously interpreted in French

Preservation and Access: Creating global community access to African heritage collections

Case study presentations demonstrate partnerships in development, using new collaborative approaches and new technol-

ogies to greatly enhance their reach and engage larger and different stakeholder communities. The presentations illustrate models for the shared creation of tools that generate new skills as well as increased access to and use of collections for expanded teaching and learning. This is an initiative of the US-Africa Cultural Heritage Strategic Partnership.

Endorsed by ICOM-US, AAAM, AAM Diversity in Museums PNC (DIVCOM), AAM Exhibition PNC (NAME) and AAM Latino Network PNC, this session was simultaneously interpreted in French.

Young, Informed, Engaged: Innovation in Creating Sustainable Global Youth Communities.

American and African museums are collaborating on new models to work with young stakeholders on issues of civic engagement, responsible citizenship and creating productive contributions to local, national and global societies. This panel describes efforts to create long-term connections with young people that inform and enhance their civic engagement, their decision-making as national and global citizens and their opportunities. Panelists describe issues and challenges in fostering and negotiating shared ownership, in shared collaborative management, in building cadres of learning participants and in resource sharing.

Endorsed by ICOM-US, AAAM, AAM Public Relations and Marketing PNC (PRAM), this session was simultaneously interpreted in Mandarin



Commemorations of Struggles: Part I

By Peter Hanes

Museums and their institutional partners have a broad range of national and international anniversaries to consider when preparing exhibits, projects, educational programs and outreach efforts. Commemorations that mark the many significant milestones in history involving the struggle for freedom and human rights have recently taken place or are currently in various stages of preparation for dates in the near future.

The African American Civil War Memorial and Museum, which preserves, interprets and celebrates the contributions of over 209,000 African Americans who served in the United States Colored Troops and the Union Navy recently held its Veteran's Day Wreath Laying Ceremony. The event featured performances of African American spirituals, South African freedom songs, and presentations by members of the Company B, 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment Honor Guard and many moving remarks by Ms Rosemary Sadlier, president of the Ontario Black History Society and the Rev. Dr. Don Meredith, Senator, Senate of Canada, among others.



Emancipation Wreath Laying Program at African American Civil War Memorial.

Washington, DC marked the 150th anniversary of slavery's end with a series of educational events during April 2012:

- The Frederick Douglass National Historic Site, historic home of the distinguished abolitionist, hosted a lecture program featuring historian C.R. Gibbs, who brought to light many examples of the shared history between the U.S. and Canada, including the Underground Railroad and the United States Colored Troops 1st Regiment Infantry, an army unit organized in 1863 in Washington which included fugitive slaves and freed Blacks from the Mid-Atlantic States, Canada and the Caribbean.
- Other events acknowledged the DC Emancipation Act, signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln on April 16,

1862, which abolished slavery in the Nation's capital, freed some 3,100 enslaved persons, and is the only instance in which the US Government paid slaveholders for the freedom of slaves.



Emancipation Day visit to U.S. Capitol Visitor Center (CVC) Emancipation Hall.



View of a model of the Spirit of Freedom Statue as she looks out on Emancipation Hall.

The variety of events and celebrations are numerous and in some instances, are scheduled through the year 2018.

- 150th anniversary of the American Civil War (2011-2015)
- signing of the Emancipation Proclamation (January 1, 2013)
- centennial of Harriet Tubman's passing (March 10, 2013)
- establishment of the U.S. Bureau of Colored Troops (May 22, 2013)
- 50th anniversary of the American Civil Rights Movement (including the March on Washington, DC for Jobs and Freedom (2013)
- ratification of the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution ending slavery (December, 2015)
- 200th anniversary of the War of 1812 (2012-2015)
- 100th Anniversary of World War I (2014-2018)
- International Emancipation Day (annual observance marking the August 1, 1834 abolition of slavery in the British Empire)
- United Nations Annual Observances:
 - International Women's Day (March 8)
 - International Day of Remembrance for Victims of Slavery & the Transatlantic Slave Trade (March 25)
 - Nelson Mandela International Day (July 18)

Archiving Modern Objects of African American Lifestyles

By Barbara Garnes

mu·se·um

Noun: A building in which objects of historical, scientific, artistic, or cultural interest are stored and exhibited; an institution devoted to the procurement, care, study, and display of objects of lasting interest or value.

African American museums have a unique opportunity to archive the works of artists and businesses in the African heritage community while educating society about talented achievers. Museums are in a unique position to build revenue from works produced by black suppliers.

Educate

Self expression is through the art of creativity. There are numerous art forms we have learned over the centuries starting with handmade objects and items. Why do we create? If we needed it, we made it ourselves. "It" had meaning to the individual craftsperson and finally to the community. Quilting is one of the precious arts that tell beautiful stories of who we are; one of the dying arts is sewing. Some have taken this talent onto international runways. We have evolved through our exposure to work environments, education and technology; today we can manufacture or mass produce large quantities of items.

Imports from Africa are wonderful; baskets, mudcloth, kente and cowrie shells are classics. However, the insertion of African art into America lifestyles has major significance. By reworking original art into practical everyday objects using images and graphics, we are making a huge impact with consumers. I've seen customers cry and through their tears as they whisper "At last..."

Archive

If necessity is the mother of invention, museums can be the resource to showcase creations by our community. By exposing our work, museums position themselves to attract more visitors to support the arts, to tell the story behind each product and to

show how we have evolved while keeping up with the changing times.

Many community and museum gift shops have done a great job of offering culturally based products - made for us by us. Customers are in awe and make wish lists for future purchases; some commented that a particular shop in Brooklyn was like a museum. They were sure to discover something creative every time they visited the store. With the unfortunate closing of many of these stores, consumers should know that our museums can be a destination spot to find great products and gifts.

Today we can produce virtually ANYTHING, there's no lack of product or raw materials. We have access to areas we've only dreamed of in the past. Pick a category and there will be something suitable for any location. Apparel/ wearable art, jewelry, home textiles, furniture and greeting cards are basic areas available to museum shop buyers. Buyers should be reminded that within each category there is the "Made in America" aspect which is a very important part of our history!

Stimulate the economy



produced by African American suppliers. Buyers for African American museums support our manufacturers and artists, help stimulate our local economies and strengthen our communities. Buyers should keep in mind that there are numerous small African American owned businesses that produce quality merchandise but that cannot always afford the expense of a trade show venue.

A museum that supports local artists is The Studio Museum of Harlem located in the heart of Harlem, New York; its museum gift shop has done a commendable job

offering visitors products that reflect the creative history of a people while presenting the wares of new and talented artists. The purchase of products for sale in gift shops is often appropriately coordinated with scheduled events or special group visits. Visitors often purchase items as souvenirs; however the visitor will incorporate the gift into everyday life.

Sources



How does a museum store find these companies? By starting locally; there are African American vendors in local vicinities

that are capable of supplying great products. Contact other museums and ask for leads. Read emails and respond to suppliers who reach out to buyers and tell them what is needed.

What better place to tell the story of African American lifestyles than the African American museum? And there's no better place than the museum to find objects created for this lifestyle whether on exhibit or in the gift shop.

Our community is rich in creativity. In the words of Vernard Grey: "We have everything we need in this room." Maggie Anderson of the Empowerment Experiment encourages us to support ourselves. Together, African American museums and businesses can be a winning combination; with the right product mix, promotions and marketing will keep the flow of visitors coming well past Kwanzaa and Black History Month.

Barbara Garnes, the Lifestyle Creator of Southern Hemisphere Design Group, Inc. (SoHe Designs) has been a product developer and manufacturer for over 20 years; she is also the founder of BK-NY-USA: made in America by us, an initiative that connects small businesses in the United States with consumers and gift shops. Discussions on collaboration between African American museums and small businesses are welcome. Contact SoHeDesigns@gmail.com for a list of African American owned suppliers. Visit the websites www.sohedesigngroup.com, www.bknyusa.com and the online showcase www.sobe.tv.

AAAM Notes

AAAM EXHIBIT AWARDS

The AAAM Curators, Archivists, Registrars, and Exhibits (CARE) standing professional committee will launch its annual competition for exhibition, preservation and multi-media presentation awards during the 34th annual conference in Baltimore.

The awards will proffer professional standards in the field for innovative exhibitions, preservation projects, and new technology presentations that advance the work of museums. The "Leadership in Art, History, Culture and Science Exhibit Awards" will be presented each year during the annual conference and all AAAM members are eligible to apply. The criteria will be formally announced in Baltimore.

Anthony Dixon, Ph.D. chair of CARE is excited about this award and its ability to provide a platform for the field. The award was approved by members attending the CARE meeting on August 5, 2011 in Tallahassee, Florida. Those in attendance were: John Franklin, NMAAHC-SI; Anthony Dixon, John P. Riley House Museum; Samuel W Black, John Heinz History Center; Alice Jackson, Tangipahoa African American Heritage Museum; Jessica Darke, Eisterhold Associates; Essie DeNoms, African American Research Library and Cultural Center Broward County; Burnadean Warren, Tangipahoa; Wayne Coleman, Birmingham Civil Rights Museum and

Margaret Santiago, Smithsonian Institution retired.

~ Samuel W. Black

DEVELOPMENT AND GRANT RESOURCES

There are numerous development resources available for institutions that serve people of color. The AAAM website, www.blackmuseums.org provides access and insight on many. The largest and most resource-laden are listed below:

Guidestar is both an assessment and analysis site as well as an information portal for development opportunities. Its search engines provide everything from completed IRS Form 990 for all non-profit organizations to information on foundation and giving and focus areas. Visit them at www.guidestar.com

Foundation Center is a non-profit service dedicated to building public understanding of the foundation field by maintaining a database on foundations and corporate giving programs and the grants offered. Visit them at <http://fdncenter.org/>

Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is an independent federal agency that fosters leadership, innovation, and a lifetime of learning by supporting the nation's museums and libraries. Visit them at <http://www.ims.gov>

National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) is a public agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts, both new and established; bringing the arts to all

Americans; and providing leadership in arts education. Visit them at <http://www.nea.gov/>

National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) is an independent agency of the United States government for grants in history, languages, philosophy and other areas of the humanities. Visit them at <http://www.neh.gov/>

NEW JOB LISTINGS

Six new jobs at member museums are listed on the website.

Curator, Louis Armstrong House, Corona, NY - May 2012

Event Associate, Senator John Heinz History Center, Pittsburgh, PA - June 2012

Exhibit Designer/Department Director, Senator John Heinz History Center, Pittsburgh, PA - June 2012

Facilities Manager, Fort Pitt Museum, Pittsburgh, PA - June 2012

Multimedia Manager, Senator John Heinz History Center, Pittsburgh, PA - June 2012

Planetarium Manager/Instructor, I.P. Stanback Museum, Orangeburg, SC - May 2012

Visit www.blackmuseums.org for more job listings.

Claudine Brown - cont.

In 1990, Claudine Brown joined the Smithsonian to serve as director of the National African-American Museum Project. In this position, she coordinated the efforts of advisory committees that considered the role of the Smithsonian in the development of a national museum devoted exclusively to the documentation of African American life, art, history and culture. She developed the Institution's final study on the project and a program plan for the proposed museum. In 1991, she

also became the deputy assistant secretary for the arts and humanities and developed policy for many Smithsonian museums.

In 1995 Ms Brown became director of the arts and culture program at the Nathan Cummings Foundation in New York; she positioned the organization as a leading arts grant maker that supports institutions that are committed to excellence, diversity and community involvement. During the early years of her tenure at the foundation, Ms Brown worked to strengthen

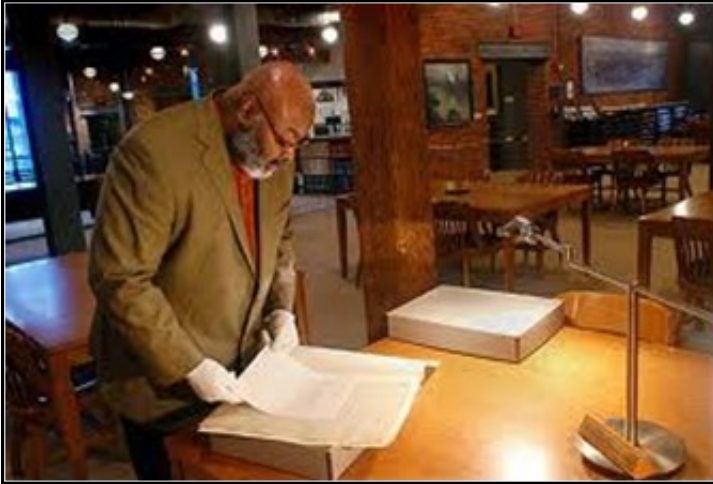
community-based arts education programs. She also worked with innovative organizations that have helped creative young people acquire new-media literacy.

From 1977 to 1990, Claudine Brown held several positions at The Brooklyn Museum: museum educator (1977-1982), manager of school and community programs (1982-1984) and assistant director for government and community relations (1985).

In addition to working in the museum and philanthropy

communities, she has served for more than 20 years as a faculty advisor and instructor in the Leadership in Museum Education Program at Bank Street Graduate School of Education in New York City, giving her the opportunity to work with some of the pre-eminent museum evaluators, educators and thinkers in the field. Brown earned her bachelor's degree from Pratt Institute in New York City and master's degree in museum education from Bank Street College of Education. She earned her law degree from Brooklyn Law School.

From the President's Desk . . .



On behalf of the African American Association of Museums, I would like to thank each of our individual and institutional members for renewing their annual memberships; your commitment to AAAM is sincerely appreciated.

Each year AAAM continues to advance its mission of supporting African and African American focused museums on a national and international level. Through our programs, we also support the museum professionals who protect, preserve and interpret African and African American art, history and culture.

The goal of AAAM is to continue to make a difference in the larger museum field but especially among our members. For those members who have not yet renewed, please do so. We look forward to having you back and seeing you in Baltimore for the annual AAAM conference.

Thanks again for your generous support of our efforts to enhance the African American museum field.

Samuel W. Black
 Senator John Heinz History Center
 President AAAM
 Phone: 412-454-6391
 Email: black@blackmuseums.org

Are you a Member?

As the oldest organization advocating on behalf of African American professionals and museums, AAAM has proven itself vital to those engaged in this work. The opportunity to network with colleagues while advancing the field, our institutions, our galleries, and centers remains invaluable. Newly instituted membership fee structures will broaden the reach of AAAM while bringing us together as a community of museum professionals. A two-year option is currently offered for individuals and institutions; the institutional rate is based on annual budgets. Retirees wishing to maintain their membership and corporate sponsors seeking to engage the AAAM mission can also join. Members now have the option to secure a lifetime membership in AAAM, paying for that level in five \$100.00 installments. All 2012 annual meeting non-member full conference registrations will include a one year AAAM membership. Now is the time to renew an individual or institutional membership in AAAM. Visit our website at www.blackmuseums.org to download an application.



INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

Retiree	\$25	Extended (two year term)	\$45
Student	\$25	Extended (two year term)	\$45
Individual Member	\$55	Extended (two year term)	\$99
Scholar	\$65	Extended (two year term)	\$117
Trustee/Board Member	\$75	Extended (two year term)	\$135
Lifetime Individual	\$500	(payable in 5 annual installments)	

INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERSHIP (based on annual budget level)

Under \$25,000	\$125	Extended (two year term)	\$225
\$25,000 - \$100,000	\$175	Extended (two year term)	\$315
\$100,000 - \$500,000	\$300	Extended (two year term)	\$540
\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	\$500	Extended (two year term)	\$900
Over \$1,000,000	\$1,000	Extended (two year term)	\$1,800

AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP (based on annual budget level)

\$0 - \$100,000	\$125	Extended (two year term)	\$225
\$100,000 - \$500,000	\$250	Extended (two year term)	\$450
Over \$500,000	\$500	Extended (two year term)	\$900

CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP

Corporate Membership	\$1000
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