



“The Princess is running late...”

Balancing Collections Care & University Administration

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Anthropology Museum at NIU

- Founded in 1964 to support faculty research
- 12,000 piece ethnographic collection
- Collections stewardship
- Museum Studies
- Exhibits driven by museum, faculty, & students
- Opened new museum and partially upgraded collections storage in 2012



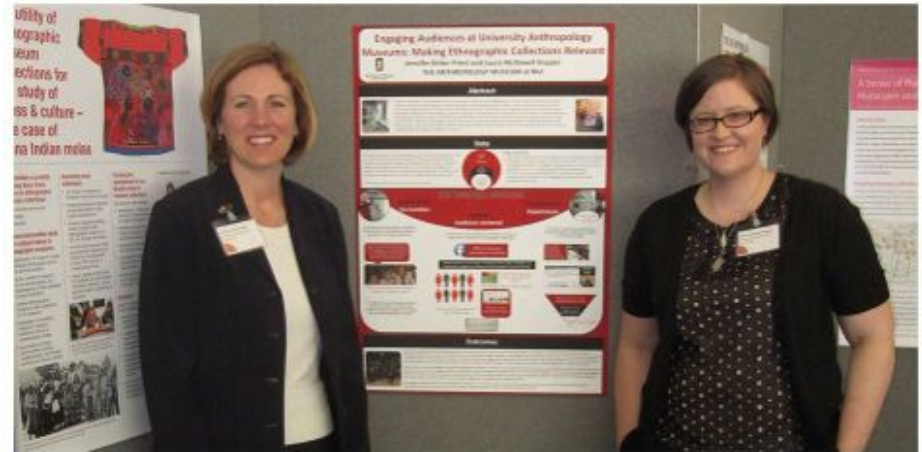
Northern Illinois University

- Founded 1895
- 60 miles west of Chicago
- Over 25,000 students
- 57 undergraduate majors
- 80 graduate programs, including Museum Studies Certificate
- 4,648 Faculty/Staff employees, including **1000+ administrators**



Anthropology Museum at NIU

- Permanent full-time staff: 2
- Graduate and undergraduate workers: 6
- Reporting structure:
Establishing advisory board,
new university president,
state of Illinois

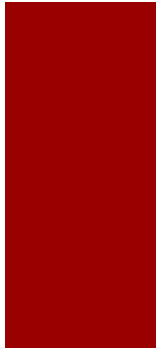


How can we raise awareness about collections care?

- Prolonged & continued education
- Invite administrators
- Work with the University
- Create opportunities!



How can we raise awareness about collections care?



Museum Collections on the Move

- 1964-2010: Museum in two buildings
- 2010: Renovation begins on Cole Hall
- 2012: New exhibit space and renovated collections storage
- **Administrative issues:** Time and Funding



Museum Collections on the Move

- **Opportunity:** Administrative tours of collections
- Deans brought new NIU President to the museum during his first month
- **Continued effort** to raise awareness about need for complete collections storage upgrade



Osteology Collections Move

- **Administrative issue:** Move 40,000 bones in one week!
- **Opportunity:** Anthropology Department secured a new classroom
- **Working with the University:** When Anthropology Building reopens, the Museum will petition to keep the classroom



The “15 Minute Exhibit”

Thai Cultures at NIU

- September 18 2013, the Princess of Thailand visits NIU
- **Opportunity:** Showcase nearly 50 of the museum’s finest Thai objects to Thai royalty, the university president, board of trustees, and administrators
- **Administrative issues:**
Scheduling!



A Royal Donation

- The Princess DID view the exhibit and talked about collections care with museum staff!
- **Big payoff:** A possible royal donation to NIU's collection
- **Administrative awareness:** NIU's new president has visited the Anthropology Museum three times during his first month



The Kicker?

“We also suffer from the need to re-educate new university administration at the drop of a hat. Terms for provosts don’t have a nice regular schedule as the terms of board chairs usually do in private museums. Provosts can change suddenly, and we must be ready to educate a new administrator on an unpredictable schedule. It’s just part of the job...In a large public university, representing disciplines from accountancy and anesthesiology to zoology and everything in between, the understanding of the museum’s role is not automatic.”

-Straight Talk on Building a Positive Relationship with University Administration, Lyndel King, Frederick R Weisman Art Museum at the University of Minnesota

Thank you!

