Now Tell Me About It

I

n the nearly 25 years I have been associated with the Exploratorium, I have been involved in helping science centers get started around the world. One thing the work has taught me is how great a role cultural assumptions play in our institutions. This is true not only in how we design our exhibits and programs, but also in how we staff them.

In Venezuela and Brazil, where we worked in the 1980s, familiar Exploratorium exhibits took on new life as museums made them their own. In Caracas, staff at the Museo de los Niños insisted that their exhibits be brightly colored. In Rio de Janeiro, at the Espacio Ciencia Viva, designers of an exhibit on AIDS included living sperm samples donated each night by the museum’s guard; this was far more explicit than anything we could have done in San Francisco. And in Rio, too, exhibits we had conceived as “stand-alone,” solitary experiences were set up more like activity tables, with one explainer assigned to every two or three exhibits.

Observations like these started me wondering: How do staff members shape museums? And how do they reflect and generate the variety of cultural perspectives we all have? In 1998–99, I got a chance to explore these questions in a study I did at Yapollo, the national science center of Trinidad and Tobago. My focus was on staff’s perceptions of—and expectations about—what they did and what they thought was going on in the science center.

Science as social interaction

Yapollo had started with a traveling exhibition that staffers set up in schools and shopping malls. In 1997, organizers obtained a building in Port of Spain and opened a science center that included the original traveling exhibits, plus new ones they built for the permanent site.

When I arrived the next year, I noticed immediately that the floor arrangement was unlike that at the Exploratorium. Exhibits were set up so that more than half the floor space remained free for group activities. This was a conscious arrangement. Staff told me that activities worked better than exhibits, and that social interaction was where the engagement with ideas happened. For them, interactivity involved interaction not just with the phenomena but also with the people around the phenomena. Both had equal weight.

One of the senior demonstrators told me: “Our activity side—that’s very popular with kids. Everything on that side excites them.... And the floor, well, the excitement is much less. They enjoy it however they can—[whether] it’s to get some more science that they know, or just to play around with the exhibits.”

It is telling that, to enforce good behavior, Yapollo staff had only to mention that an offender would be separated from his or her group for five minutes; the children considered this a dire consequence.

Science center staff also equated an understanding of science with being able to communicate it. In describing
how his enjoyment of conversation fit with teaching science, another demonstrator said to me: “I’m that kind of person. I like to talk. Science is good for that kind of people skills.”

Even exhibit labels became a vehicle for social interaction at Yapollo, as demonstrators first encouraged students to read the text and then engaged them in questions about their learning. Such back-and-forth exchanges were common. After giving an explanation at an exhibit, a demonstrator would often say to a student, “OK, now you tell me,” and the student would talk through an explanation, step by step, with assistance from the staff person.

During my time at Yapollo, I rarely saw an exhibit with just one person using it. Mostly I would see guided activity, involving an explainer and several members of the public. In contrast to the emphasis that U.S. science centers tend to place on free-choice environments, Yapollo’s staff believed that guided activity was more important than free choice, and the right to participate was key.

The science center’s director of education drew the following distinction for me, after hearing my description of how exhibits are used in San Francisco: “At the Exploratorium, it’s a visitor’s choice to go to an exhibit. If they don’t go to that exhibit, they’ve just lost that privilege of knowing that. Whereas at an activity, they are directly faced with doing the thing to the end, from beginning to end. And they participate in all its parts. With an exhibit, it may be there for them to use, but the visitors may not use it.”

**Stand-alone vs. stand-along**

In Brazil and in Trinidad, the social aspect of exhibits and programs is not a secondary add-on; it’s part of the whole. In the United States, our emphasis on individualism is reflected in exhibit design and in the kinds of human interaction you see on the floor. The exhibits we consider most effective are those that need the least mediation and teaching.

Of course, we do have some exhibits, such as the Exploratorium’s classic Everyone Is You and Me, that invite social interaction, but many of our exhibit areas are filled with computer screens and other displays that can be used by only one or two visitors at a time. Even if the subject matter is something people might like to observe and discuss together, the design may frustrate conversation.

Cultural differences also influence how many staff members are used on the floor and what they are expected to do. For example, in contrast to having one facilitator for every three to five exhibits, as they do in Brazil and Trinidad, U.S. science centers commonly have one for every 15 to 20 exhibits (or less).

The Explainer program at the Exploratorium got its start when founder Frank Oppenheimer visited the Palais de la Découverte, in Paris. At the Palais, they’ve had staff on the floor since the museum opened in 1937. Their mediateurs scientifiques are formal, white-coated graduate students in science who do demonstrations and stay in one gallery area.

Oppenheimer saw the advantage of having people on the floor, but he altered the plan for his new science museum. In San Francisco, the Explainers are not required to have formal science backgrounds, and they are encouraged to wander freely on the floor. (For more on the Explainers’ responsibilities, see “Playful Attention: The Role of the Explainer,” page 6).

**Accounting for culture**

Of course, becoming aware of cultural assumptions isn’t just about marveling at our many differences. It’s also about becoming smarter regarding how those differences influence us. Distinctions like those I have described above have implications for today’s societies, where many cultures mingle together.

As we work to attract new audiences to our science centers, including audiences that may place a higher emphasis on social interaction, we need to take that cultural aspect into account. We must look at the exhibits and experiences we have on the floor, and see what we could offer that would reflect different cultural values and emphasis—and thus be more inviting to more visitors.

One size doesn’t fit all. It will take creative use of many different approaches if we are to succeed, as Eric Jolly urged us at ASTC 2001, in “making the unknown known.”

**Recommended reading**


Sally Duensing is director of the Center for Informal Learning and Schools at the University of California–Santa Cruz. Previously, she held the Collier Chair in Public Understanding of Science at the University of Bristol, U.K.

Timely Transition:

Floor Staff as Agents of Institutional Growth

By Luigia DeDivitiis

The Scientific Center of Kuwait (TSCCK), located on the waterfront in the city of Salmiya, is a complex of four attractions: the Discovery Place, a hands-on science center targeted at children under 14 and their families; the Aquarium, the largest in the Middle East, focusing on environmental education; the 3-D IMAX Theatre, the only large-screen theater in the region; and the Dhow Harbor, home to seven historic sailing ships of Kuwait and the Arabian Gulf.

The nearly 80,000-square-meter science center was a gift to the nation from the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science (KFAS). Founded in 1976, KFAS is a private institution dedicated to promoting science research and the public understanding of science and technology in Kuwait and the rest of the Arab world. It is funded by all Kuwaiti shareholding companies.

When TSCCK opened in 2000, the linchpin of its educational programming was the Explainer program, which was largely centered in Discovery Place and the Aquarium. With no Kuwaiti base of expertise to draw from, KFAS hired an American firm to manage startup and the first year of operations. Education professionals were put in charge of the Discovery Place department, but all of the Explainers were local.

Many of these young men and women, new graduates from university in various disciplines, had never even visited an interactive science museum, but they were soon enthusiastically staffing one. They engaged families, school groups, adults, and other visitors in the learning experience through careful questioning. They played with children in the Young Learner Zone. They added content and nuance to exhibit interactions. They ran the planetarium shows in Starship Kuwait. They challenged visitors at the Aquarium to notice details about the fish, and they oversaw the proper handling of the sea creatures in the Touch Pool. The Explainers became a hit with visitors and the media; local papers carried their pictures and stories.

A time of transition

In every new science center, there comes a moment when the initial rush of excitement is over, the attendance drops off a bit, and staff start to wonder what's next. It was no different for TSCCK. Having embraced and met the challenges of opening and of learning their craft, the Explainers began to show symptoms of burnout. They were seeing only the same old exhibit in front of them, not the new visitor interacting with the exhibit.

Fortunately, they also saw potential for improvement in their daily activities. Recognizing that the moment had come for more internal input, management encouraged Explainers to consider and comment on everything at TSCCK, from the systems for handling classes to the content of the programs to the quality of the exhibits. The initial simple structure of the organization, in which the bulk of the education staff had one job, "explaining," came into question. Within one year of opening, specific functions were identified, a new staff hierarchy was developed, and leaders among the Explainers were promoted into new positions as Senior Explainers or Coordinators.

The transition continued as chairman and operating director Miqbil Almutawa adjusted the science center's organizational structure to reflect the new situation and promoted teamwork and staff development. I was hired in February 2001 as director of Discovery Place and Education.

The Coordinator positions were modified to include enrichment programs, and they were given substance and specificity. As the Explainer function evolved and became more "program driven," it added richness and diversity to visitors' learning experiences. Explainers began to play a role...
in the development of new programs, demonstrations, and cart activities. They grew from receivers of information and solutions to participants in planning. Their day became more varied, and they had more influence on how it was structured.

Today, through regular meetings and joint projects, Seniors and Coordinators collaborate with Explainers to ensure that the ones who actually staff special events, deliver weekend enrichment programs, and manage school visits remain informed and involved in the projects. Coordinators take turns as floor managers during Explainers’ shifts, improving the connection between the visitor and the explaining function. This frees the Seniors for their responsibilities in staff training and development and special events, and it ensures that Coordinators remain close to the education department’s core functions.

Everyone in TSCK’s education department—from the director on down—was, or is, an Explaner. Everyone shares the same grounded understanding of core programs and processes. Explainers know that their ideas will be heard, understood, and respected, even if they are not necessarily implemented. Importantly, sharing the same practical understanding of the job enables us to solve problems collectively, as TSCK strives to mold local solutions from existing methods in the once primarily Western field of interactive science museums.
Southern Hospitality

The weather may have been unpredictable, but the mood was undampened as 1,550 science museum professionals and friends of informal science education gathered in Charlotte, North Carolina, for the 2002 ASTC Annual Conference.

Hosts for the October 10-15 gathering were John Mackay and the hardworking staff of Discovery Place. From the cheerful banners at the airport and dancing on the "beach" at Saturday’s Open House to the energetic cloggers at Sunday’s banquet and Monday’s margaritas on the Terrace, their North Carolina hospitality was warm and welcoming.

Our hearty thanks, also, to the 146 science center volunteers who worked at the Convention Center, handling registrations, distributing evaluations, and otherwise toiling anonymously to make ASTC 2002 a success. With 140 exhibitors and more than 140 sessions, the conference had something for everyone.

High marks went to three innovations this year: the IBM/TryScience Internet Café, the Monday day trips to science centers, and the relaxing back massages offered in ASTC’s Resource Center.

A global gathering

ASTC 2002, “Access the Future,” was a truly international event, attracting 159 participants from 30 countries beyond the United States. Attendees came from as far away as Ecuador, Ghana, and Nepal. Once again, Canada led the non-U.S. contingent, with 59 registrants, but for the first time the second-largest delegation, 17 registrants, was from the People’s Republic of China.

Fifteen of the 17 were members of a special program on the Public Understanding of Science, sponsored by the U.S. National Science Foundation. Their visit to the United States, which also included stops in St. Paul and Boston, mirrored a trip to China and Japan made by 16 representatives of U.S. science organizations in 2000 (see ASTC Notes, ASTC Dimensions, March/April 2001).

China is embarking on a new phase of science museum development. More than 2 million people visit one of 24 science centers in China each year; in 2001, 11 new museums were built, and nine older museums were renovated.

The Chinese delegation, led by Dr. Wang Jie, professor of mathematics and vice president of the National Natural Science Foundation of China, included professors, senior museum staff, and representatives from major science organizations in China. They came to the ASTC conference to promote exchange and cooperation.

While in Charlotte, members of the delegation presented a Sunday morning session on current public understanding of science and research in China and participated in a Monday workshop/roundtable discussion with representatives of U.S. science centers. Proposed collaborations included sharing expertise for developing traveling exhibitions and arranging for staff exchanges and summer youth camps for students.

Already in process are two joint projects: a traveling exhibition, Dragon Skies: Astronomy of Imperial China, being organized by Chabot Space & Science Center, Oakland, California, in conjunction with the Beijing Ancient Observatory and the Sushou Institute of Ancient Astronomy and Timekeeping, and the China-U.S. Virtual Science Center, a web site featuring interactive, Internet-based IT applications. The latter is a collaboration of the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History, Texas A&M University, and the Chinese Academy of Science.


Conference speakers challenge and inspire

Guest speakers are always a highlight of conference, and this year’s roster of two keynote and nine session speakers provided especially rich food for discussion.

Saturday’s keynoter was journalist Ray Suarez, senior correspondent on public television’s “The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer.” Drawing parallels
Keynote speakers Eric Jolly, left, and Ray Suarez linked changes in today’s communities, schools, and cultural life to new challenges for science centers. Photos by Megan Hull

between his discipline and the work of science centers—both must “leave things out” of the story, both share an enthusiasm for technology, and both face audiences increasingly content to do without their product—Suarez called on museums to do better than television has in promoting science.

“Serious science reporting on television is almost nonexistent,” he said, “pushed to the margins by the far more sponsor-friendly ‘health news.’” In a complex world, Suarez noted, museums are positioned to make a difference in science literacy, especially for children who lack other support systems, but only if they remain true to their mission. “Be credible and authoritative,” he urged. “Science should be hard. Science demands patience, precision, curiosity, and engagement.” Museums should aspire to no less.

In his Sunday keynote, Eric Jolly, vice president of the Education Development Center, sketched a picture of America as a place of rapid demographic change, a place where only 23 percent of the people understand media reports on science, and where the rapidly growing youth population among minority groups is putting additional pressure on struggling schools. Jolly called on science centers to embrace “engagement, capacity, and continuity”—taking a proactive approach to new audiences, increasing the rigor of their science content, and committing themselves to institutional opportunities that support advancement. “The questions we ask shape the answers we get,” Jolly said. “It’s time to ask different questions.”

Also offering insight and inspiration to appreciative audiences were, among others, Judith Ramaley, of the National Science Foundation; Anna-María Rivas McGowan, of NASA; Beverly Cureton, of the Joe Martin Institute of Race Relations; and Lemelson Center speakers Robert and Michele Root-Bernstein, researchers into the roots of innovation. Tapes of their presentations, and those of the other guest speakers, are available from Convention Recordings International (see opposite page).

Peterson, Cardiac team honored

At Sunday’s banquet, the association awarded its highest honor, the ASTC Fellow Award for Outstanding Contribution, to James L. Peterson, president and CEO of the Science Museum of Minnesota (SMM), St. Paul.

The award cited Peterson for “the leadership and guidance that he generously provides, the capacity for turning vision into reality that he modestly demonstrates, and the commitment to equity and diversity that he faithfully champions.” The occasion marked the 20th presentation of the fellow award. (A complete listing of past winners is available in the Members pages at www.astc.org.)

A former teacher and an administrator at Philadelphia’s Academy of Natural Sciences, Peterson took on the leadership role at SMM in 1984. Under his guidance, the museum’s annual budget has doubled, from $9.5 million to $19 million. SMM has produced four IMAX films and received more than 55 federal grants. Membership has climbed to 27,000 households, and full-time staffing has increased from 94 to 213. In 1999, SMM opened a new $99.6 million facility on the bluffs of the Mississippi River.

Peterson has also worked tirelessly on behalf of the science center field. A former member of ASTC’s board of directors and president of the association from 1993 to 1995, he currently co-chairs ASTC’s Equity and Diversity Committee. He also sits on the Accreditation Commission of the American Association of Museums and is a member of the National Science Foundation’s Advisory Committee for the Education and Human Resources Directorate.

Also honored at the banquet was Liberty Science Center’s Live from Cardiac Classroom team, 2002 winners of the Award for Innovation (see ASTC Notes, ASTC Dimensions, September/October 2002). Accepting the award from cosponsor Clear Channel—Exhibitions’s Stacy King were team members Tim McElroy, Stuart Pepose, and William Tansey.

Advocates, alumni join Conference Fellows

The third year of the ASTC Conference Fellow Program, Promoting Dialogues on Diversity, continued previous development opportunities for U.S. museum professionals of color while adding
two new features. At the suggestion of the Equity and Diversity Committee, each of the 10 Conference Fellows was asked to bring an "advocate," a senior staff member from his or her institution. In addition, a new category of participant, Alumni Conference Fellow, was added this year.

ASTC’s Partnerships for Learning worked closely with coach and consultant Lisa Martinez to design and facilitate this year's workshop. The Conference Fellows, Alumni, and advocates worked together to refine their understanding of systems thinking as it relates to organizations like science centers. Each team took away a copy of ASTC’s new video and discussion guide, “Eric Jolly: On Sustainable Diversity,” to share with those leading diversity efforts in their institutions.

The 2002 Conference Fellows (advocates’ names in parentheses) were:
- Inés V. Alcazar, Discover Room Supervisor, California Science Center (Jacques Bordeaux)
- Kenn Burnett, Human Resources & Volunteer Services Coordinator, Reuben H. Fleet Science Center (Craig Blower)
- Sarah Flores, Manager of Education Services, Witte Museum (Lynee Christopher)
- Wesley Fondal Jr., Director, Starbase Robins Program, Museum of Aviation, Flight & Technology (Wayne Schmidt)
- Regina Hall, Education Exhibit Coordinator, Cincinnati Museum Center (John Fleming)
- Judy U. Henry, Technology Specialist, Miami Museum of Science (Angelo Gonzalez)
- Rosita Elizabeth House, Events Coordinator, Whitaker Center for Science and the Arts (no advocate)
- Armando X. Orduña, Outreach Coordinator, Children’s Museum of Houston (Cheryl McCallum)
- Lita Sandoval, Visitor Services Coordinator, Lodestar Astronomy Center (David Beiling)
- Fabienne Taylor, Coordinator, Interpretive Resources, Fairchild Tropical Garden (Carolann Baldaya).

The Alumni Conference Fellows were Jody Anderson, Cheronda Frazier, and Charlie Silva.

To benefit the ASTC Conference Fellows program and raise awareness of the Equity & Diversity Initiative, ASTC held its first annual International Dance party on Sunday, October 13. The 200 ticket holders, some attired in 1970s dress, enjoyed Spanish flamenco and Korean fan dance lessons and boogied the night away, raising $4,400 for next year’s program. Our thanks to event sponsor Conferon and door-prize donors the Hilton Charlotte & Towers, the AT&T Foundation, Borders Books, and Armando Orduña.

A vote of thanks

Each year, delegate registrations cover only a portion of the costs of the annual conference. Once again, we owe a round of applause to the generous sponsors who make up the difference. In 2002, they included IBM and TryScience; the Charlotte Observer; Natural History Magazine, Inc.; Sodexho; Visual Impressions; K’NEX; Buena Vista Pictures Distribution; the Howard Hughes Medical Institute Grants and Special Programs; Illusionworks; Jeff Kennedy Associates Inc.; SimEx! lverks; Snapshot Profiling; and Spitz Inc. Thanks to you all!

Conference tapes on sale

Audio recordings of many of the 2002 ASTC Annual Conference sessions are available from Convention Recordings International Inc., 6983 Sunset Drive South, St. Petersburg, FL 33707/727/345-8288; fax 727/345-8494. An order form is posted in pdf format at www.astc.org; go to “ASTC Annual Conference” and click on 2002. Tapes are $9 each; 16 for $125, plus shipping.

The following new members were approved by ASTC’s Membership Committee in October 2002. Contact information is available in the Members section of the ASTC web site, www.astc.org.

- Sharjah Science Museum, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. Opened in 1996, the only hands-on science center in the U.A.E. covers biology, physics, chemistry, mechanics, electricity, astronomy, and electronics.

SUSTAINING MEMBERS
- Boston Productions Inc., Norwood, Massachusetts
- Innovation Network, Ardmore, Pennsylvania
- Lifeformations, Bowling Green, Ohio
- TERC, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
A 60-foot dome soars over the newly renovated Fels Planetarium, at Philadelphia’s Franklin Institute

Photo courtesy The Franklin Institute

STARSTRUCK—A new journey to the stars has begun at the Fels Planetarium in Philadelphia. The completely renovated planetarium, a highlight of the Franklin Institute since 1933, celebrated its grand reopening on October 25, 2002.

The new Fels showcases a seamless, 60-foot-diameter aluminum dome designed by Spitz Inc., with four overlapping projectors and an 11,000-watt digital sound system. The wheelchair-accessible planetarium is equipped with radio frequency headphones and RearWindow captioning for visitors with hearing impairments. Its opening show, Oasis in Space, highlights these technical capabilities, taking visitors on a journey through our solar system and beyond in search of water and “water worlds” like Earth.

In conjunction with the planetarium’s debut, the Fels opened Space Command, a new permanent exhibition based on life on a space station. Thirty interactive exhibits allow visitors to learn more about low earth-orbit environments; try on real space gear; use satellite positioning to locate their homes and recapture a lost space probe; take a trip through the history of space research; and more.

The 10-month, $1.8 million renovation of the planetarium was made possible by support from the Samuel S. Fels Fund; the lead benefactor and presenting sponsor for Space Command is Lockheed Martin. Both projects are components of the Franklin Institute’s $50 million Opening Young Minds campaign, a series of nine new

exhibitions, plus major institutional renovations, scheduled to open at the museum through 2006.

Details: Evan Welsh, ewelsch@fi.edu; www.fi.edu

COMMUNITY EFFORT—Bilingual education takes center stage in Proyecto Futuro, an outreach program launched in the 2002–2003 school year by the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science (NMMNHS), in partnership with the Albuquerque Public Schools.

Through the program, the museum seeks to foster school and community interest in hands-on/inquiry learning. Components include teacher professional development; dissemination of K-8 curriculum materials in Spanish and English, and a series of parent/child workshops and family nights at the museum.

At an introductory teacher workshop in September, five teachers from each participating school conducted hands-on science and math activities, relating them to grade-level curriculum. Each school received two bilingual manuals and two kits of science materials. Teachers can participate in three ongoing workshops offered during the school year.

Three three-hour bilingual workshops held at NMMNHS during the school year will allow participating parents to explore hands-on science, receive a take-home kit of activities, and meet other parents, while their children take part in planned activities in small groups. Two additional Family Museum Nights will offer parents and children a chance to tour the museum, visit the planetarium and Naturalist Center and try hands-on activities. Each program includes dinner and optional transportation.

Currently in use in five states and the District of Columbia, Proyecto Futuro is funded by the National Science Foundation and the General Mills Foundation.

Details: Maddie Zeigler, mzeigler@nmmnh.state.nm.us; http://museums.state.nm.us/nmmnh/

PRIMATE TIME—For science centers that book the IMAX film Jane Goodall’s Wild Chimpanzees, Science North, in Sudbury, Ontario, Canada, offers an opportunity to extend the experience with its new 6,000-square-foot traveling exhibition, Discovering Chimpanzees: The Remarkable World of Jane Goodall.

The exhibition is in four parts. Entering through a simulated grove from Tanzania’s Gombe National Forest, visitors encounter The Work of Jane Goodall, a recreation of the famous researcher’s first home and research station, and learn through artifacts, videos, and an object theater about the history of her work and the chimpanzee family she studied for 40 years. In the area called Primates, visitors learn about the basics of primate anatomy and where these animals live in the world. In the Chimp Forest, they are invited to “Be a Chimp,” experiencing activities of daily primate life like walking, nesting, vocalization, and feeding. The experience concludes with “Reasons to Hope,” an interactive exhibit about Goodall’s recent work that emphasizes the need for preservation.

Discovering Chimpanzees is at the Cincinnati Museum Center, Cincinnati, Ohio, through February; the exhibition will tour through 2007.

In Discovering Chimpanzees, two visitors learn to “walk like a chimp,” with the help of wooden arm extensions. Photo courtesy Science North
Grants & Awards

On October 29, 2002, the Institute of Museum and Library Services completed its annual round of grants and awards by presenting its National Awards for Museum and Library Service. These awards were created in 1994 to honor outstanding institutional commitment and innovative approaches to public service.

The three museum winners for 2002 included two ASTC members: the Bronx Zoo/Wildlife Conservation Society, New York City, recognized for its After-School Adventures in Wildlife Science, a partnership with Hones for the Homeless to provide families with instruction in science and life skills; and Philadelphia’s Please Touch Museum, for its Family Court Project, a program to brighten the experience of children and noncustodial parents participating in supervised Sunday visits at the court with art exhibits and creative art activities. (The third museum winner was the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art, Loretto, Pennsylvania.)

The awards were presented at a White House colloquium hosted by first lady Laura Bush. Also attending were representatives from last year’s winners, whose ceremony was canceled after September 11. All three museums chosen in 2001 were ASTC members: They are the Children’s Discovery Museum, San Jose, California; the Miami Museum of Science, Florida; and the New England Aquarium, Boston. In addition, Jeffrey Patches, president and CEO of the Children’s Museum of Indianapolis, a 1997 winner, was a 2002 colloquium presenter.

The Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, Portland, has received $1.82 million from the National Science Foundation to support development of a new interactive technology exhibition. The grant will cover renovations to OMSI’s Technology Hall, as well as a series of hands-on exhibits, computer simulations, audio and video components, and artifacts.

ASTC has received a one-year grant of $74,000 from the American Honda Foundation for the Today’s Youth, Tomorrow’s Teachers program (TY→T), headed by DeAnna Banks Beane. The program is intended to attract more young people from underrepresented populations into science education. An additional $10,000 award from Rockwell Collins represents TY→T’s first corporate gift.
Margie Marino, former exhibit development manager at Colorado's Denver Museum of Nature & Science, has joined ASTC's staff as manager of Exhibition Services. (See page 3 for her article, written with Judy Koke, on the impact of floor staff on museum visitors.)

Renee Rice has joined the Museum of Life and Science, Durham, North Carolina, as vice president of resource development. Rice was previously associate director for corporate foundation relations at North Carolina State University.

Ioannis N. Miaoulis, formerly associate provost and dean of Tufts University's School of Engineering, is the new president and director of the Museum of Science, Boston. During his 15 years at Tufts, Miaoulis significantly increased the number of female engineering students and faculty and more than doubled the school's research initiatives. He has been actively involved with elementary and secondary education as well, and currently chairs the Massachusetts Technology/Engineering Advisory Board. Miaoulis replaces David Ellis, who has retired after 12 years with the museum.

Brent D. Glass has been appointed director of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History, Behring Center (NMAH). Previously executive director of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Glass is known for his scholarship in the history of industry and technology, cities, and cultural organizations. He succeeds Marc Pachter, director of the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery, who had served as acting director of NMAH since November 2001.

The new director of the Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware, is George J. Vogt. A former director of the Wisconsin Historical Society, Vogt replaces Glenn Porter, who retired after 26 years at the museum.

The EcoTarium, Worcester, Massachusetts, has named Alexander Goldowsky director of museum programs and exhibits. Goldowsky, an environmental educator, comes to the museum from the New England Aquarium in Boston.

The new president of the Kirkpatrick Science and Air Space Museum at Omniplex, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, is Max L. Ary. Known for his work in space artifact restoration, Ary was president/CEO of the Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center, Hutchinson, for 27 years.

The Science Center of Connecticut, Hartford, announces the promotion of former executive vice president and chief operating officer Edward Forand to president/CEO.

We report with regret the death on October 26, 2002, of R.M. Chakraborti, former director general of India's National Council of Science Museums (NCSM). A past chairman of the Indian National Committee of ICOM and founding director of the Nehru Science Centre in Mumbai, Dr. Chakraborti was a guiding force in many NCSM projects.