2020 ANNUAL REPORT
THE CHARLES H. WRIGHT MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY
THE WRIGHT THRIVES BECAUSE OF YOU.
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## 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

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LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

As you know, this year marks the 55th year since The Wright was founded and I must say, this invaluable resource of knowledge and understanding has truly achieved its mission of opening minds and changing lives. At the same time, working with my colleagues to preserve the integrity of this institution, we know there remains much more work to do.

The past year has presented a variety of unique challenges, not only for the museum, but for Metro Detroit, the nation and across the globe. Despite devastating losses of life and dire financial straits compounded throughout the year, we continue to band together in an effort to sustain and grow the impact of The Wright.

As we adjust to meet the needs of the times, one thing remains constant – the museum serves as a sacred space and institution intent on bringing communities together. While some choose to visit in person and others participate online, the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History is still a place of meaning, of memory and of possibilities.

Nobody knows how long the ripple effect of this pandemic will last, but we are determined to push forward with the excellence that you, as engaged supporters of The Wright, expect. Thank you for your ongoing dedication to our mission as we explore, celebrate and present African American History and Culture together.

Eric Peterson
Board Chair
As the world awakens to the Black Lives Matter movement and endures an election which as of this writing, continues to disenfranchise the votes of its citizens, we arrive at a moment where The Wright and its particular ability to tell the complete stories of African American people could not be more relevant or important.

In the shadow of the holiday where we pause to give thanks for all the blessings that God and our ancestors have bestowed upon us, each of us remain extremely grateful for your support as we maintain the legacy of Dr. Charles H. Wright. We are continuously committed to sharing the incredible history of our journey, both in this region, as well as its lasting effects on people of color throughout the world. In support of these efforts, this past spring, the Wright Community Advocacy and Advisory Council, chaired by Ms. Lauren Hood and the late Abdul-Musawwir Aquil, began meeting. We are excited to work with this council as it works to further align The Wright with the communities we serve.

Through a collaboration with Detroit Public Television, as well as an increase of activity onthewright.org, we began moving archived programs to our virtual platforms while also developing original virtual programming. It was during this time that we would also put the finishing touches on our Voting Matters exhibition which opened September 27th and recently won a Design Award for our design team.

In October, The Wright was named one of 20 organizations to share a $153 million America’s Cultural Treasurers initiative grant, designed to resource America’s organizations of color for long-term sustainability. This seven-figure gift will be used to create operating and capital reserves, upgrade our core exhibition - And Still We Rise - and begin the multi-year process of seeking AAM accreditation. The fund will also provide operating support to the Wright over the next four years.

Last, but certainly not least, the ongoing and diligent work of our Trustees brought in more than $600,000 throughout the year, which increased our ability to weather the pandemic. Additionally, I would like to acknowledge our Women’s and Friends committees who raised well in excess of $125,000 to support our operational efforts. Their support has meant everything to us as we soldiered on during one of the most challenging times in our history.

The coming year will see The Wright embrace new technologies, as we strive to move the museum into the digital age both online and through live streaming. We look forward to the future with a great sense of hope and optimism and invite you to join us on what promises to be an exciting journey!

Neil A. Barclay
President & CEO
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FISCAL YEAR 2020 EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

JULY 2019
- Camp Africa Summer Concert of Colors
- Visitor Studies Association Conference Concert
- Family Activity Series Presents Family Trivia Challenge
- Freedom School Summer Vegetable Gardening Project

AUGUST
- MHC Grant Writing Workshop
- Sofrito of Cultures Community Performance
- Defending the Movement: Reflections of a People’s Lawyer
- 37th Annual African World Festival
- Meet the Scientist Saturday

SEPTEMBER
- The New York Times Magazine Presents The 1619 Project
- The State of the Union Movement: 50 Years After the LRBW
- Grandparents Day
- Genealogy and Racial Healing Project
- Getting PrEPped at The Wright
- The Statewide Uprising Against Black School Dismantling
- Blackness, Africans, & African Americans
- John Coltrane Celebration Concert
- 4th Annual Detroit Women of Color International Film Festival
- Meet the Scientist Saturday

OCTOBER
- The Wright Gala 2019 Masquerade Ball
- Humanities & Technology Lecture
- 160th Anniversary of the Harpers Ferry Raid
- Two-Day Celebration of John Brown
- Harvest Festival at The Wright
- Detroit Teachers Professional Development Symposium
- How To Be An Antiracist featuring Dr. Ibram X. Kendi
- Sustainable Detroit Forum 2019 Meet The Scientist Saturday
- Pamela Wise Ensemble Presents “A New Message From the Tribe”

NOVEMBER
- Detroit Independent Freedom School: Fall Semester
- Water Story Youth Workshop
- Family Activity Series
- Green Museum Town Hall
- Nu Omega Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. Presents African-American Males in the Community: What We Can Do to Serve
- A Sonic Decolonization of Mind From Native Son to Native Song: A Conversation
- Detroit Independent Freedom School: Fall Semester
- Annual Meeting of Members
- Noel Night
- 50th Anniversary of the Assassination of Fred Hampton
- Inaugural Celebration of Dr. Carter G. Woodson’s Birthday
- Kwanzaa

DECEMBER
- Detroit Independent Freedom School: Fall Semester
- Annual Meeting of Members
- Noel Night
- 50th Anniversary of the Assassination of Fred Hampton
- Inaugural Celebration of Dr. Carter G. Woodson’s Birthday
- Kwanzaa

JANUARY 2020
- 30 Days to Lose It! Season 10
- 20th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day Breakfast & Celebration
- QUEEN Voices Lecture Series

FEBRUARY
- Celebrating Dr. Carter G. Woodson
- Visions of Detroit Exhibition Reception
- Family Activity Series
- Gone to the Village Documentary Screening
- Adinkra Linocut Print Workshop
- Griots of the Cloth Sewing Collaborative
- Detroit Association of Black Storytellers Fest
- The Vincent Chandler Experience Jazz Concert
The Potential Power in the Conscious Black Vote
Liberation Film Series
Dance Theater of Harlem at 50: Past, Present, & Future of Equality
Meet the Scientist Saturday
The QUEEN Exhibition: A Conversation with CCH Pounder
30 Days to Lose It! Season 10
QUEEN Voices Lecture Series

MARCH
The Osiris Papers
Adinkra Linocut Print Workshop
We Found Hip Hop Presents Women In Hip Hop Showcase
Cuban Literature in the Age of Black Insurrection - Canceled due to COVID-19
Women’s History Month: Honoring Honorable Women - Canceled due to COVID-19
We Want Our Bodies Back Book Tour & Celebration - Canceled due to COVID-19
30 Days to Lose It! Season 10 - Canceled due to COVID-19
QUEEN Voices Lecture Series - Canceled due to COVID-19

APRIL
Family Activity Series - Canceled due to COVID-19
Logotherapy: Finding the Meaning of Life - Canceled due to COVID-19
MSU SciCon 2020 - Canceled due to COVID-19
Repeal the Third Grade Reading Statute - Canceled due to COVID-19
Who’s Afraid of the Black Indian? - Canceled due to COVID-19
30 Days to Lose It! Season 10 - Canceled due to COVID-19

MAY
Wright Now - Virtual
Malcolm X Day: Honoring Malcolm’s Enduring Legacy & Relevance - Canceled due to COVID-19
Get Free or Die Trying: Food, Clothing, & Shelter - Canceled due to COVID-19
30 Days to Lose It! Season 10 - Canceled due to COVID-19

JUNE 2020
Wright Now - Virtual
Oceans: The Phyllis Wheatley Suite Concert - Canceled due to COVID-19
A Tribute to Donald Byrd - Canceled due to COVID-19
Sounds of Freedom: The Art & Music of Charlie Parker - Virtual
A Critique of “Who Killed Malcolm X?” - Canceled due to COVID-19
30 Days to Lose It! Season 10 - Canceled due to COVID-19
Remembering Charlie Parker at the Griot Lounge
CHWM collaboration on Juneteenth Rally and event sponsored by City of Detroit
CHWM National Juneteenth Event with other African American Museums
The Wright Museum’s Education Department has proven to be a dynamic learning environment that supports the Museum’s mission."

**IN 2019**

The Wright Education team reached outside of museum walls to provide community groups with pop-up exhibitions focused on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the Underground Railroad. Speaking opportunities for educators grew during Black History and Women’s History month, including a stop at Homeland Security and Border Protection. The QUEEN VOICES series featured author Bridget M. Davis and engineer and entrepreneur Camilla Rice. When school tours were halted in the Spring, the Department made the transition to virtual learning, developing relationships with schools such as Muskegon Heights Academy School District to provide professional development and African American centered curriculum.

**IN 2020**

In partnership with Professor Stacey Deering of Wayne State University, The Wright’s Education Team hosted a BLACK VOTERS MATTER event on ZOOM to discuss issues such as gerrymandering and the electoral college. For those seeking a virtual tour of the museum, our team is actively researching and producing audio, video and podcast segments focused on key themes within our thought-provoking AND STILL WE RISE exhibition.

**A LOOK AHEAD**

The goal for the Education Department is to expand training in Culturally Relevant Instruction and Critical Literacy. Building on the success of our VOTING MATTERS exhibition, a Gallery Guide Mobile App is being designed, which will allow visitors within and outside of the museum to access collections and exhibits on their cell phones!

*Reggie Woolery, MPS, Director of Education*
Our mission is committed not only to preserving Black history and culture, but also to protecting the earth in the present and future. In the fight for climate justice and action, we are leading the vanguard of 21st - Century museums, so that everyone can see that they have a stake in and can contribute to environmental preservation.

FISCAL 2019/2020 ACTIVITIES

The Sustainability Department designed and constructed several Green Stormwater Infrastructure projects:

- **Warren Circle:** includes a 70-foot Sankofa Permeable Pavers off Warren Circle, where the beak of the Sankofa points to the entry of The Wright indicating, “The journey starts here.”
- **Employee Parking Lot:** Parking spaces were designed with permeable pavers where all striping was done with two tones so we will never need to re-paint. Bicycle parking and recycle bins will also be added.
- **During the Roof Replacement project,** we preemptively installed a membrane to convert into a future GREEN roof.

All of these projects will save on our drainage fees and address extreme weather/flooding events.

NOTABLE UPDATES:

We are quickly becoming a destination and a demonstration site for the green community as we are frequently included on a number of Green Stormwater Infrastructure tours. Our CEO, Director of Education and myself recently spoke at the Association of African American Museums on a topic titled: “Creating a Model for African American Museums to Lead Environmental Justice Work.”

**The Museum has won two Awards for its Sustainability Efforts!**

- The Detroit 2030 District Leadership Award.
The Inside World: Contemporary Aboriginal Australian Memorial Poles
Dennis and Debra Scholl
JULY 18, 2019 – JANUARY 5, 2020
The exhibition was drawn from the collection of Dennis and Debra Scholl. The exhibition presented 99 beautifully designed totems created from eucalyptus trees by indigenous Australian Aborigines. The totems were originally used as caskets. When the British took over the continent of Australia, they forbade the use of trees for burials. The paintings on the totems were a way for the Aboriginal to continue their history. Many people that saw the exhibition were surprised to learn that Aboriginals are black and identify with African Americans.

Personal to Political
Celebrating the African American Artists of Paulson Fountaine Press
Bedford Gallery at the Lesher Center for the Arts
JANUARY 20, 2020 – APRIL 5, 2020
The artists of Personal to Political capture the many personal narratives and political battles of African American artists across the country, reflecting a collective experience expressed in uniquely individual ways. The exhibition included the likes of Kerry James Marshall, Martin Puryear and the Gee’s Bend quilters.
**QUEEN: From the Collection of CCH Pounder**

**JANUARY 28, 2020 – AUGUST 2, 2020**

QUEEN featured 53 Contemporary works of art by 43 African diaspora artists exploring the theme of beauty, strength, agency and dignity of Black women. This exhibition included a beautiful catalog that is still available online and in the museum store.

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**Voting Matters**

**SEPTEMBER 27, 2020 – APRIL 4, 2021**

Currently on display, Voting Matters is our newest exhibition. It opened September 27th and will run until April 2021. Voting Matters implies power and intention. The exhibition provides a 150 year historical survey of African American struggle to gain their right to vote and how we are still struggling against voter suppression.

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**Ibrahim Mahama**

**NOVEMBER 9, 2020 – DECEMBER 4, 2020**

Ibrahim Mahama’s exhibition, titled: In Between The World and Dreams, is currently on loan in partnership with the University of Michigan. It is an installation created from jute or burlap bags. The exhibition provides monuments to moments of reckoning, mending and the longevity of African people.

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“Voting Matters” is an educational presentation which foregrounds the role of African Americans in securing the right to vote in the United States. It is designed in five parts to illustrate the influential role of African Americans in the process, beginning with Pre-Reconstruction and traveling through to present day.

Patrina Chatman, Curator
The Charles H. Wright Museum has made great strides toward accomplishing its capital objectives. Below, you will find a list of projects that have been completed over the past two years. But the Museum needs to continue to invest in both large-scale capital projects and routine maintenance to ensure our facilities serve our ongoing needs.

Jeff Anderson, EVP & COO

**COMPLETED - 2019**

- **United We Stand Sculpture:** Included repairs to address graffiti, rust, scratches, water and concrete damage. Installed new signage.
- **Wright Community Gallery:** Included installing new floor, painting and lights.
- **Bollards Installation:** Included installing six new bollards at the base of the walkway at Farnsworth to eliminate parking on walkway.
- **Warren Circle:** Included redoing the entire entrance to include a blend of concrete but more importantly an artistic design of the Sankofa Permeable Paver into the center of the circle.
- **External Building Name Signage:** Included installation of the museum name on the facade of the E. Warren side of the building. The signage also illuminates.
- **First, Second Tier Flat Roof:** Included removal of the old roof components and installation of new roof with elements that will allow the museum to erect a GREEN roof in the future.
COMPLETED - 2020

- **Dome, Skylights**: Included removal of all the old sealants at each panel and replacing with silicone sealant. Replacing six (6) glass panels that were cracked. Concluded the project with a cleaning of the entire dome and skylights.

- **Wheelchair Lift**: Included replacement of the wheelchair lift. Added new lighting to the alcove on the lower level and improved the lighting on the main level. We added new directional signage.

- **Staff Kitchen**: Included new cabinetry, appliances, tile backsplash, tile flooring, automated lighting and ceiling tile.

- **Parking Lot**: Includes complete restoration of combination of concrete and pavers. New electronic gate, bicycle racks and trash units. *(project still underway)*

- **Phones, Computer Overhaul** *(project just underway)*

The following capital projects have been proposed for the coming year. Their successful completion will depend on available funding, and the cost of labor and equipment.

PROPOSED: 2021-22

- Upgrade Buildings Automation System/Freight Elevator Upgrades
- Replacing Buildings Chillers
- Convert Building System From Steam To Boilers
With a full year of new leadership in place, The Wright showed some progress toward financial stability, recording a surplus in net position of $96,331, a 109 percent turnaround from the previous fiscal year of ($1,018,940). Despite the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, revenue for the year ended June 30, 2020 only slightly decreased two percent, by $97,737. Funding from the City of Detroit remained at its historic level of $1.9 million.

As a result of the pandemic, The Wright was forced to close its doors mid-March 2020. Three and one-half months later on July 10, 2020, The Wright reopened with reduced staffing (approximately two-thirds) and reduced operating hours from being open 6 days a week to 4 days a week. During the closure, administrative operations continued. Staff took the time to develop an online presence programmatically. In addition, The Wright applied for and received during the second round an SBA Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan totaling $693,000. The loan extended a lifeline to the museum as noted by the turnaround in net position. Full forgiveness is anticipated based on Safe Harbor rules established by the SBA.

Overall, net position increased by approximately five percent, compared to a decrease of approximately thirty five percent a year ago. The Wright’s unrestricted net position increased by $19,178 from the previous year to ($1,645,080). Total expenses, excluding depreciation, decreased $1,223,025, or approximately 16 percent, due to the reduction of operating expenses as a result of the forced COVID-19 closure. Facility maintenance and contractual services were reduced in this regard as well. Other savings resulted from a successful 2019 Gala moved in-house and presented by museum staff eliminating large production costs.
**REVENUE**

**TOTAL REVENUE:** $6,363,505

- Exhibit Admissions: 256,012
- Special Events & Other: 1,074,509
- Grants: 920,168
- Contributions: 1,439,915
- Museum Store: 115,124
- Facility Rental: 504,636
- Membership: 153,201
- Grant - City of Detroit: 1,900,000

**EXPENSES**

**TOTAL EXPENSES:** $7,272,046

- Facility Operations & Maintenance: 792,280
- Contractual & Professional: 1,035,019
- Educational Programs & Exhibits: 1,378,129
- Support Services: 2,361,633
- Other Expenses: 461,860

**REVENUE COMPARISON**

**EXPENSE COMPARISON**
The Museum would like to extend its sincere appreciation to those donors who have made gifts to support our exhibitions, programming and special events. Listed here are the names of contributors who made gifts of $250 or more. Every attempt has been made to list donors accurately. If there are errors or omissions, please call (313) 494-5853 so we may correct them. Thank you!

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**$300,000 +**
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**$200,000 +**
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**$100,000 +**
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**$75,000 +**
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**$50,000 +**
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President & CEO

Patrina Chatman
Curator of Collections & Exhibitions

Reginald Woolery
Director of Education & Public Programs

Leslie Tom
Chief Sustainability Officer

Saunders J. Lee II
Senior Public Programming Coordinator
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Executive Vice President/COO

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Facility Sales Manager

Jessica Brown  
Outreach Coordinator

Annivory Calvert  
Director of Donor Stewardship

Patrina Chatman  
Curator of Collections & Exhibitions

Jerry Clinton  
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Director of Design & Fabrication

Mena Davis  
Grants Writer/Administrator

Jennifer Evans  
Assistant Curator

Takia Flowers  
Guest Services Associate

Edward Foxworth III  
Director of External Affairs

Shivani Gajjar  
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Elsa Hernandez  
Security Officer

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Executive Assistant to President

Cheryl Holley Stanton  
Engineer

Yolanda Jack  
Youth Program Coordinator

Sheneese Johnson  
Group Sales Manager

Jonathan Jones  
Museum Educator & Outreach Coordinator

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Finance Intern

Doug McCray  
Museum Educator

Quartina McKinney  
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Michelle McKinney  
Education Specialist

Georgetta Michael-gray  
Educator

Lovie Moorer III  
Building Engineer

Raina Polk  
HR Manager

Everett Robinson  
Security Officer

Sharron Rose  
Chief Financial Officer

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Ramon Sandelin  
Controller

Tracey Smith  
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Ashley Smith  
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Aundrea Stokes  
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Lloyd Tolliver  
Security Supervisor

Leslie Tom  
Chief Sustainability Officer

Arielle Wallace  
External Affairs Coordinator

Germaine Williams  
Vice President of Development

Tracey Williams  
Director of Customer Experience

Reggie Woolery  
Director of Education

Richard Yancy  
Guest Services Associate
HISTORY COMES ALIVE!

“From the exterior you can not imagine what you will discover inside. The architecture and creativity in arranging the exhibits mixed with the descriptions makes the whole history of African Americans come alive. It has been tastefully arranged, tracing the chronological history from Africa, to slavery, to modern day achievements.”

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