

Panel Session III and Table Discussions

The Power of Partnerships with Museums

Saturday, April 14

1 - 2:15 pm

Assembly Room, 4th floor Rackham

Session Abstract

The power of partnerships between research centers and science museums enables a level of education and outreach together that neither could do as well separately. While we may share the same mission, we come from "different worlds." Hence, this session will also discuss the obstacles encountered in the partnerships and how they were overcome (or not). Eric Marshall leads off discussion by summarizing results of a study of partnership modes, stages, and issues and efforts to support sharing of experiences and resources. Panelists give examples of a variety of partnership engagements and discuss outcomes and issues. All session participants are asked to consider two questions: (1) If you could take advantage of the power of partnership, what would you really like to accomplish together with a science museum? and (2) What are the obstacles you anticipate to actually doing this?

Panelists

Mel Drumm

Community partnerships have strengthened the educational offerings of the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum by providing valuable insights into current science and research being conducted at the University level for the public and regional school children. The collaborations and partnerships that founded the Museum in 1982 continue to grow and prosper today through innovative new exhibits, educational partnerships and community interaction. Obstacles abound as collaborations are often more complicated than imagined with project outcomes usually exceeding the expectations of the collaborative parties. Recent examples at the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum include demonstration devices and exhibits, workshops for regional schools and community-wide partnerships between diverse organizations.

Kate Duckworth

Ms. Duckworth will discuss NISENet (network building), NEO, and other relevant Exploratorium partnerships.

Marco Molinaro

Working with your local museums and public institutions is both challenging and rewarding. As part of a Science and Technology Center we have a lot to offer but it is not always suited for a general audience. Experiences working with small and large science centers and other venues will be discussed with examples from community events and family days.

Gary Woodard

"The Promise and Pitfalls of Partnering with Museums, Science Centers, and Other Informal Education Venues"

Partnering with museums, science centers, and other informal education venues offers access to large numbers of people primed to be both educated and entertained. To maximize the benefits from each partnership, one must closely examine the expectations and socio-

demographics of each venue's attendees, and look beyond displays and exhibits to take advantage of special events, summer camps, web sites, even the gift shop.

Recorder: Bob DeGroot