

The Michigan History Center fosters curiosity, enjoyment and inspiration rooted in Michigan's stories.



MICHIGAN HISTORY CENTER

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

Submitted by the Michigan History Center
Michigan Department of Natural Resources

2018 HIGHLIGHTS

MAKING LEARNING FUN

In 2018, the Michigan History Center continued to expand and improve programs that provide experiences filled with questions, exploration and discovery.

- Future Historians Camp was added to our summer offerings. Students aged 9-12 learned to lead oral history interviews, conduct genealogical research and create final projects based on their work. All four of our week-long day-camps offered scholarships for at-risk students.
- The Governor's Decision Room program served 241 middle and high school students. They participated in a multiday, solution-based learning experience using primary source materials from historic events. The culminating, role-playing day, held at the center or the Governor's offices in Cadillac Place in Detroit, focused on the civil unrest in Detroit in 1967.
- Thirty-eight BIG History Lesson classes (3,578 students) from fifteen area schools made the Michigan History Center their classroom for an entire week. They used museum exhibits and special activities for in-depth exploration of a part of Michigan's history. Museum educators partnered with the teachers to conduct more than 70 facilitated programs on such topics as lumbering, statehood and immigration.
- The Michigan History Center welcomed 56,626 students on field trips. More than 8,600 other students participated in programs at sites from Fort Wilkins and the Iron Industry Museum in the Upper Peninsula to Walker Tavern and the Mann House in the Lower Peninsula.



Future Historians campers used a historic map to search for the former location of a 1930s home near the Capitol building on West Michigan Ave...and they found it!



A visiting school group participated in a musical program with Acoustic Strings & Friends at Cambridge Junction Historic State Park.

SHARING THE REAL STORIES OF MICHIGAN

In 2018 the center discovered, researched and shared new, authentic Michigan stories with people across the state and the nation.

- Our partnership with Michigan Radio's "Stateside" program marked its first anniversary. The center helps produce a weekly segment with topics ranging from the Michigander who invented Muzak to the tragic creation of Indian Schools that separated Anishinaabe children from their families and culture. The segments are archived at michiganradio.org/term/michigan-history.
- Sponsors across the state erected 13 historical markers approved by the Michigan Historical Commission in 11 different counties.
- Our Heritage Trails team helped community stakeholders develop and implement interpretive plans for Kal-Haven Trail State Park between Kalamazoo and South Haven, the Haywire Grade Trail between Manistique and Munising, and the Huron River Water Trail between Flat Rock and Lake Erie.
- Our "Rock Your Mocs" program, which celebrates Native American heritage in Michigan by clarifying and examining the challenges and intricacies of Native life in the 21st century, held seven programs in Lansing and Detroit. Topics included contemporary issues, such as cultural appropriation and missing and murdered indigenous women, as well as the ongoing impact on Michigan's tribes of Lewis Cass's Indian policy and other historic events.
- The center debuted a new family program, Family History Day, in conjunction with the Archives of Michigan's annual Abrams Family Seminar. The day-long event included multi-generational lessons on how to create a family tree and an introduction to family history research.



Education Specialist Rachel joined Stateside host Cynthia Canty to record a segment on Michigan's "Hello Girls."



Visitors to our first Family History Day learned how to write with a dip pen and ink.



Heritage Trails Coordinator Dan and Friends of the Kal-Haven Trail volunteers installed a multi-sensory exhibit about the history of Mentha, MI.

- The Michigan History Museum opened the national traveling exhibit “States of Incarceration,” a collaboration between university student and community groups across the country facilitated by the Humanities Action Lab. Staff added 500 square feet of stories about incarceration in Michigan, including a section on Michigan’s reform schools for our K-12 audience. The exhibit won an AASLH Leadership in History Award of Excellence.
- The Mann House in Concord hosted its first annual Women’s History Conference, which put the story of the Mann sisters and their mother into the broader context of exceptional women working in communities across the state and the nation.



Michigan History Center staff added labels, panels and artifacts to the traveling exhibit States of Incarceration to connect it to Michigan’s stories. Visitors were invited to participate in the conversation at several points throughout the exhibit.

RESEARCHING AND COLLECTING MICHIGAN'S UNTOLD STORIES

Our commitment to telling all of Michigan's stories continues to create new conversations and collaborations.

- The Archives of Michigan began work on collecting records from all probate courts in Michigan. Beginning with Wayne County, the Archives expects to add more than 30,000 cubic feet of records to its collections. Staff members conducted onsite visits with 20 counties in 2018. The archives implemented a partnership with FamilySearch.org to digitize and eventually make more than 8 million probate records available online for free.
- To document an important contemporary Michigan story, we collected artifacts related to the Flint water crisis, including lead service pipes, water bottles and a water bottle chandelier made by a preschool class for pediatrician Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha.



The Michigan History Museum collected artifacts related to the Flint water crisis.

EXPANDING ADULT AUDIENCES

We continue to increase access to archival collections that have special value and meaning for individuals researching their family history and to develop programs targeted to adult audiences.

- This year archives staff gave presentations to 45 local genealogy and history groups across Michigan and made an additional 6 presentations at statewide and national conferences, including its annual Abrams Foundation Family History Seminar and the Michigan Genealogical Society Fall Family History Event.
- In partnership with FamilySearch, and with the support of the Michigan Genealogical Council, the Archives of Michigan continues a digitization and indexing project to make naturalization records from nearly 70 Michigan counties available online at seekingmichigan.org. The project uses an online indexing tool that allows anyone with online access to transcribe key genealogical information from the records. Those without online access can visit the archives in person and use the public terminals for indexing. Staff hopes to complete the project in 2020.
- The center received a Michigan Humanities Council grant to create a series of programs on issues of mass incarceration, in conjunction with the States of Incarceration exhibition that opened at the Michigan History Museum in September 2018. The first grant-funded presentation was on the Attica Prison Uprising of 1971 by Dr. Heather Ann Thompson from the University of Michigan.



Dr. Heather Ann Thompson, author of *Blood in the Water*, presented the keynote address at the opening of the States of Incarceration exhibit in September 2018.

COLLECTING AND PRESERVING FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

To ensure that future generations can find their own meanings and stories in the past, we continued to work to improve collections storage conditions, better understand the people we serve, provide secure digital storage and take care of our historic buildings.

- We received a grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to upgrade our offsite collections facility with new compact shelving, which will provide better storage environments and make more space for objects that tell new stories. The grant requires matching funds from state capital outlay or donations.
- Fort Wilkins hosted 150 tourism industry professionals participating in Michigan Cares for Tourism, an annual workday. The volunteers completed 23 projects around the historic 1840s fort, including replacing stockade posts.
- The Save Michigan History grant program funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) offered onsite assessments, mini-grants and archives workshops to local history organizations around the state.
- Working with the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, we now offer digital access to some 6 million Corporations and Securities Annual Reports.
- There are new windows in the logging camp buildings at Hartwick Pines State Park, and the Mann House in Concord has a repaired chimney and roof.



Two Michigan Cares for Tourism volunteers work to repair a porch at Fort Wilkins.

STAFF ENGAGEMENT

Knowing that engaged staff are productive staff, and responding to statewide surveys, we added a new goal to our strategic plan and began implementing changes.

- The need for equipment to do the job was met in part with updated audio-visual equipment in our long-term exhibits and archives scanners.
- We allocated funding for conference attendance.
- A break room was added for employees.

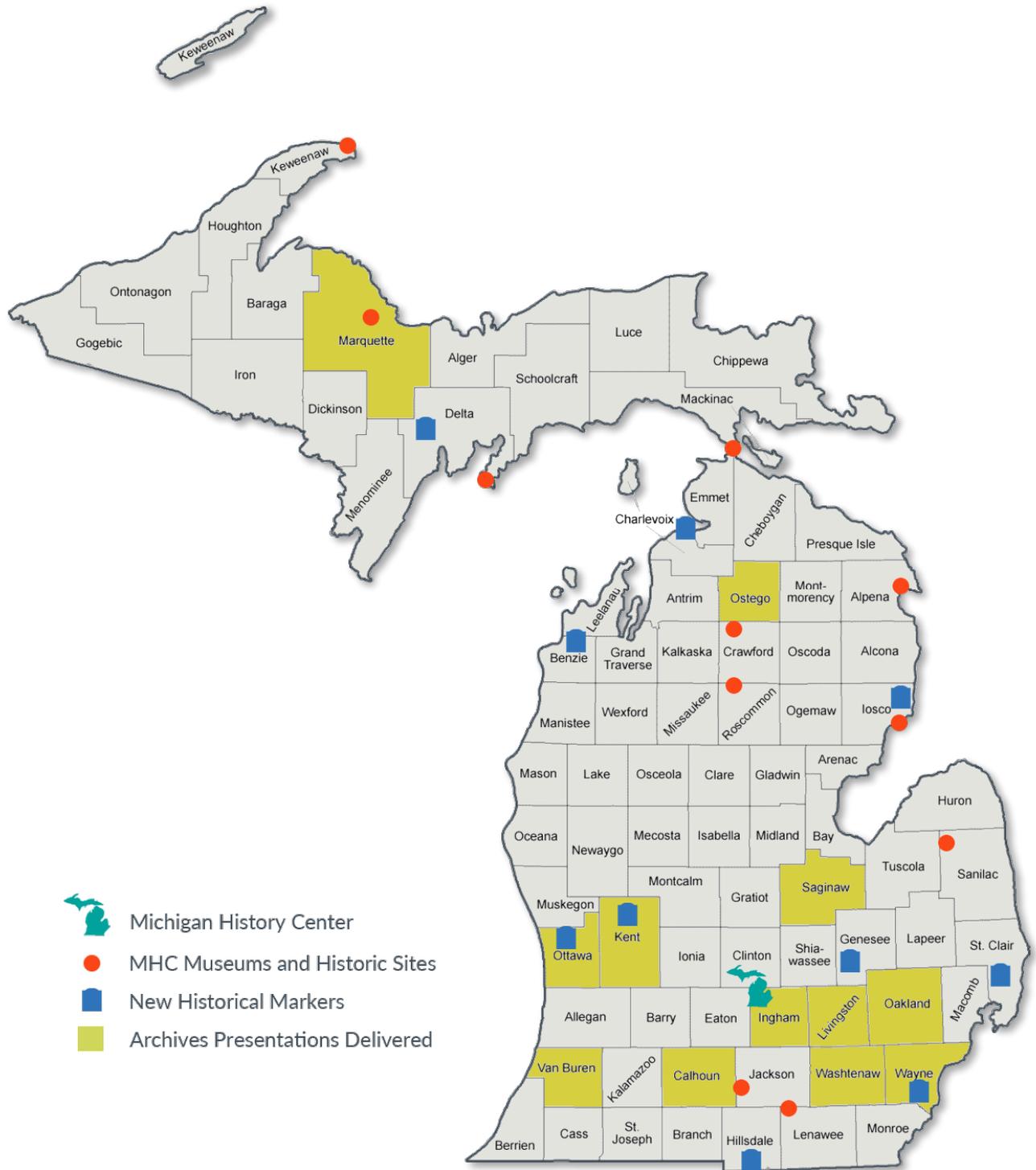
Staff members from the Archives of Michigan attended the National Genealogical Society Conference in Grand Rapids, MI.



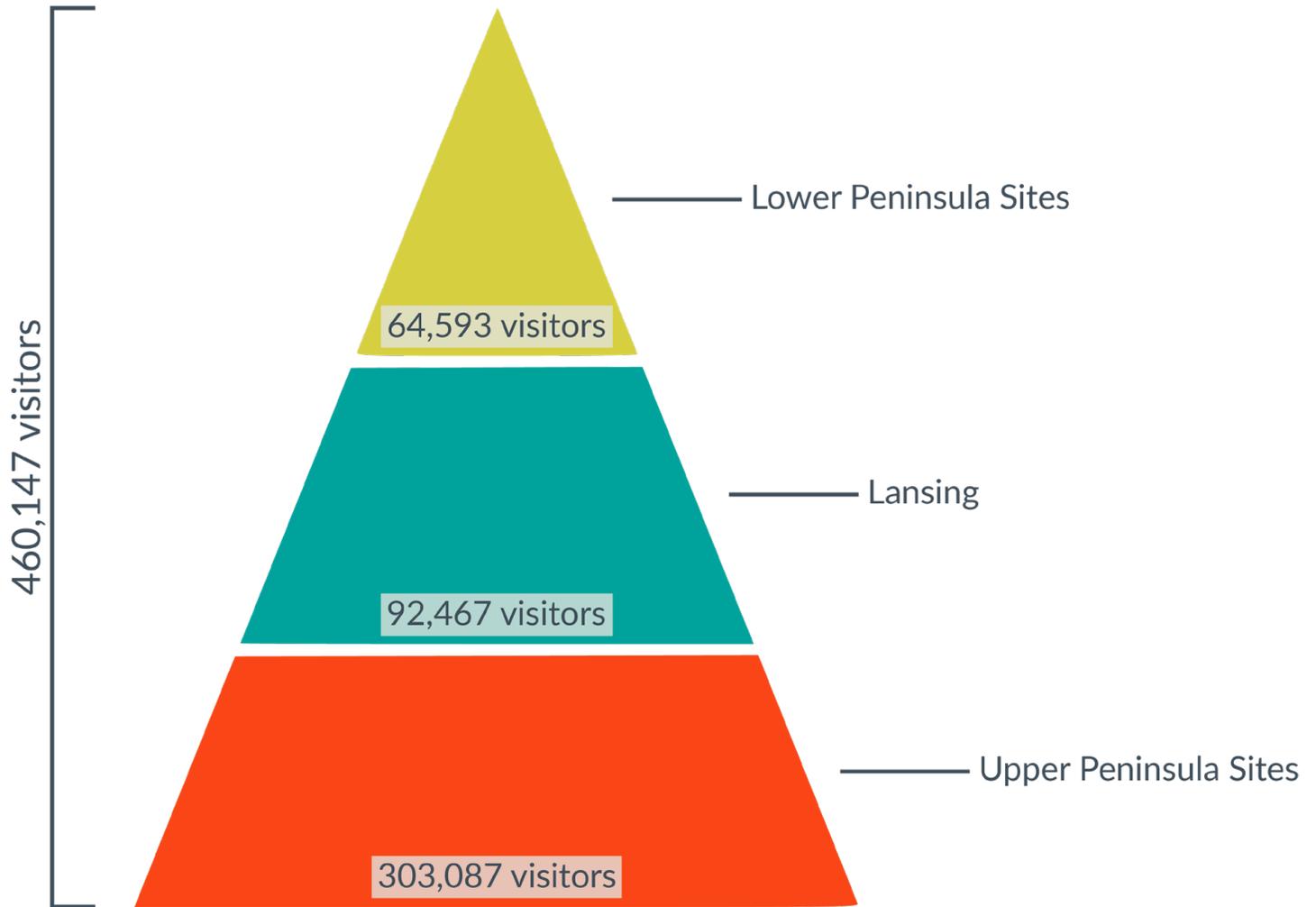
A new breakroom with seating for 10 was opened on the 5th floor of the Michigan History Center in Lansing.

A FEW NUMBERS

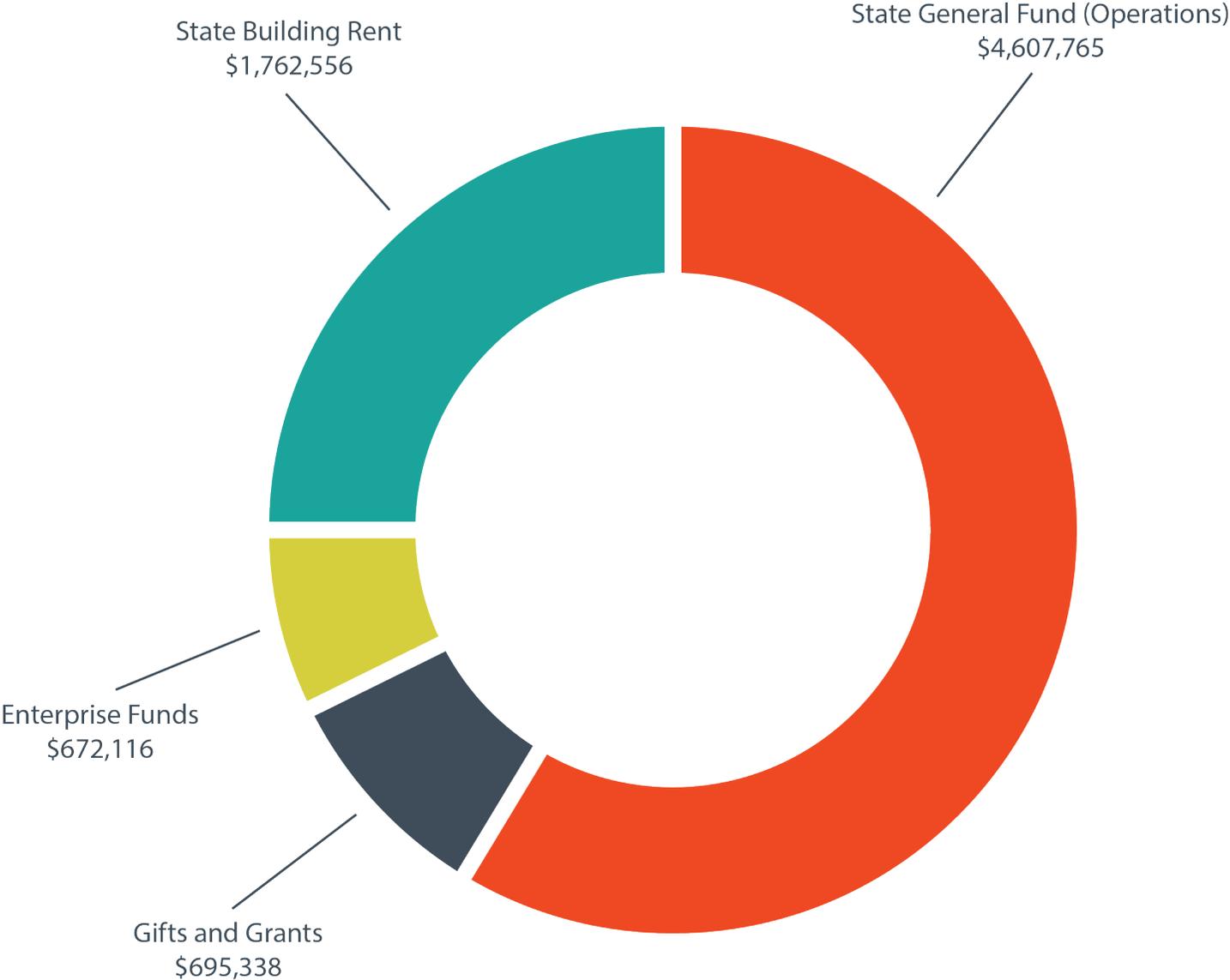
ARCHIVES PRESENTATIONS, HISTORICAL MARKERS, MUSEUMS AND SITES



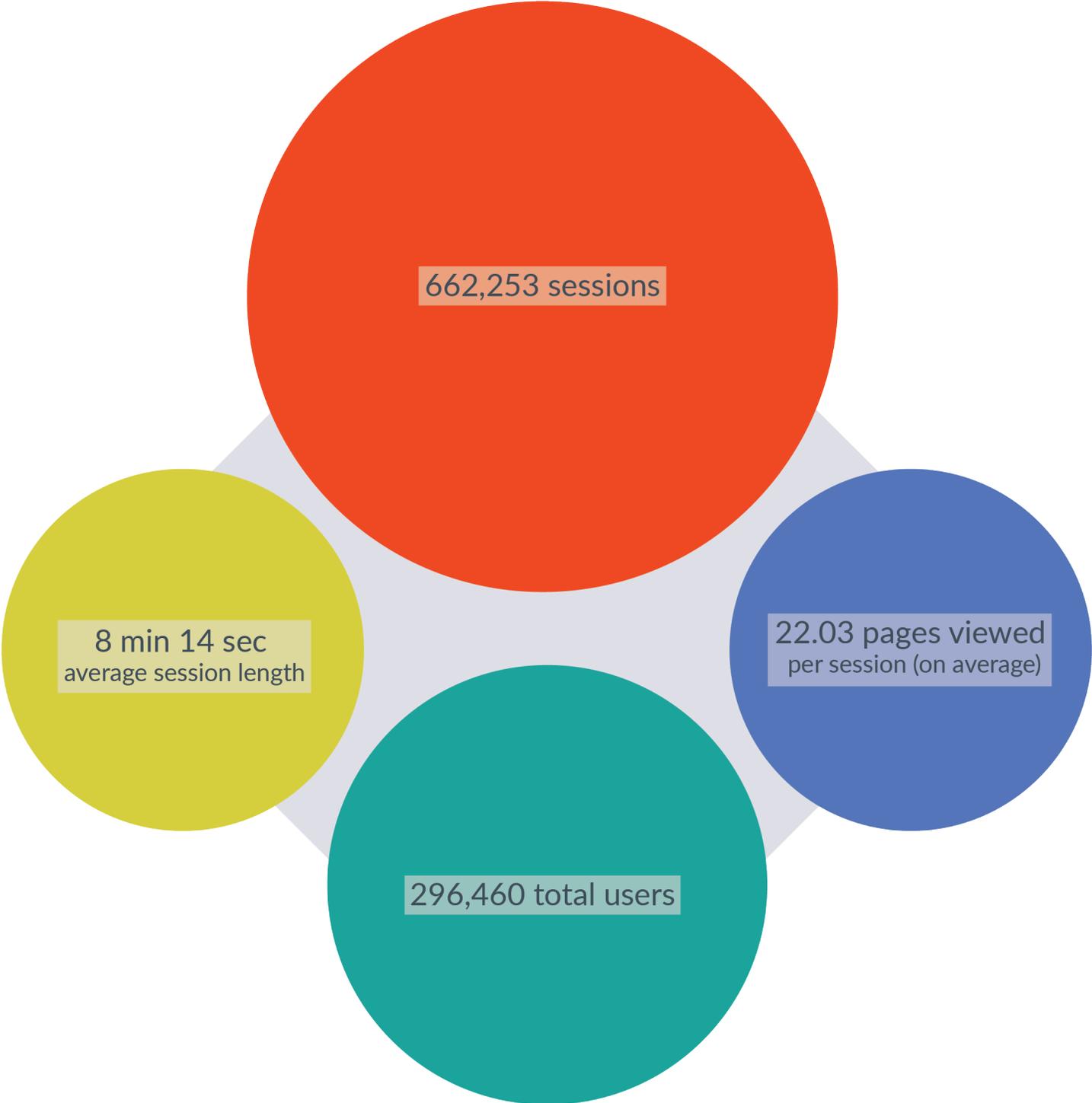
MUSEUM AND HISTORIC SITE ATTENDANCE



SOURCES OF FUNDING



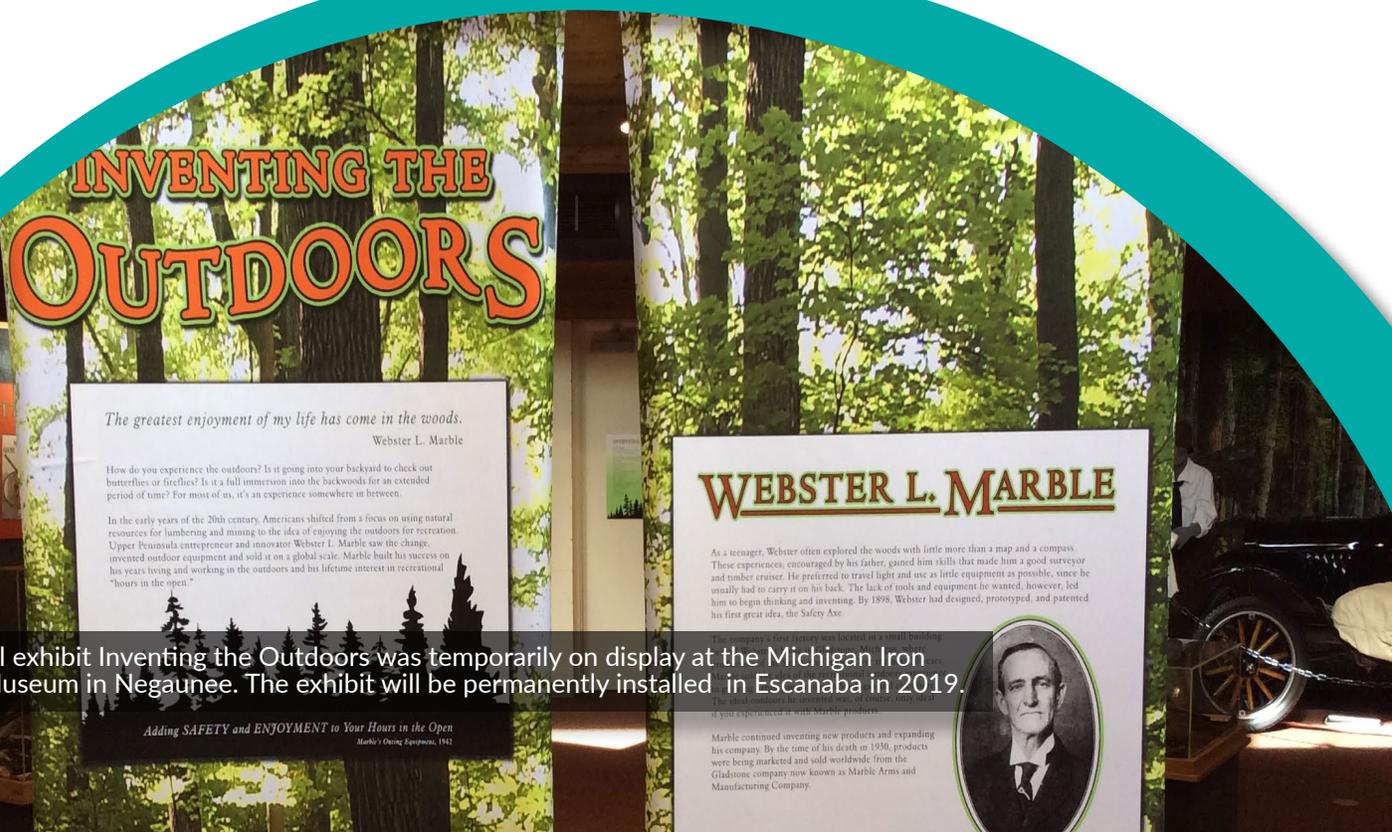
SEEKING MICHIGAN ONLINE VISITATION



2019 GOALS

The major projects on the horizon for the Michigan History Center include:

- Upgraded, accessible websites at Michigan.gov/MHC and our research website.
- Permanent installation of the once-temporary “Inventing the Outdoors” exhibit on Webster Marble and Marble Arms at the new welcome and commerce center in Escanaba.
- Continuing to work on exhibits with Michigan’s federally recognized tribes, creating a Native American Heritage Plan, and developing historic sites, including a joint management agreement for the Sanilac Petroglyphs.
- Completing outdoor interpretation along the Kal-Haven Trail and adding interpretation at Fayette Historic Townsite, North Higgins Lake State Park and Fort Wilkins Historic State Park.
- Working with the Michigan History Foundation, dba Heritage Michigan, to raise the private funds needed to upgrade exhibits, support programs and match federal grants.
- Building capacity to help local governments with the records management and preservation that is essential to governmental transparency.
- Beginning to collect oral history conversations in partnership with StoryCorps.



The special exhibit Inventing the Outdoors was temporarily on display at the Michigan Iron Industry Museum in Negaunee. The exhibit will be permanently installed in Escanaba in 2019.

THANK YOU!

The dedicated, talented staff members of the Michigan History Center are assisted and supported in their work by scores of volunteers who share our passion for Michigan and its stories. We thank them all.

VOLUNTEER GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

- Michigan History Museum Docent Guild & Associates
- Michigan Heritage Leadership Council
- Michigan History Foundation, dba Heritage Michigan
- Friends of Michigan History
- Friends of Fayette Historic Townsite
- Fort Wilkins Natural History Association
- Friends of Straits State Park
- Friends of Hartwick Pines State Park
- Friends of North Higgins Lake State Park
- Friends of Tawas Point Lighthouse and State Park
- Friends of Walker Tavern

LEGISLATIVELY AUTHORIZED COMMISSIONS AND BOARDS

- Michigan Historical Commission
- Iron Industry Museum Advisory Board
- Michigan Freedom Trail Commission
- Michigan Underwater Salvage and Preserve Committee
- Michigan State Historical Records Advisory Board



Docent Guild & Associates of the Michigan History Museum



Friends of Walker Tavern



Friends of Tawas Point Lighthouse