

Douglas County Historical Society

Watkins Museum of History

2019 Annual Report



Mission Statement

The Douglas County Historical Society, operating the Watkins Museum of History, promotes civic engagement by supporting the preservation, research, and interpretation of county history through active exhibits and thought-provoking educational programs for the public.



Watkins Museum of History
1047 Massachusetts Street
Lawrence, KS 66044
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www.watkinsmuseum.org

From the President, Michael Delaney

The Watkins Museum of History is on a roll! Under the leadership of Executive Director Steve Nowak, the museum's dedicated and talented professional staff and volunteers reached several remarkable milestones in 2019. The Watkins was one of only two Kansas museums to be awarded a prestigious competitive grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. This \$145,000 grant, together with local matching funds the museum is raising, will fund construction of the remaining core exhibits on the museum's third floor, completing the museum's permanent exhibits.

The Watkins' staff also prepared and displayed 16 changing exhibits and hosted over 80 public programs, driving attendance to an all-time high of over 23,000 visitors. Attendance at the Watkins has grown over 49 percent since 2013 – more than 15 times the average growth rate for history organizations our size!

2020 is shaping up to be another terrific year. The Watkins will host a national traveling exhibition, *Encountering John Brown*, this fall. The Watkins has also been a key participant in "The Lawrence 1970 Project," a community-wide effort reflecting on the turbulent events of 1970 in Lawrence and across the nation.

Thank you for your support in 2019. Our growth and success in 2020 and beyond will depend on your continued participation and financial support. Help us grow our membership by asking friends and family to join. Please continue to visit the museum's exciting new exhibits, attend our programs, and take advantage of the benefits of your membership, including members-only exhibit previews, discounts on *Encountering John Brown* tickets, and discounts on our popular Civil War bus and walking tours.

I hope to see you often this year at the Watkins!

From the Director, Steve Nowak

Mike's comments highlight all we have achieved and what we hoped to look forward to in the coming year. Faced with the challenges of the COVID-19 outbreak and the resulting uncertain economic conditions, the Watkins Museum will need to rethink the way we operate and how we engage our community. To deal with closures required for public safety, we are finding ways to transition from an onsite to an online experience. Watch the museum's website for a schedule of virtual activities and exhibits. Engage with us on social media.

We can't predict what 2020 will hold, but wherever it takes us, the Watkins Museum remains committed to serving our community and inspiring civic engagement, no matter what form our engagement takes.



Left, below, and on the cover:
Visitors of all ages enjoyed the opening of new core exhibits on the museum's third floor in September and discovered new ways to encounter the past.



The Watkins Museum's community engagement efforts were recognized by IMLS Grant reviewers:

"Your institution has clearly made great strides over the past decade. It is evident that you are making a difference in your community given the increases in attendance and support."

"The museum's focus on illustrating local history stories in ways that will inspire engagement and action on the part of visitors is particularly laudable for a smaller organization and if successful, could set a wonderful example for other museums."



2019 Attendance at a Glance

- Attendance for the year was 23,407, a 5% increase over FY 2018
- Walk-in visitors accounted for 8,898 of the total
- 1,270 people participated in a guided tour of the Watkins Museum
- 3,071 people attended meetings or rental events at the museum
- 128 researchers visited the archives
- 6,661 people attended programs at the museum
- 3,459 attended museum programs and presentations held off-site

Collections

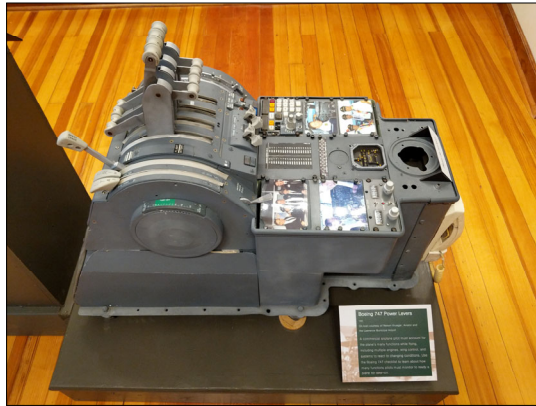
2019 saw new and exciting additions to the Watkins Museum's collections. Exhibitions played an especially large role in inspiring donations:

- After learning about the museum's exhibit on Lawrence soldiers in the Spanish-American War, Roberta Pryor donated a bronze medal honoring Co. H of the 20th Kansas.
- Visitors to the Watkins' exhibit *Opening Doors: A History of Accessibility in Lawrence* might have seen a white door on display. The door, one of the entrances to the Beuerman farmhouse, was donated by Leo Beuerman's relatives in anticipation of the exhibit.
- DCHS board member Sean Williams donated several Dog Days t-shirts in anticipation of an upcoming exhibit on Lawrence work-out legend Red Dog and his exercise program.
- Staff at The Merc donated one of the original signs for the Lawrence Community Mercantile Grocery Store.
- In Fall 2019, the museum partnered with Kerry Altenbernd and mechanical engineering students at KU to undertake dimension



The 3-D printed model of Old Sacramento in front of the original cannon.

studies and material testing on the museum's cannon, Old Sacramento. In addition to providing insight into the origins and history of the cannon, the students created a 3-D printed model of Old Sacramento that Altenbernd donated to the museum.



L to R: Leo Beuerman's family door, an original sign from The Merc, and a throttle from a Boeing 747 on loan from Nelson Krueger.

2019 Loans

Loans from private collectors and other organizations enhanced changing exhibits and gave Watkins visitors an opportunity to experience something new. These lenders provided material for exhibits in 2019:

- Sexual Trauma & Abuse Care Center, *Take Back the Night*
- Nancy Helmstadter and Tom Murray, *Lawrence's Leading Lady*
- Audio-Reader, *Opening Doors*
- Nelson Krueger, *Up in the Air*
- League of Women Voters, *Enterprising Women*
- New York School, *Building for the Future*

2019 Exhibitions

- *Picturing Place: Photographing Lawrence*
January 11—March 9, 2019
- *Resistance: How Kansas Fought the Klan*
February 22—May 11, 2019
- *Lawrence's Leading Lady: Gertrude Bullene*
March 29—June 26, 2019
- *Students Take a Stand*
April 26—June 23, 2019
- *Model Figures: How the Great Depression Changed Education*
April 27—July 14, 2019
- *Freedom Day: The History of Juneteenth*
June 6—August 11, 2019
- *River City Overrun: The Floods that Changed Lawrence*
June 14—August 18, 2019
- *Up in the Air: Lawrence and Aviation*
June 28—September 8, 2019
- *Common Ground: The Foundations of Lawrence's Early African American Community*
July 26—October 6, 2019
- *Home of the Phoenix: Deerfield School Proposal for 11th and Mass*
August 24—September 15, 2019
- *Far Afield: Kansans in the Spanish-American War*
August 30—November 24, 2019
- *The 19th Amendment: 100 Years Centennial*
September 11-24, 2019
- *Building the Future: New York School Celebrates 150 Years*
September 19—October 16, 2019
- *Take Back the Night: The Fight Against Sexual Violence in Lawrence*
September 28, 2019—February 15, 2020
- *Enterprising Women: Lawrence in the Suffrage Movement*
October 25, 2019—January 18, 2020
- *Opening Doors: A History of Accessibility in Lawrence*
December 20, 2019—April 4, 2020

Archives and Research

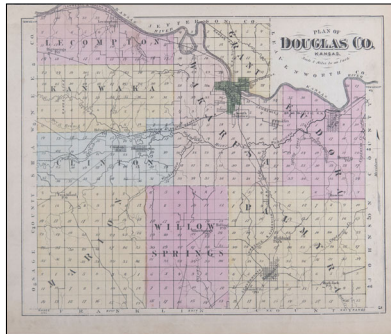
Public research engages a broader community with the museum's archival collections. In 2019, Watkins staff and volunteers addressed 247 public research requests, including 128 onsite appointments. In fulfilling these requests, 243 photographs and 464 pages of documents were scanned. \$1823.10 in reproduction fees and \$93.50 in research fees were collected.

Due in a large part to the valiant efforts of our devoted volunteers, the collections database increased with 4442 new records added.

With the support of a Midco Foundation grant, the museum purchased new camera equipment, which has enabled us to digitize large format materials such as maps, blueprints, and posters. This same equipment is also being used for the photography of 3-dimensional artifacts.



Digital Media Specialist Cole Finley uses the new camera equipment to photograph museum artifacts.



Examples of museum artifacts that are photographed and digitized using the new museum camera equipment.

2019 Programs Overview

This was a history-making year in Watkins programming. We hosted or partnered on 80 events, ranging from Final Friday exhibit openings to our popular Summer Games Series for kids. Highlights included unique events like a panel discussion on connecting women's histories with current issues, a talk by Dr. Lorie Vanchena on German immigration to America sponsored by the Goethe institute, and Raven Book Chats at the Watkins. On May 11, Lawrence High School students presented an original dramatic production based on documents from the 1968 LHS student walkouts, a tie-in with our exhibit on the topic. A new partnership with Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area helped make our annual Civil War on the Western Frontier series more successful than ever seen in its 24 years. For the third year in a row, Richard and Alisa Branham presented a series of classes on topics related to genealogy. Museum programming attracted record numbers of participants this year, and we owe much of this success to our members. Thank you for your interest in and support for programming.



Participants enjoy an interactive walking tour during Civil War on the Western Frontier.

Visitors engage with the exhibit, Students Take a Stand, following a performance on the 1968 LHS student walkouts.



2019 Programming Partnerships and Sponsorships

The Watkins is grateful to all our partners and sponsors.

- City of Lawrence
- Downtown Lawrence Inc.
- Explore Lawrence
- Lawrence Public Library
- Emily Taylor Center for Women & Gender Equity
- Friends of the Kaw
- KU Natural History Museum
- KU Department of History
- KU Department of Museum Studies
- KU Department of European Studies
- KU Department of African Studies
- KU Department of East Asian Studies
- KU Department of Theatre & Dance
- KU Center for Latin-American & Caribbean Studies
- KU University Honors Program
- KU Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies
- KU Center for Russian, East European, & Eurasian Studies
- U.S. Army Command & General Staff College
- Lawrence Arts Center
- Lawrence Civic Choir
- Prairie Park Nature Center
- The Raven Bookstore
- Lawrence Opera Theatre
- Lawrence Parks & Recreation
- Lawrence Public Library
- Max Kade Center for German-American Studies
- St. Luke AME Church
- Clinton Lake Historical Society
- Lawrence Community Orchestra
- Robert J. Dole Institute of Politics
- Spencer Museum of Art
- KU Natural History Museum
- Goethe Institute
- Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area
- League of WWI Aviation Historians
- Free State Brewing Co.
- Humanities Kansas
- Liberty Hall
- BLACK Lawrence
- Hall Center for the Humanities
- Baker Wetlands Discovery Center
- Haskell Indian Nations University
- Epicenter
- Washburn University Department of History
- National Buffalo Soldiers 9th & 10th (Horse) Cavalry Association
- Willow Domestic Violence Center
- Lawrence Anti-Trafficking Taskforce and Education Association
- Kaw Valley Farm Tour
- Greenhouse Church

Finding Women's Histories was a collaboration between many partners: KU Dept. of History, Haskell Indian Nations University, BLACK Lawrence, Epicenter, Spencer Museum of Art, and KU University Honors Program.



2019 Education Overview

The Watkins Museum provided 82 educational programs for students, teachers, and families in 2019. Well surpassing an average of one



Lead Educator Amanda Hamilton Burkhardt teaches a Tiny Tours lesson on the prairie in Spring 2019.

program a week, this beats last year's all-time high of 64. The Museum's monthly toddler story time, Tiny Tours, rolled out in the spring and had seven sessions with 135 participants. The museum was honored with an anonymous donation funding the program for all of 2020. The Watkins Kids Club kicked off in January and gained 74 new members in 2019. The young historian's membership features

free homeschool lessons, quarterly events, seasonal activity packets, and a birthday card from the Watkins staff and Ellie the Electric Car – the program's mascot. The Museum rolled out several new programs for Douglas County and Kansas City metro students, including "Debating John Brown" and a partnership with New York Elementary in which nearly every class visited the Museum to learn about life in the 1860s.

Education by the Numbers

- 33 Kids Club birthday cards mailed
- 23 new programs
- 1503 offsite programming attendance
- 74 Kids Club members
- 6222 total attendance
- 26.4 percent of total Watkins attendance

Children enjoy an activity during a session of the weekly Watkins Summer Games.



Facilities Improvements

2019 saw a lot of updates for facilities at the Watkins. Thanks to a grant from the Sunderland Foundation, the museum was able to make several needed improvements. The back stairwell, from the first to the third floors, was updated with new coverings on the steps and new carpet on the landings. The front and side entrances were updated with ADA compliant automatic open doors. We removed the drinking fountain on the second floor and replaced it with an ADA compliant one on the first floor. The first floor restrooms received a major overhaul. Volunteers Ken Karr and Charlie Thomas raised the ceilings, removed the mechanical equipment, rebuilt walls, installed new sinks and doors, and Kring's Interiors installed new flooring.

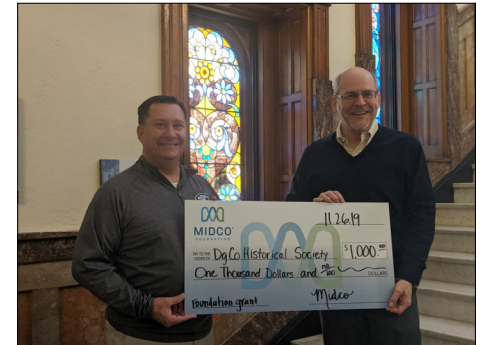


L to R: Stairs leading up to the third floor, drinking fountain on the first floor next to the elevator, and the entrance to the front door.

Grants

In 2019, the Douglas County Historical Society received grants from:

- **City of Lawrence**
\$13,000 to support promotion and social media engagement
\$5,577.80 to support Civil War on the Western Frontier
- **Midco Foundation**
\$1,000 to update server and computer equipment
- **Museums for America, Institute of Museum and Library Services**
\$144,187 to complete the third floor core exhibit
- **The Ethel and Raymond F. Rice Foundation**
\$18,000 to support museum assistants and internships
- **The Sunderland Foundation**
\$40,000 for replacement of public entry doors and back stair hall repair



Fundraiser

The Watkins Museum had over 180 participants attend the Power of the Past: Watkins Dam Fundraiser, held at Abe & Jake's Landing and the Bowersock Mills & Power Company. Thanks to attendance by members and support from several sponsors, the Watkins raised over \$15,000, which went to support our public and educational programs. The Watkins wants to give an especially big thanks to our sponsors:



Sarah's Fabrics, Nancy Helmstadter, The Bowersock Mills & Power Company, Abe & Jake's Landing, The Eldridge Hotel, Marks Jewelers, Tom Harper, Waxman Candles, and Yarn Barn.

Participants at Power of the Past enjoy stepping back into time with the green screen photo booth.

Membership

The Douglas County Historical Society closed 2019 with 391 members. Funds raised through membership dues are the primary source of support for exhibitions and public programming at the Watkins Museum. 38% of our members support the Society at an enhanced level with annual gifts of \$100 or more. We would like to recognize those members in particular for their generosity.

J.B. Watkins Circle Fellows

(\$5,000 +)

Beach-Edwards Family Foundation
Capitol Federal Foundation
Barton P. and Mary D. Cohen
Charitable Trust
Nancy Helmstadter
Ethel and Raymond F. Rice
Foundation
Dolph Simons Family Fund
of the Douglas County
Community Foundation

Benefactor (\$1,000+)

Kathleen & Bill Argersinger
Ken & Katie Armitage
Judy & Dave Billings
Susan & James Bloom
Jerree & Harley Catlin
Carol Koenig
Cathy Reinhardt
Gary Mark Smith
Sarah Steele
John & Deanell Tacha

Patron (\$500-999)

David & Mary Kate Ambler
Leslie Christenson
Ann Gardner & Tom Gleason
Sandra Gautt
Emily Hill & Burke Griggs family
Stephen & Marcia Hill
Carolie Houglund
Jeff & Ellen Jensen
McDonalds of Lawrence

Supporter (\$250-499)

Michael & Kathleen Delaney
The Eldridge Hotel
Emprise Bank
Phil & Phoebe Godwin
Web & Joan Golden
Carol & Don Hatton
Matthew Herbert
Norma Decker Hoagland
Larry Irick
Ken Karr
Marty & Patty Kennedy
George Laughead
Gayle Matchett
Susan Millstein
Judy Niebaum & Dave Marden
Rumsey-Yost Funeral Home
Suzanne Sherr
Dale Slusser & Sherry Fowler
Steve & Pat Sublett
Ralph & Mary Tallmon
Bill & Kathryn Tuttle
Jeff & Mary Weinberg



DCHS members enjoy an interactive members-only exhibit talk.

Associate (\$100-249)

Eric Anderson
Frank & Betty Baron
Julie & Randy Bell
Beverly Smith Billings
Mark & Marsha Buhler
Patricia Campbell
Peter & Rosalea Carttar
Janet Cinelli & Eric Ryan
Margaret & George
Coggins
Dennis & Judy Dailey
Cris & Ron Darmon
Candice Davis
Virgil & Jan Dean
Vicki & Joe Douglas
Chris & Kaye Drahozal
David Dunfield &
Pat Graham
Marion Dyer
Charles & Jane Eldredge
Marcia Epstein &
Kyle Thompson
Ann Evans
Connie Friesen
Peter & Cathy Grassl
Marilyn Gridley
Al & Sue Hack
Peter Haggart
Allan & Louise Hanson
Tom Harper
Dr. Charles Henery
Jane Herron
Dick & Sue Himes
Monica Huke
Raymond & Mary Lee
Hummert
Sheila & John Immel
Craig & Gloria Jacob
Robert & Sheryl Jacobs
Don & Alice Ann
Johnston
Charles & Carol Jones
Evan Jorn

David & Sharyn Katzman
Pat & Ned Kehde
Tim & Judy Keller
Cami & Jeff Kennedy
Denise Kester
Jeanne Klein
Carol & Dave Kyner
Roy & Kathy Lafferty
Light Touch LLC
David & Jennifer Little
Burdett & Michel
Loomis
Diane & Don Low
John & Linda Lungstrum
Mammoth Inc.
Julia & Joel Manglitz
Barbara Mason &
Ron Christ
Linda McCoy
Bill & Jean Mitchell
Rick Mitchell
Bill & Becky Myers
John Nalbandian
Jerry & Joan Nowak
Lois Orth-Lopes &
Steve Lopes
Lucia Orth & John Head
Mark & Susan Osborn
Craig & Elizabeth Owens
Dean Owens*
Melissa Parsons
Jerry & Jeanne Pees
Mary Lou Penny
Lewis & Carolyn Phillips
John & Ardith Pierce
G. Joseph Pierron &
Diana Carlin
Kent & Cathy Pringle
Charles & Dorothy
Quinn
Pam & Steve Reiz
Kathy Richardson
Harold & Donna Riehm
Paul & Bobbi Riley

Peter Rinn &
Barbara Wiley
Linda & Scott Robinson
Mary Margaret & Ken
Rowen
John & Virginia Saylor
Bob & Sandra Schumm
Jan Sheldon &
Jim Sherman
Fred & Lilian Six
Ivan & Terry Smith
Byron & Marion
Springer
Stephens Real Estate,
Inc.
Ruth Stoebener
Dustin Struble
Gail Tiemann &
Oather Strawderman
Austin Turney
Doug & Karen Tyler
Randy & Edna
Van Schmus
Kurt & Pennie
von Achen
Dustin & Kathy Walker
Chuck & Karen Warner
Warren-McElwain
Mortuary
Daniel Watkins
Peter & Elizabeth Welsh
Mike & Linda Wildgen
Sean Williams
Virginia Wulfkuhle
Frank Ybarra &
Janet Buie
Norm & Anne Yetman



*deceased

Volunteers

Forty-one individuals provided 2,532 hours of volunteer service in 2019. DCHS/Watkins Museum volunteers helped with record-keeping and storage of the collection, welcomed visitors, kept the museum looking great, and assisted with tours and public programs. We thank the following dedicated volunteers for their assistance:

Rita Adame
Katy Armstrong
Lauren Bajorek
Sarah Barthell
Sarah Ben-Ezra
Alisa Branham
Richard Branham*
Michael Buckley
Mary Eastwood-Tallmon
William Garcia
Drew Gilmore
Griffin Gilmore
Mike Higley
Joni Hughes
Ken Karr

Jeff Lopez
Isaac Loufa
Jordan Malhiot
Paula Monroe
Michele Montour
Molly Nevius
Paula Ryan
Precious Sanders
Sawyer Family
Alex Siebrasso
Morgan Smith
Earlene Stover
Ralph Tallmon

Henry Terry
Charlie Thomas
Christine Traner
Julie Trowbridge-Alford
Doug Tyler
Natalie Vondrak
Dustin Walker
Kathy Walker
Emily Wellborn
Amanda Wells
Presley Wilson
*deceased

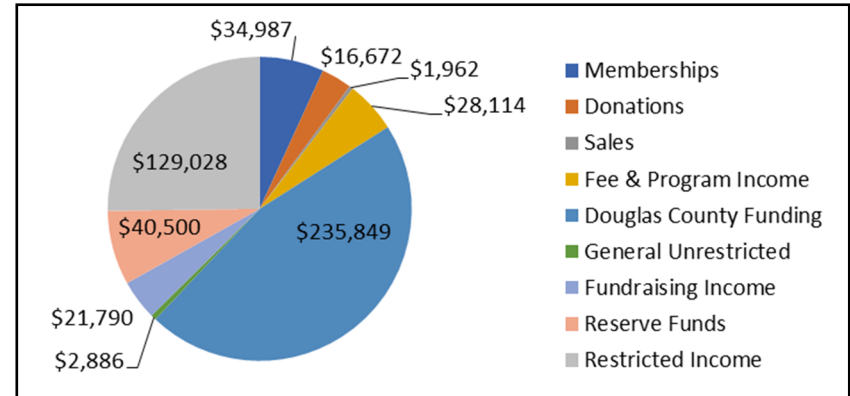


Volunteer Ken Karr shows off his skills by updating the security camera in the museum's galleries.

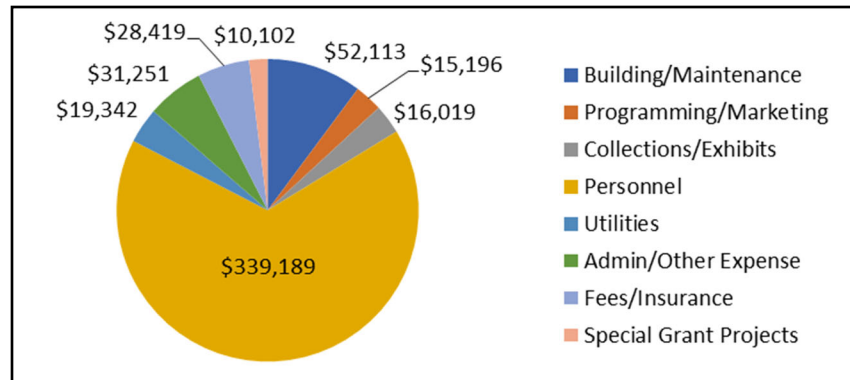
2019 Volunteers of the Year

The Watkins Museum is lucky to have volunteers who are creative and handy. This year, we want to recognize a group of volunteers who put in many hours to renovate our public bathrooms and keep them looking festive. Ken Karr and Charlie Thomas, with the assistance of John Jewell, did a full remodel of the first floor bathrooms, including rebuilding the walls and installing new sinks and doors. Judy Jewell demonstrates her creativity with beautiful bathroom displays that always match the current season or holiday. Thank you to Ken, Charlie, John, and Judy for providing the Watkins with a clean, beautiful space!

FY 2019 Income: \$511,718



FY 2019 Expenses: \$511,631



DCHS 2019 Board of Directors

Officers/Executive Committee

Kathryn Tuttle, President
Mike Delaney, Vice-President
Jeannette Blackmar, Past President
Tess Banion, Secretary
Kurt Falkenstien, Treasurer

Members:

Shawn Alexander	Pat Kehde
Eric Anderson	Mica Mendez
Abby Ehling	John Nalbandian
Sandra Gautt	Mick Ranney
Web Golden	Deanell Tacha
Tom Harper	Lauren Taylor
Charles Jones	Sean Williams

Staff

Steve Nowak, *Executive Director*
Will Hickox, *Public Engagement Coordinator*
Sarah Bell, *Development Officer*
Amanda Burkhart, *Lead Educator*
Brittany Keegan, *Curator-Collections Manager*
Cole Finley, *Assistant Curator, Digital Resources*
Monica Davis, *Research Coordinator*
John Jewell, *Business Manager*
Mika Schrader, *Education and Outreach Assistant*
Emily Wellborn, *Education and Outreach Assistant*
Austin Childs, *Pubic Engagement Assistant*