

First I want to say I feel very fortunate to have been able to attend the symposium with you all! Cincinnati was really a lovely city and as Carol said, our host committee did a great job of coordination. As a docent I still have a lot to learn and I will encourage others to go to Montreal if they can.

On impressions, I think it was really good having the opportunity to meet with docents and some museum staff from all over the country (plus Canada). So many interesting people and places that they serve. Many different kinds of institutions represented. It would be interesting to have some contact with other Hawaii docents at other museums in the future.

From the content of the break-out sessions and the speakers, I saw that museums are reaching out to more diverse audiences. Trying to engage younger adult audiences, visually impaired, memory loss tours and many more distinct audiences were discussed. This fits with our new values statement of accessibility to all.

The speakers at the beginning and end had a lot of similar ideas. Here are just a few I noted:

People today have a broader standard for what a "cultural" experience is and even what art is. Street art is very popular. Food festivals are included as cultural experiences. Regular visits to museums and symphony concerts have declined. People seek active engagement rather than passive. Younger visitors prefer to visit in a group rather than alone.

Visual thinking, learning and interpretation were emphasized. Sensory kits suggested providing texture, smells, reaching out to different audiences using iPads, social media. iPads could provide other detail such as videos and resources explaining how a work of art was created, poetry. FAQ's may be helpful for some to understand how to visit a museum.

The model of visitor engagement has shifted to honor the background of the visitor meaning each visitor has his/her own story of the art. We are no longer there to teach visitors about the art instead we are teaching with the art. Another speaker said we need to engage with the person rather than trying to get them to engage with the art.

In the museum of the future, everything is changing so we must be flexible to continue to provide exceptional visitor experiences but things still matter (not just the techie stuff).

Art helps to "teach" creativity.

Carol already reviewed the STEM session. I thought the maker/invention time sounded fun for the participants and the association with the nearby university sounded helpful. A lot of the tour ideas were the same as the ones we use in our STEAM tour. I disagreed with the visual of the word engineer being crossed out and replaced by artist. Being an engineer requires creativity (maybe not in the traditional way we think of creativity but they solve problems using creative solutions).

The Visual Literacy session was similar to what Betsy already emphasizes with ODIC. Some of their visual aids were good and the idea that everyone in the museum was trained together was an interesting idea.

The Walters Art Museum session on the Common Core was really good. One activity that the participants enjoyed was being assigned characters from a painting and each person wrote from their assigned character's point of view telling the story. The Walters used several examples which would encourage students to write stories or poems to connect to common core standards. I think Betsy was familiar with their activities, but they seemed like good ways to stimulate creative writing assignments and were fun for the docents.

The Taft school tours session was also very interesting. Cathy and I previewed their probability tour for middle school audiences. There may be some parts of this which we could integrate in to our math tours for the right age groups.

The Taft also has a special Girl Scout patch. This seemed like a fun way to attract that group. On Oahu a large number of Girl Scouts are military children who may not be familiar with HMA.

I think all the school tour ideas which emphasized looking at the art for a specific purpose also will provide students with focused ways to engage with the art itself.

Some of the breakout sessions have their PowerPoint sessions posted on the [NDS2015.com](http://NDS2015.com) website if you want to go to review them.