One of only a handful of museums across the country focusing exclusively on the art, history and culture of American Indian and First Nation peoples of the United States and Canada, the Mitchell Museum of the American Indian is unique.
Since our founding in 1977, the Mitchell Museum of the American Indian has served the public, and most importantly the American Indian and First Nation communities, to promote and share a deeper understanding and respect of Native American peoples through the collection, preservation and interpretation of their traditional and contemporary art and material culture.

The museum reaches nearly 10,000 national as well as international visitors. New marketing strategies have expanded our social media presence with a 42% increase in Facebook followers and an 8% increase in e-mail subscribers, as well as a 10% increase in Unique website visitors in 2014. We were also featured on WBEZ and Native America Calling radio, in Native Peoples magazine, highlighted in the Chicago Tribune’s “Best Bets in and around the Northwest Suburbs,” and Chicago Now’s “Top 5 Multicultural Events for Families” just to name a few.

This year also marked new community partnerships including the Ho-Chunk Nation and many others. We also launched the Native Peoples Today program to expand our reach beyond the museum walls. While the program is fee based, 28 area schools and libraries participated in free programs through the Woman’s Club of Evanston pilot program. It was a great success as one teacher said:

“Of course (I would recommend this program). It is engaging and a needed discussion in our society. For me, being involved with the presentation made me acutely aware of the blind eye that I have turned to this group of people—some of us just need (to be) reminded of how great of a culture this is.”

The Board and staff also worked with consultants behind the scenes to strengthen their fundraising capacity to sustain the museum for generations to come.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen McDonald, Executive Director & Beth Lent, Board President
Programs

Each year the Mitchell Museum develops programs to promote Native arts and artists, discuss contemporary topics in Indian Country today, and provide deeper insight into American Indian culture. The family craft activities, docent led tours, and flute group encourage regular participation from all age groups. The Mitchell Museum is a bustling center for authentic cultural experiences.

In conjunction with our “Cultural Identity: Mixed Blood” exhibit we held a panel discussion “Native Voices on Mixed Race.” Storytellers Jim St. Arnold, Bad River Chippewa, and Vince Romero, Laguna Pueblo, bought to life our exhibit “Storytellers: Inspiring Traditions for Generations.” Eli Suzukovich III, Little Shell Chippewa/Cree (now on staff) revealed to visitors how she create a home prairie using the Mitchell’s own Native garden. And expanding on our exhibit “All My Relations: A Seneca History,” co-curator and dancer Rosy Simmons described in her talk how she transformed her family history into contemporary dance and then wowed audiences with her performances at Columbia College.

In 2014 the museum hosted several world-renowned presenters to explore the richness of indigenous cultures. We were honored to host an Indigenous flute presentation by Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s Richard Graef and Emily Seabury Graef, Anishinabe/Choctaw and our Dr. Carlos Montezuma Honorary speaker Richard West, Jr. President & CEO, Gene Autry Museum, and Founding Director of the National Museum of the American Indian. International Champion Pow-Wow dancer, Mark Denning, Oneida, enlightened audiences of all ages with his presentations on Horses and the Great Lakes Tribes. Finally, the Wisconsin Dells Singers and Dancers came to celebrate the Ho-Chunk Ciporoke opening with full drum and dance demonstrations.

Collections

The Mitchell Museum’s collection has grown from 3,000 to over 10,000 pieces donated from all across the country to represent some of the country’s best American Indian made baskets, textiles, beadwork, visual arts, jewelry, and sculpture.

Taking steps to better document the collection, we revised our acquisitions procedures and examined our collection donation records to identify and begin correcting any incomplete information.

2014 donation highlights include this Nampeyo style pot donated by Pat Taylor and seven exquisite Native dolls representing the Papago, Quechan, Apache White Mountain, Northwest Plateau, and Arctic tribes.
**Temporary Exhibitions**

**Moccasins: Steps Through Time, April 2014**
Showcasing the best and most distinctive moccasins, this exhibit represented the major decorative and structural types of indigenous footwear worn throughout the United States and Canada.

**Storytelling: Inspiring Traditions for Generations, January 2014**
Storytellers hold a venerated place in the American Indian community because they are instrumental in keeping cultural traditions and language alive.

**Ho-Chunk Ciporoke, September 2014**
Built in partnership with the Ho-Chunk Nation, this is the southern-most traditional Ho-Chunk lodge built in over 500 years. **Now open for tours.**

**Did You Know They’re Native IV, August 2014**
Many famous and prominent people in the United States and Canada are Native, or have Native ancestry. Most of these people are household names or have done incredible things, but some are less commonly known. Learn more about the famous people you might already know who are Native, and about other Native people who have led fascinating lives such as Dr. Robbie E. Hood, an Atmospheric Scientist.

**All My Relations: A Seneca History, September 2014**
With choreographer and contemporary dancer, Rosy Simas, visitors could journey through the life of one Seneca family’s experience of treaty violations, family life and urban relocation, and reconciliation with one’s past.
The museum completed its first audit since separating from Kendall College in 2006. Once again the museum shows financial strength.

We developed new earned income services in the Native Peoples Today presentations that will help the museum's mission as well as the bottom line. Through the dedicated board and staff, we expanded our individual donor base by 10%, and maximized every donation invested in the museum.

A bequest from Elizabeth Seabury Mitchell established a new endowment to support museum operations.

As part of the museum's outreach efforts, we serve as the fiscal agent for the Chicago American Indian Community Collaborative. Monies are segregated in a separate bank account, but are included in the museum's financial statements.
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## Volunteers

We are supported by volunteers who greet visitors at the front desk, tend our Native garden, provide docent tours, assist exhibit installations, and more. Special thanks to these volunteers who contributed over 2,500 hours in 2014.

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The Mitchell Museum’s mission is to promote and share a deeper understanding and respect of American Indian peoples through the collection, preservation, and interpretation of their traditional and contemporary art and material culture.

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