

Trends

No Data Available

Legend:

▲ Increase,
 ▼ Decrease,
 ↔ Steady

Key Performance Areas

No Data Available

Productivity

No Data Available

Legend:

▲ Improving,
 ▼ Worsening,
 ↔ Maintaining

For more information on administrative key, and productivity measures, go to www.vaperforms.virginia.gov/agencylevel/index.cfm

Background & History

The Virginia Museum of Natural History, located in Martinsville, hereinafter referred to as the "Museum," was created in 1985 and became a state agency in 1988. The Museum, located in Southside Virginia, is responsible for preserving and protecting Virginia's natural history.

The Museum is entering its 30th year of existence. With no institution serving as a centralized repository for the Commonwealth's natural history collections, the Museum was built to fill a gap in service to our culture and natural heritage. To date, the Museum remains the state's only collections-based science institution, and excels in collections-based research, inquiry based science education, science teacher professional development, and exhibit experiences rich with the actual specimens and artifacts documenting the natural and cultural heritage of Virginia.

Primary Product & Services

The Museum serves as the State's natural history museum and its duties include the following: 1) investigating, preserving and exhibiting the various elements of natural history found in Virginia and other parts of the United States and the world; 2) fostering an understanding and appreciation of how man and the earth have evolved; 3) encouraging and promoting research in the varied natural heritage of Virginia and other parts of the world; 4) encouraging individuals and scholars to study our natural history and to apply this understanding of the past to the challenge of the future; 5) establishing a state museum of natural history in Virginia where specimens of natural history, especially those of Virginia origin, can be properly housed, cared for, cataloged and studied, and to ensure a permanent repository of our natural heritage; and 6) coordinating an efficient network in Virginia where researchers and the public can readily use the natural history material of the Museum, its affiliates, Virginia's institutions of higher education and other museums.

Customer Base

The key customers served by the Museum are students, teachers, children and families, scientists and researchers, tourists and eco-tourists, website visitors, and senior citizens. The Museum also serves the community by providing volunteer activity, including juniors and approximately 75 senior citizens. At present, the Museum has the capacity to serve a broad array of interested customers through programs, lectures, exhibits, the website, and special events. The programs, exhibits, events, publications, and website of the Museum are designed to appeal to a broad audience.

Customer Listing

No Data Available

Key Agency Statistics

The Museum hosted 5 exhibits and 31,000 visitors in-house and more than 220,000 visitors at 18 off-site locations and traveling exhibits in FY2013. The Museum held 7 special events in FY2013, educators reached 15,523 people through 680 educational

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programs, served 66 school divisions with 400 programs at the Museum and with 280 programs through outreach offices.

Museum scientists and collections staff have provided the following: published 4 peer-reviewed papers, 1 e-book, and 2 technical reports; conducted 33 programs, lectures and tours for more than 600 individuals; made 34 research presentations to more than 1100 individuals in Virginia and 13 research presentations to more than 600 individuals outside Virginia; responded to 37 requests for technical information and reviewed 113 technical documents; posted 71 new entries on the Museum's Paleontology Blog, which received more than 28,000 visits; provided content and assisted in planning, design, and fabrication of 2 major exhibits; provided loans of 282 scientific specimens to 8 other institutions and agencies; added 4,150 new records to the specimen catalogs and modified/updated 12,319 specimen records; and responded to 66 requests for information in the Museum library (from 101 adult visitors and 15 children).

Finances

The Museum's programs are supported by a variety of funding sources, including general fund support, special funds or earned income, and federal grants. Approximately 81% of the Museum's budget comes from the state's general fund, 16% from special funds, and 3% from the federal government. The Museum also receives capital improvement funds from the Virginia Public Building Authority for building maintenance. Over the past few years, reductions in general fund support have increased the Museum's reliance on fund-raising and federal grants.

Fund Sources

No Data Available

Revenue Summary Statement

The Museum collects revenues from miscellaneous sources such as admissions and events, sale of Museum publications, memberships, education programs, room rentals, gift shop sales, and city, county, and federal grants. These revenues are used for agency operations, exhibit fabrication, educators' payroll, education programs, and to meet customer demand for services.

Key Risk Factors

Several factors will have a significant impact on the agency over the next four years.

Budget constraints- Adaptation to necessary budget constraints placed added emphasis on drawing outside dollars to the museum's programs. Personnel have made greater use of competitive grant activities.

Research and Collections- Curators are the caretakers of the state's only centralized repository of collections representing extensive natural and cultural heritage. Staff vacancies have impacted the Museum's ability to conduct biological and paleontological programs.

Economy- A high unemployment rate has negatively impacted visitation. As a consequence, the admission fees were reduced and visitation remained constant, but the museum has not had an increase in revenue.

Performance Highlights

One of the best measures of the Museum's performance is the number of customers reached by various programs. In FY2013, the Museum reached over 30,000 visitors in-house and over 220,000 visitors at 18 off-site partnering organizations, state parks, schools,

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and visitor centers throughout the state. Educators reached over 15,000 people through 680 educational programs, all of which were correlated to standards of learning, served 66 school divisions, with 400 programs at the Museum and 280 programs through outreach offices.

Museum scientists produced 7 publications. They served 2,403 people through lectures, identifications, and peer review. The Paleontology Blog was updated 71 times and received over 28,000 hits world-wide. Scientists were key to the development of 2 new major exhibits, loaned almost 300 specimens to 8 different institutions, and made 4,150 new collections database entries representing 12,319 specimens.

The Museum delivers valuable services to the Commonwealth via original collections-based research on our natural heritage, dynamic exhibits, in-house and at offsite areas that focus on enhancing the public's science literacy and children's comprehension of Virginia SOLs, and providing educational opportunities that benefit families, students, and teachers. The Museum is increasing multiple visits per person by maintaining up-to-date and interesting programming. Staff continually improve operating revenue. Ultimately, the museum preserves and maintains the Commonwealth's natural history--the library of our natural heritage--for future generations.

Performance Measures

Management Discussion & Analysis

General Information about the Ongoing Status of the Agency

As the museum's extensive collections continue to grow and further benefit our education, exhibit, and research efforts, the Museum offers exciting opportunities for all Virginia citizens to be engaged in furthering their science literacy. This unique benefit generates tourism, with half of our onsite visitation coming from outside our area code, and over a quarter million people visiting our 18 offsite exhibits. Our modern facility in Martinsville, built in 2007, continues to protect and house the state's collections effectively. Highlights of collections growth include new specimens (including fossil species new to Virginia) from Carmel Church located in Caroline County, mammals from throughout the state, marine specimens from coastal habitats, and archaeological specimens from statewide locations will be the focus of current collections growth.

Research supports a Virginia science SOL-based curriculum of programs for school groups and homeschoolers. These programs are delivered by experts in early childhood education. In addition, surveys show that teachers who go through museum teacher professional development programs come out of these week-long immersive programs with a greater understanding of science instruction methods, and are more comfortable handling STEM-based topics. Due to the museum's draw (approximately one half of all visitors are from areas outside of Martinsville/Henry County), it is an important focal point for area tourism efforts. Visitors spend time at the Museum then shop and/or eat in local establishments. Museum staff purchase much of their supplies and equipment, or contract specialized workers, from local Small, Women, and Minority (SWAM) businesses, thus providing hundreds of thousands of dollars flowing through the local economy. The Museum is one of the larger employers in the area, thus supplying steady jobs.

Information Technology

The agency intends to improve the elementary, secondary, and vocational education function that provides educational programming at the museum and through outreach programs to local and regional K-12 schools. The agency will accomplish this through a non-major IT project called Adventure Classroom. The project is scheduled in FY2014 and will install a state-of-the-art videoconferencing science classroom at the Museum. The videoconferencing science classroom will serve as a distance-learning laboratory connected to the local and Virginia IT network where science education at-a-distance can be delivered, studied, and improved.

Adventure Classroom will promote opportunities for citizens to expand their knowledge, skills and cultural awareness through science, art, music, drama, literature, dance, and other educational services.

Workforce Development

The Museum's workforce will continue to face technological changes and frequent changes in systems and processes. One strategy the Museum will use to ensure a knowledgeable workforce is to provide professional development training to all of its employees. Continuous training will ensure that employees are able to adapt to operational changes and provide quality services. The Museum will also face challenges because of aging and retiring employees. Leadership training and cross-training programs will prepare future leaders and employees to succeed retiring employees.

Physical Plant

The Museum is housed in a state owned state-of-the-arts facility completed in 2007. It is located on a main highway in the cultural district of Martinsville and is very accessible to the public. Besides the day-to-day management of this building, the Museum operates

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two other buildings used as storage space. The Museum has no major physical plant projects planned.