

# Danville Museum of Fine Arts & History

## 2019-2021 Strategic Plan



Danville Museum  
of Fine Arts  
& History

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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At a time when the Danville Museum of Fine Arts & History faces many challenges, it is also a time ripe with opportunity. We seek to be perceived as a more progressive museum center with a strong emphasis on the arts and a focus on Danville's rich history beyond the current emphasis on the Sutherlin Family, the Civil War and Jefferson Davis. We seek to present a more balanced history of the Danville region with stronger focus on African American history to make the Danville Museum welcoming to all people.

To accomplish this, we seek input from community stakeholders and collaboration with underserved individuals to ensure we present relevant programs. We seek greater diversity for those who serve on our Board of Directors to ensure there is a broader representation of the community we represent. We pursue opportunities for staff and board development to help ensure that best practices are implemented with respect for cultural competence.

We seek the leadership of individuals with the knowledge and expertise required to help guide the decision-making process for selecting exhibitions, driving attendance, attracting younger audiences, and creating opportunities for fresh and diverse educational programming.

We continue to evaluate the use of the museum campus at 975 Main Street. We will plan and work through changes needed to exhibition spaces and focus on ongoing improvements needed by our facilities.

We will strive to generate financial support through individual and corporate donations, to secure the sustainability of our efforts.

## II. HISTORY

Danville Museum of Fine Arts & History (DMFAH), a 501 (c) (3) organization established in 1972, is a non-profit educational organization with a mission to promote art and history in the Dan River Region. The vision of the DMFAH Board of Directors is to provide leadership in promoting an integrated awareness of and participation in the Dan River Region's art, history, cultural life, and community. Located on Main Street in the heart of Danville, the museum is a wonderful space for learning and celebrations.

As a primary fine arts and historical institution in the region, DMFAH is valued as a major cultural resource for regional educators, artists, students, and researchers. DMFAH is a collecting institution, with focus on the mid-to-late-nineteenth-century period of history. To date, particular interest has been placed on the years 1857-1901, the period when the family of Major William T. Sutherlin occupied the historic mansion in which the museum is located. In the area of art, the museum collects 19th and 20th century art and the work of contemporary artists of the southeastern United States. The museum presents several high quality changing art exhibits throughout each year. In addition, DMFAH's current history exhibit, *Between the Lines: Danville 1861-1865*, gives visitors an understanding of Danville's role in the Civil War.

The museum collaborates with the community to promote and develop mission related programs for the general public, students, and visitors to the region. DMFAH partners include Danville Art League, Little Theatre of Danville, Danville and Pittsylvania County public school systems, private and parochial schools, home school groups, Head Start, Danville Public Library, Danville Community College, Averett University, Danville Historical Society, the Langhorne House, History United, City of Danville Public Works, Garden Club of Danville, and Old West End Association.

DMFAH offers numerous educational opportunities for the region’s young people and adults throughout the year in the Swanson Studios, galleries, auditorium, children’s “See & Do” Room, and off-site in classrooms. Educational programs include art classes, workshops and camps, focused tours based on the Virginia Standards of Learning, in-school programs, and special events. Among DMFAH’s recurring special events are Art on the Lawn, Storytelling Festival, and Ghosts & Gravestones, a walking tour of Grove Cemetery.

### **III. MISSION**

To promote history and art in the Dan River Region.

### **IV. VALUES**

Inclusion and diversity are cornerstones of the Danville Museum’s experience. Our goal is to foster a community that embraces and celebrates a wide range of backgrounds and perspectives. The board of directors, staff, and volunteers affirm and support many different dimensions of inclusion and diversity, including age, race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical abilities and qualities, country of origin, religion, culture, socio-economic status, and political views. We seek to ensure that the Danville Museum is representative, follows best practices, and creates a climate of inclusion. The Board of the Danville Museum welcomes suggestions from all museum members, and residents of Danville and the greater community.

### **V. VISION**

To be the Dan River Region’s leader for integrated awareness of history, culture and community.

### **VI. GOALS**

Danville Museum’s 2019-2021 Strategic Plan focuses on the following four goals, with action steps to meet needs that will strengthen the organization: (1) Museum Programming, (2) Collaborative Partnerships, (3) Resource Development, and (4) Board Development. These focus areas were selected by the board of directors with the following justification:

- **Programming** is important to the museum as it is the “service” or “product” our institution offers thereby engaging the interest and support from the community.
- **Collaborating** with organizations that align with the museum’s mission allows for greater access to shared resources and potentially engages a broader audience whose lives may be enriched by museum programming that could lead to greater financial support.
- **Identifying and increasing access to resources**, specifically financial resources, is vital for the sustainability of the organization.
- The **board of directors** must be representative of the diversity in the community and provide strong leadership for the strategic direction and financial security of the museum.

#### **Goal 1: Museum Programming**

- Secure a consultant for data gathering assessment of stakeholder perceptions
- Implement survey, analyze data, and process results
- Communicate and disseminate information to stakeholders
- Plan and implement new programming based on research results

#### **Goal 2: Collaborative Partnerships**

- Identify regional groups, businesses, and nonprofits that align with the museum’s mission
- Initiate dialog with each group to discuss mutual interests and potential areas for collaboration
- Conduct formal negotiations with interested parties
- Create and finalize agreement(s)

#### **Goal 3: Resource Development**

- Monitor and modify, as necessary, the current Development Plan
- Explore options for using current collections as a revenue-generating asset
- Form a committee to design an action plan for maximizing use of 126 Sutherlin
- Form a committee to explore creation of two museum campuses
- Review and restructure the volunteer program at the museum

#### **Goal 4: Board Development**

- Communicate clear and definitive expectations for each board member's participation on his/her selected committee(s)
- Communicate clear and definitive expectations for each committee chair
- Establish a protocol and schedule for training for each committee's participants
- Create and monitor a schedule for board members to document volunteer hours
- Create and monitor a schedule for board members to document in-kind donations

## **VII. SUMMARY & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

In July 2018, the Danville Museum of Fine Arts & History's Board of Directors embarked on planning for the creation and implementation of the next strategic plan. With the fundamental goal of creating a more progressive museum center, where art is without borders and history is without filters, the Danville Museum of Fine Arts & History solicited the guidance and expertise of an outside facilitator, Martha Walker, PhD., Community Viability Specialist Virginia Tech/Virginia Cooperative Extension. Upon completion of two intensive strategic planning work sessions, the following areas of focus were identified: Museum Programming, Collaborative Partnerships, Resource Development, and Board Development. Goals and a timeline for completion of each goal were generated targeting the identified areas of focus.

The Danville Museum of Fine Arts & History Board of Directors extends its gratitude to Dr. Martha Walker for her leadership, input, and skill in integrating the thoughts and suggestions of our board. Her energy, expertise, and enthusiasm are inspirational and motivating!

### **Intensive Work Session 1-August 13, 2018**

Kathy Milam, Executive Director  
Kristen Barker, Board President  
Joe Zappacosta, Board Vice President  
Jeff Gignac, Treasurer  
Mira Becher  
Patsi Compton  
Kim Demont  
Niki Fallis  
Sherry Gott  
Janet Laughlin  
Courtney Nicholas  
Carrie Petrick  
Rachel Schoonover  
Teresa Wiseman

### **Intensive Work Session II-November 5, 2018**

Kathy Milam, Executive Director  
Kristen Barker, Board President  
Mira Becher  
Patsi Compton  
Kim Demont  
Niki Fallis  
Janet Laughlin  
Courtney Nicholas  
Chinique Scott