



MAKING CONNECTIONS

A Year of Discovery and Impact

JULY 2023 - JUNE 2024

HMSC HARVARD MUSEUMS of SCIENCE & CULTURE

DISCOVERY AROUND *Every Corner*

Our mission is to foster curiosity and a spirit of discovery in visitors of all ages, enhancing public understanding of, and appreciation for, the natural world, science, and human cultures. From delicate glass flowers to ancient Egyptian coffins, our collections not only awe but inspire. Since our partnership was established, more than three million visitors have experienced the wonder of the Harvard Museums of Science & Culture.



FROM THE *Executive Director*

The Harvard Museums of Science & Culture (HMSC) provide a window into the past—and a glimpse into the future. In this first-ever annual report, it's my honor to share what we've accomplished over the past year.

As the third Executive Director, I'm fortunate to have inherited a thriving organization thanks to the succession of leadership from my wonderful predecessors, Jane Pickering and Brenda Tindal, and the creativity and enthusiasm of the entire HMSC team.

HMSC was formed in 2012 with the vision to make the collections and groundbreaking research at six of Harvard's museums available and accessible to the broader public. This partnership includes the Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments, the Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East, the Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology, and the Harvard Museum of Natural History, the public face of three research institutions: Harvard University's Herbaria, Mineralogical and Geological Museum, and Museum of Comparative Zoology.

Through these collaborative relationships, HMSC creates high-quality exhibits and educational programming for the general public, ensuring Harvard's world-class collections and innovative research advancements are available for all to experience and enjoy. To that end, we have a range of free and reduced-admission programs and events throughout the year to help ensure everyone can access the museums.

The staff and volunteers at HMSC, our partner museums, various stakeholders, and affiliated faculty, students, and academic departments form a large community committed to our mission to foster curiosity and a spirit of discovery in visitors of all ages. In the pages of this report, you'll be inspired by the collective impact we're making at Harvard and beyond.

I invite you to share in our enthusiasm for the natural world, science, and human cultures and join us as we face our future together.

Sincerely,

Caroline Jean Fernald

Caroline Jean Fernald, PhD
Executive Director



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OUR IMPACT *at a Glance*

3 million visitors
from around the world
since 2012

305,203 visitors in 2024
42% of visitors toured
the museums for free

40 programs and events
in FY24

45 staff members, with an
average tenure of more than
12 years at Harvard

175 active volunteers
contributed 4,827 hours of
service in FY24

INSPIRING *Discovery at Harvard*

As part of Harvard, we serve our campus community by collaborating on grant-funded research and public engagement projects and exhibits through partnerships with academic departments, research centers, and cultural organizations across the university.

HMSC staff helps train students and emerging scholars on the fine art of sharing their passion for museums with visitors during events and festivals such as I ♥ Science and the Amazing Archaeology Fair. We also create educational opportunities and inspire innovative ideas for faculty and students eager to draw connections between science, history, art, archaeology, and more.



HMSC

Partner Museums



Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East

The Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East (HMANE) explores the rich history of cultures of the ancient Near and Middle East, serving Harvard's teaching mission, the general public, and researchers with cutting-edge, tech-enhanced exhibits.

Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology

Guided by the principles of ethical stewardship, the Peabody Museum (PMAE) is an anthropology museum where visitors can experience 10,000 years of cultural history across six continents and eight galleries.



Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments

Housing nearly 25,000 objects dating from about 1400 to the present, the Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments (CHSI) enhances our understanding of the human history of scientific education, practice, and discovery.



Harvard Museum of Natural History

Sparking the spirit of discovery in people of all ages, the Harvard Museum of Natural History (HMNH) is the public face of three renowned research museums:

- **Museum of Comparative Zoology (MCZ):** Focusing on the comparative relationships of animal life, MCZ comprises approximately 21 million extant and fossil invertebrate and vertebrate specimens ranging from shells to DNA.
- **Harvard University Herbaria (HUH):** With over 5 million preserved plant and fungal specimens, HUH's collections represent the largest university-based herbarium in the world.
- **Mineralogical and Geological Museum at Harvard University (MGMH):** Home to one of the world's finest collections of geological material, MGMH furthers Earth science research and education at the university and worldwide.



HARVARD MUSEUM
of the **ANCIENT NEAR EAST**

Founded in 1889, the museum explores the rich history of cultures of the ancient Near and Middle East. Serving the Harvard teaching mission, the general public, and researchers worldwide, HMANE features ancient Egyptian coffins, life-sized casts of famous Mesopotamian monuments, a full-scale replica of an ancient Israelite house, and ancient tablets containing the earliest forms of writing.

New Tours at HMANE



HMANE Touch Tour

This year, HMSC offered blind and visually impaired visitors the unique opportunity to touch antiquity at HMANE. These Touch Tours explored the popular exhibition *From Stone to Silicone: Recasting Mesopotamian Monuments*, which features casts meticulously fabricated by Harvard students and museum curators.

The casts were created from plaster recreations of ancient reliefs that once hung in the throne rooms and banquet halls of the palaces of Nimrud and Nineveh, the massive homes of the great Assyrian rulers Ashurnasirpal II (883–859 BCE) and Ashurbanipal (668–627 BCE).



Bilingual Audio Tour

As part of our ongoing commitment to making our partner museums accessible to all, HMSC launched a Spanish-language version of an audio tour for the *Mediterranean Marketplaces: Connecting the Ancient World* exhibition.

This educational tour explores how the movement of goods, peoples, and ideas around the ancient Mediterranean transformed the lives and livelihoods of people at all levels of society, driving innovations that have had lasting impacts—even on the modern world. To expand the exhibition’s accessibility to a global scale, HMANE created 80 **interactive 3D models** for online visitors to explore.



Bringing Ancient Assyrian Sculptures to Life

HMANE launched its new Snapchat lens, *Art of Intimidation: Journey to Ancient Assyria*. Visitors can enjoy this augmented-reality experience in the exhibit *From Stone to Silicone: Recasting Mesopotamian Monuments*. This immersive new lens brings large casts of sculpted panels from the famed royal palaces of ancient Nineveh and Nimrud to life.

For inspiration, Chief Curator Adam Aja looked to games such as *Assassin's Creed: Origins*, set in ancient Egypt, and *Apotheon*, animated in the style of ancient Greek vase decorations. A multidisciplinary team then created the experience. Cowritten by Adam Aja and Senior Lecturer on Assyriology, Gojko Barjamovic, *Art of Intimidation* engages visitors in a lively exploration of palace life around 640 BCE.



My goal for HMANE is to find new and innovative ways for visitors to explore our diverse collections. In 2024, we brought visitors on a digital journey to ancient Assyria through our customized Snapchat filter *Art of Intimidation*, which colorizes, soundscapes, and animates palace wall art. HMANE's partnership with HMSC aided in bringing the animated artwork and accompanying behind-the-scenes video to a wide and enthusiastic audience."

Adam Aja, PhD

Chief Curator, Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East



One of the HMANE and HMSC collaborations that I'm most proud of is the mixed reality enhancement to our Mesopotamian exhibition, *Art of Intimidation: Journey to Ancient Assyria*. The show immerses visitors in the ancient city of Nineveh—in modern-day Iraq—around 640 BCE. Aim your phone at a relief using Snapchat and it magically comes to life with animations, restored ancient colors, sound effects, and even a palace guard who tells you what's going on."

Peter Der Manuelian, PhD

Barbara Bell Professor of Egyptology
 Director, Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East
 Harvard Anthropology Director of Graduate Studies



Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology

A renowned anthropology museum, PMAE cares for cultural heritage, including items and images, of diverse people from around the world and across time. PMAE has a complicated and sometimes difficult history, but today it is guided by our principles of ethical stewardship. The museum aims to welcome and inspire visitors to connect and engage with the collections and each other through exhibits, research, and programs.

Ethical Stewardship

A message from Stephanie Mach, PhD

Curator of North American Collections at the Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology

“PMAE staff continue to work on ethical stewardship goals by interrogating our colonial history and past efforts while also working to reconnect the cultural items in our care with the communities from which they originate. Often, our Indigenous visitors express that cultural items are living beings, considered relatives, and that they have a spirit. It is an honor and a responsibility to care for collections at PMAE, knowing that our work impacts the spiritual well-being of both the cultural items and the Indigenous communities to which they are related.



When revised regulations for the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) went into effect in January 2024, the Curatorial and Collections departments at PMAE worked closely with the Exhibitions department at HMSC to remove funerary belongings and potentially sacred objects or objects of cultural patrimony from display. We also installed new text panels throughout the museum describing our commitments to ethical stewardship, explaining why our exhibitions are always changing as we build and nurture respectful, open, and reciprocal relationships with Indigenous and descendant communities.”



Partnering with HMSC has been fantastic for the Peabody. Bilingual K-12 classes, spectacular cultural celebrations, and the groundbreaking Virtual Archaeologist program enable us to reach audiences near and far, which is vital for an anthropology museum caring for global collections.”

Jane Pickering

William & Muriel Seabury Howells Director of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology

Manifest: Thirteen Colonies

Wendel A. White, Distinguished Professor of Art at Stockton University and the 2021 recipient of the Robert Gardner Fellowship in Photography, launched his exciting new exhibition, *Manifest: Thirteen Colonies*, at PMAE on May 18, 2024.

White's powerful photography captures African American materials from collections across the 13 original U.S. colonies and Washington, DC. Accompanying the exhibit is the monograph *Wendel A. White: Manifest | Thirteen Colonies* (Radius Books/Peabody Museum Press, Summer 2024), featuring insights from Brenda Dione Tindal, Cheryl Finley, Deborah Willis, Leigh Raiford, and PMAE Curator of Visual Anthropology Ilisa Barbash.



White's subjects are rare, singular objects—such as the Clark baby dolls. Some images are related to famous historical figures such as Malcolm X (a tape recorder he used), James Baldwin (his inkwell), and Zora Neale Hurston (manuscripts including *Their Eyes Were Watching God*). Other images speak to slavery and empowerment.

"These artifacts are the forensic evidence of Black life and events in the United States."—Wendel A. White

A New Interpretation for Encounters in the Americas

This year, in collaboration with PMAE experts, HMSC unveiled a refreshed *Encounters in the Americas* exhibit—now featuring new, modern interpretations and Spanish translations. The exhibition explores the Indigenous communities of Mexico and Central and South America, and these updates offer a deeper dive into the struggles and cultural survival of contemporary Maya, Panamanian Guna, and Amazonian native groups.

The exhibit's new introduction panels include an updated interpretation written by Sarah Clunis, PMAE's previous Director of Academic Partnerships and Curator of African Collections, and Jenny Carballo, Research Associate of Mesoamerican Lab and Lecturer of the Department of Anthropology.

Other highlights include new murals, a map of archaeological sites, a timeline of significant cultural moments in the history of Mexico and Central America, and a 400-pound Mesoamerican sculpture called a chacmool.



In my capacity as FAS Chief Campus Curator, it has been a privilege to continue to partner with HMSC and affiliated research museums through several key programs and exhibitions during the 2024–2025 academic year. These efforts reflect our shared commitment to advancing curatorial innovation, knowledge production, and public engagement at the intersection of the arts, science, and culture."

Brenda Tindal

Chief Campus Curator, Faculty of Arts and Sciences
Senior Advisor on Academic Community Engagement



Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments

H A R V A R D U N I V E R S I T Y

Harvard University has been acquiring scientific instruments since 1672, and in 1948, CHSI was established to preserve these objects for teaching and research in the history of science and technology. CHSI is one of the three largest university collections of its kind in the world. Stewarded by Harvard's Department of the History of Science since 1987, the collection is an integral resource for students and faculty in the Greater Boston area.

Surveillance: From Vision to Data

CHSI and HMSC launched their interactive exhibition, *Surveillance: From Vision to Data*, which was on view from September 22, 2023–June 22, 2024. Curated by Harvard PhD candidates in the History of Science and in Film and Visual Studies, the thought-provoking exhibition delved into the multifaceted concept of surveillance.

Student curator Aaron Gluck-Thaler explains, "The exhibition assembles a diverse collection of scientific instruments and places them into their multiple historical contexts. What emerges from their intertwined histories is unmistakable. The history of surveillance is inseparable from scientific knowledge production about data."

The exhibition examines how powerful entities harness data to perpetuate social hierarchies.

According to student curator Matt Goerzen, "The exhibit explores how the data produced through surveillance practices can serve a range of outcomes. A single dataset can be made to mean different things—as when measurements of human bodies are used to support contradictory conclusions, or when an individual's self-collected health data is suddenly deployed against them in a legal proceeding."

Student curator Carolyn Bailey adds, "Surveillance mediates many aspects of public and private life. While we tend to think of surveillance technologies as tools of control, they are also tools of witnessing and entertainment. Many of us knowingly use digital apps that violate our privacy because they are fun or offer new insights. In questioning the historical role of data surveillance practices in shaping the world around us, the exhibition examines how we adapt to them."



"Surveillance depends on data: technologies for producing data, techniques for analyzing data, and ways of making sense of data."—Curator Aaron Gluck-Thaler



CHSI's partnership with HMSC has allowed us to welcome nearly 20,000 visitors to Putnam Gallery each year. We are especially excited to launch a new exhibition in fall 2024, titled *Measuring Difference*. Guest curated by Professor Gabriela Soto Laveaga, the exhibit will be CHSI's first bilingual exhibition. We're also looking forward to further integrating our collection within teaching and research at the University and continuing to play an important role in the HMSC community."

Hannah Marcus, PhD

John and Ruth Hazel Associate Professor of the Social Sciences; Faculty Director, Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments

Joshua Gorman, PhD

Executive Director, Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments



Harvard Museum of Natural History

HMNH was established in 1998 as the public face of three research museums: the Museum of Comparative Zoology (MCZ), the Harvard University Herbaria (HUH), and the Mineralogical & Geological Museum at Harvard University (MGMH). Presenting these incomparable collections and scientists' research across the University, the museum aims to enhance public understanding and appreciation of the natural world.

Frogs and Mineral Eggs

This year, HMNH's lobby featured intimate portraits of amphibian life by renowned herpetologist and University of Delhi professor Sathyabhama Das Biju—also known as the "Frogman of India." Meanwhile, the Earth & Planetary Sciences Gallery showcased *Mineral Eggs*, a collection of 250 polished egg-shaped minerals from London collector Robert Myers—including eggs made from rare minerals such as beryl, tourmaline, spodumene, and chrysoberyl.



Collaborating with HMSC has allowed us to showcase the unique beauty and scientific significance of these mineral egg carvings to a broader audience. It's been a privilege to work alongside such a dedicated team who share our passion for education and preservation."

Raquel Alonso-Perez, PhD
Curator, Mineralogical & Geological Museum

The Blaschkas at the Microscope: Lessons in Botany

The famous Ware Collection of Blaschka Glass Models of Plants (the Glass Flowers) from the Harvard University Herbaria includes life-like representations of 847 plant species with remarkably accurate anatomical sections and enlarged flower parts. These models were made by Leopold Blaschka and his son, Rudolf, between 1889 and 1893.



After nearly a quarter century, these models triumphantly returned in the new exhibit, *The Blaschkas at the Microscope: Lessons in Botany*, within the [Glass Flowers Gallery](#) at the Harvard Museum of Natural History. The exhibition, which opened on April 16, 2024, introduces visitors to intricate and complex microscopic structures involved in the reproduction of spore-producing plants and fungi.



Sea Monsters: Wonders of Nature and Imagination

The idea of sea monsters has captivated people for centuries. On June 29, 2024, HMSC and HMNH invited visitors to embark on a daring voyage into the depths of human imagination in the new exhibition *Sea Monsters: Wonders of Nature and Imagination*.

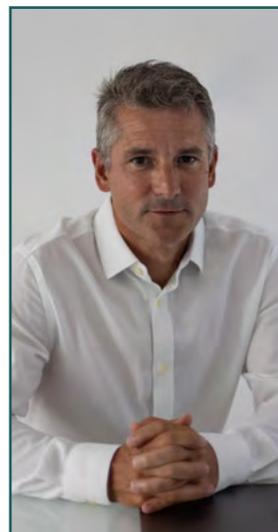
The new exhibition is inspired by a popular course on sea monsters taught by Peter Girguis, Guest Curator and Harvard Professor of Organismic and Evolutionary Biology. From a megalodon tooth to an ancient telescope decorated with sea serpents, the exhibit features a wide range of specimens, objects, and artwork from MCZ, PMAE, CHSI, and the Harvard Map Collection.



As a marine biologist, I love sharing stories about humanity's relationship with the ocean. I am delighted to have collaborated with HMSC staff on the *Sea Monsters* exhibit, which gives visitors a chance to glimpse at real deep-sea creatures, learn about traditional and modern lore, and consider whether sea monsters actually exist (hint: they do, but that might not mean what you think)."

Peter Girguis, PhD

Professor of Organismic and Evolutionary Biology
Adjunct Oceanographer, Applied Ocean Engineering
and Physics, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution



The MCZ has the perfect partner in HMSC, working together to showcase our most interesting specimens and tell compelling stories of evolutionary biology and conservation. HMSC is a perfect vehicle to support funding grants for curators who can build outreach opportunities through research grants. We are lucky to have HMSC as our closest institution on campus."

Gonzalo Giribet, PhD

Director, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Curator
in Invertebrate Zoology, Acting Curator in Malacology
Professor of Organismic and Evolutionary Biology,
Alexander Agassiz Professor of Zoology

Ants and Termites: Nature's Super Organisms

HMSC launched the new exhibit *Ants and Termites: Nature's Super Organisms* at the HMNH on March 16, 2024. This grant-supported exhibition was curated with the support of MCZ at Harvard.

HMSC Voices



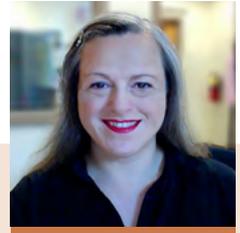
I coordinate external events at HMSC. Working with clients and caterers to create a meaningful experience and seeing their guests, many of whom have not visited before, appreciating the museums after hours is very gratifying."

Angie Foss
Visitor Services Representative



I love walking through the galleries and seeing people of all ages so engaged with the exhibits. I also love telling people about where I work and that all are welcome to check out this amazing place open to the public at Harvard."

Julia Horvath
Membership and Development Associate



I enjoy talking to visitors and seeing them gasp with delight, disbelief, and wonder at whatever tale I am telling. A good Gallery Guide can make even a short factoid a fun little story for all ages."

Ian Adler
HMSC Volunteer



I feel privileged to be able to volunteer at HMSC and enjoy meeting people from all over the world and the camaraderie of the volunteers."

Sue Martin
HMSC Volunteer





The volunteer team consists of amazing people to learn from! I also enjoy interacting with visitors and getting to hear their stories."

Misha Gupta
HMSC Volunteer



I help people engage with museum spaces and learn in an informal setting. I enjoy thinking about education in museums and that I get to do different things every day!"

Arielle Moon
Senior Museum Educator



Everyone at HMSC is motivated by an inner drive to bring science and culture to visitors that may not know about the museums or have not crossed paths with them in a long time. There is always something for everyone, and we work hard to keep things fresh."

Bethany Carland-Adams
Public Relations Specialist



What I love most is getting to share my love of the museum with people from around the world."

Maria Collins
HMSC Volunteer



As a graduate student interested in science communication, HMSC inspires me to improve and keep pushing my own skill boundaries to make sure I am communicating my science to a general audience using the right tools and language. Initiatives within HMSC are focused in doing so, and I am lucky to be part of this community."

Carlos Rivera-López
Harvard Graduate Student





CULTIVATING DISCOVERY WITH *Our Programming*

Throughout the year, we invite visitors to experience special programs, lectures, screenings, and events designed to ignite their curiosity about the natural world, science, and human cultures.

Signature Events

HMSC signature events joyously welcome visitors to the museums throughout the year.

I ♥ Science

Held in February every year, I ♥ Science encourages visitors to engage their curiosity by partnering with local amateur clubs dedicated to minerals, carnivorous plants, fungi, shells, and telescope making. Nearly 1,000 visitors attended this event in 2024.

National Fossil Day

HMSC's National Fossil Day festival attracted over 1,100 attendees on October 7, 2023. With lightning talks by paleontologists and table-based displays, museumgoers met members of Harvard's vertebrate and invertebrate paleontology labs and collections.

Amazing Archaeology Fair

Held at PMAE and HMANE, HMSC's Amazing Archaeology Fair showcased Harvard graduate students' research photos, tools, and discoveries. Activities—such as playing the oldest known board game—encouraged active discussions between Harvard students and museum visitors about ancient Egyptian and Aztec society.



HMSC has given me the chance to present my science to a broader audience. Presenting here challenges me to know my research in-depth enough to explain it to anyone, whether it's to middle-schoolers, the general public, or even fellow scientists. It also gives me the chance to share the work I'm doing and show people that anyone can be a scientist. This is one of the best ways to increase accessibility to science!"

Juan Orozco
Harvard Graduate Student

Celebremos El Salvador

HMSC celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month by offering the new bilingual family festival Celebremos El Salvador. The free event attracted more than 800 visitors, most of whom were Spanish speakers visiting for the first time.

The Salvadoran Ministry of Culture presented a live virtual tour of the UNESCO World Heritage site Joya de Cerén, which was buried under a volcanic eruption in 600 CE. This event is one of several HMSC initiatives to increase Latino awareness of museum resources for lifelong learning.

Summer Solstice Celebration

Visitors of all ages joined HMSC on the longest day of the year to explore the museum galleries for free and enjoy lively musical and circus performances. Crowd-favorite activities included flower crown making and miniature golf.

ArtsThursdays

The presidential initiative sponsored by the Harvard University Committee on the Arts provided generous funding for HMSC to develop a series of unique evening programs highlighting connections between the arts and sciences through exhibitions, collections, informal learning opportunities, and art-making activities.

From September 2023 to June 2024, HMSC presented nine ArtsThursdays events offering free access to the galleries of HMNH and PMAE—ultimately engaging 5,300 visitors from more than 110 towns in Massachusetts.

Free Programs for Adults

As part of its free public program series for adult audiences, HMSC presented:



Six evening lectures

on a variety of topics, including archaeological research at ancient Egyptian sites and the pitfalls of using genetics to predict human traits



Two film screenings

on stories of human resilience, such as a Massachusetts lobster fisherman who was swallowed by a whale



Two conversations

bringing people together to discuss topics like the status and future of Navajo cultural heritage in museums

Where We Belong: Tree Chuangs



For this interactive outdoor art project and experience, HMSC collaborated with community members ranging from Harvard students to senior citizens. Community participants responded to inspirational prompts and crafted stunning fabric panels. Visiting artist Xinan Ran then quilted these panels into traditional Chinese chuangs ranging from 6 to 18 feet tall. These chuangs, typically covered in Buddhist prayers, were hung from towering trees before HMNH last fall.

During a special opening event, visitors were invited to step inside the chuangs and experience a moment of introspection. Upon exiting, they shared their thoughts with one another. The chuangs delighted visitors and helped advance our mission of making museum resources and learning available to all.



SUPPORTING STUDENTS IN THEIR *Pursuit of Knowledge*

We're committed to serving Harvard students through research collaborations, training opportunities, and educational experiences. We also support K-12 students and teachers in their exploration of natural history, the history of science, anthropology, and archaeology.



Partnerships with Harvard Students

PMAE Student Tours

This year, HMSC educators trained Harvard students to lead PMAE tours that connected visitors with the research, teaching, and Indigenous engagement surrounding the cultural heritage in the museum's care. Harvard student guides grew their confidence and public speaking skills by providing over 100 free tours that were enjoyed by 549 visitors in 2024.

Training the Next Generation of Science Communicators

Now in its seventh year, the Science Education Partners program allows Harvard graduate students and postdoctoral researchers from departments across the sciences to collaborate with HMSC to create meaningful public engagement about current scientific research and increase public science literacy. This year, eight scientists across several Harvard science departments participated.

The program included a workshop on science communication led by HMSC museum educators to help Harvard students learn how to share their research with nonscientists. They used their newfound skills to share their discoveries with visitors through the innovative, student-led HMSC program, Science Spotlights at the HMNH. During bustling weekends inside the museum, visitors have learned about topics ranging from zombie ants and human/dog relations to ancient asteroid impacts.



Working as a Tour Guide has been so much more than I hoped for. We received comprehensive training, worked with a collaborative team, and delivered tours to inquisitive and engaged visitors from all around the world. The position taught me transferable skills that I will continue to apply as an aspiring physician, educator, and scientist."

Alisia Pan
Medical Student



Presenting my research to the public was a fantastic experience! I got the chance to break down complex concepts for museum visitors, which helped me refine my science communication skills and appreciate the broader impact of my work beyond academia. The curious questions from kids made it even more rewarding!"

Val Aguilar
Science Education Partner
Harvard PhD Student

Student Board

The HMSC Student Board is composed of Harvard undergraduate students who are committed to raising the profile of HMSC museums in Harvard students' social lives. Through a collaborative process with HMSC staff, the student board spearheaded several significant initiatives this year, including running behind-the-scenes tours and launching an Instagram account to raise awareness of the museums.

The board welcomed potential incoming students during Harvard Visitas for an exclusive Night at the Museum. Additionally, as part of first-year orientation activities, they issued asynchronous challenges; creating a dating profile for museum specimens was a crowd favorite!

Enhancing the Educational Experience

Harvard University classes such as Latinx Studies, Creative Writing, Freshman Seminars, and Harvard General Education courses visit the museums in small groups with their teaching fellows throughout the year to learn directly from HMSC exhibits. This year, approximately 740 students visited HMSC museums as part of their classes.

Teen Saturdays at the Museum!

Teen Saturdays at the Museum! is a new monthly bilingual program that emerged from the Institute of Museum and Library Services grant-funded initiative Hear Me Out/Escúchame that ran from 2021–2023. Teen Saturdays is the first recurring program designed for teenagers in HMSC's portfolio.

The program consists of three-hour workshops taught in English and Spanish, introducing youth interested in Latino heritage to museum exhibits, programs, and technologies. Participants who attend three or more sessions receive a complimentary museum membership, and at the end of the year, they're invited to apply for paid summer jobs or join the HMSC volunteer team.



Welcoming K-12 Schools and Youth Groups

HMSC's Education departments support many audiences, from young children to adults. The mission-central work supports broad public understanding and targeted communities, such as Spanish-speaking learners in bilingual programs. Educators collaborate with Harvard curators, faculty, and students to provide the public access to museum resources.

This year, our team:

- ✔ **Taught 25 unique school programs**, 50% of which are offered in Spanish and English
- ✔ **Lowered the barrier to entry with fee reductions** to enable more students to attend these one-of-a-kind museum programs
- ✔ **Served 29,277 K-12 students and teachers** who explored everything from how the earth has changed over 600 million years to how Indigenous peoples use natural resources
- ✔ **Led teacher professional development classes**, often funded by federal research grants, to help educators learn from Harvard faculty, improve their understanding of complex topics, and develop new skills to take back to their classrooms



WAYS TO GET *Involved*

Ensuring Equitable Access

To help share the museums with a broad audience, we provide many opportunities for free admission, special events, and programs. During 2024, free visits represented 42% of all museum admissions. These include HMSC members, the Harvard University community, and many who otherwise might not experience all HMSC has to offer. Free admissions are also extended to EBT and WIC cardholders, active-duty military, and Massachusetts K-12 teachers. Notable new partnerships this year include free admission opportunities for participants from Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Massachusetts and families staying at the Safety Net Family Shelter in East Cambridge. In addition, all Massachusetts residents may visit for free on Sunday mornings and Wednesday afternoons.

Ways to Get Involved

There are so many ways to join our community by supporting HMSC:

- ✓ **Become an HMSC Member**—Support our work while enjoying benefits like unlimited free admission, discounts, and invitations to exclusive member-only events.
- ✓ **Visit The Shop @ HMNH**—Our shop has had a phenomenal year, with an ever-evolving curated stock of books, one-of-a-kind minerals, jewelry, and other collectibles. A planned renovation on the horizon for 2025 will expand the Shop’s sales floor and make shopping easier and more accessible for all visitors.
- ✓ **Host an event at HMSC**—HMSC’s function rental program opens the doors to some of Harvard’s most visited spaces for private, after-hours events such as departmental meetings and celebrations, student events, bar and bat mitzvahs, weddings, and anniversary parties.
- ✓ **Volunteer at HMSC**—Volunteers provide critical support for the visitor experience, whether it be welcoming guests, engaging visitors with hands-on activities, or participating in HMSC festivals and programs.
- ✓ **Learn more**—Discover how you can help support our mission by visiting hmsc.harvard.edu/support-hmsc.

Thank You

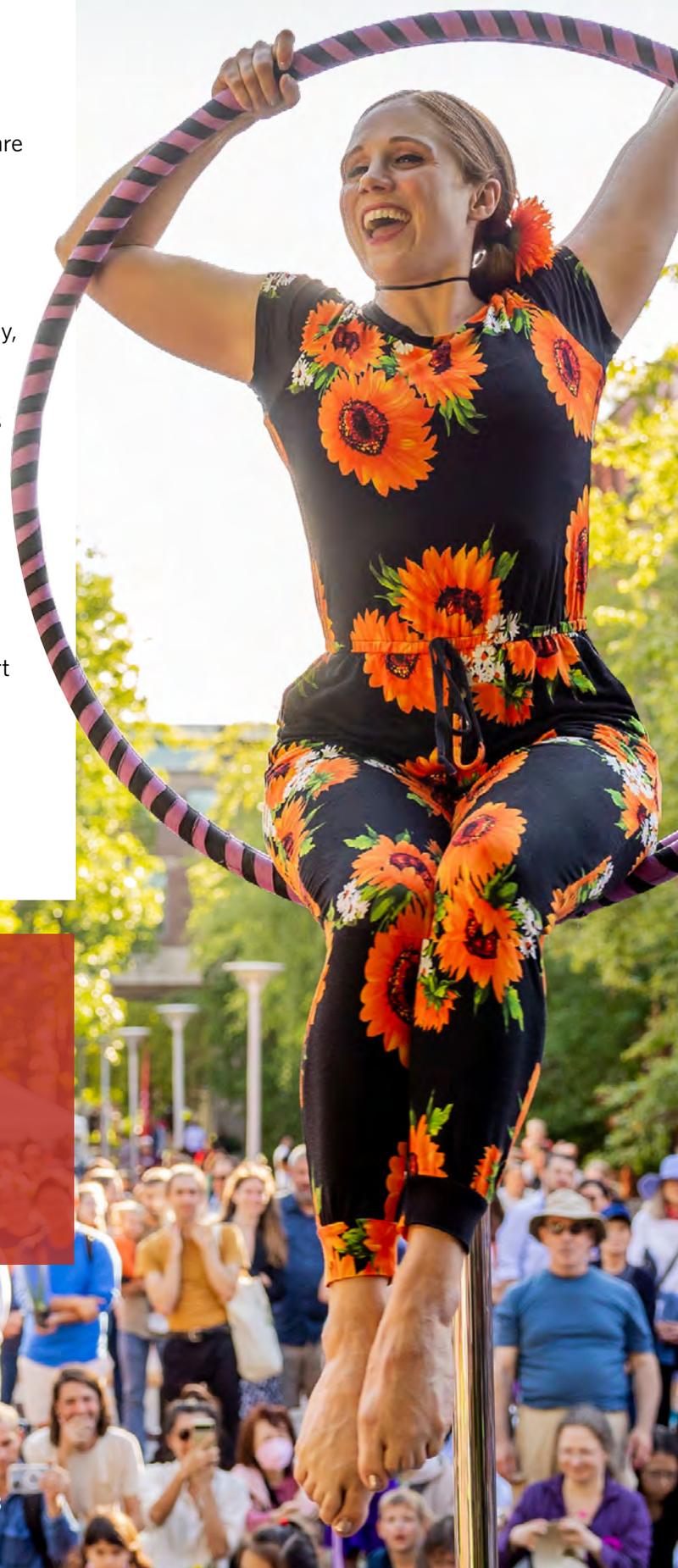
HMSC relies on donations to support everything we do—from engaging lectures to new exhibitions. We are especially grateful to the donors and members who helped us extend free access in 2024:

- **Library Partner Program**—Thanks to one anonymous family, HMSC's Library Partner Program distributes free passes to libraries in communities with high poverty rates. Additionally, HMSC offers discounted admission to patrons of local libraries who do not qualify for the free program. Over 12,000 visitors used these passes for admission in 2024.
- **Day of Free Admission**—The Highland Street Foundation sponsored one day of free admission for all visitors during 2024's busy April school vacation week.
- **Summer Solstice Celebration**—In June, the Massachusetts Cultural Council provided support for HMSC's free Summer Solstice Celebration.

• **Donations in any amount support our mission.**
• **Make a donation now.**
• hmsc.harvard.edu/support-hmsc

A special thank you to our photographers who helped capture every moment:

- Caitlin Cunningham
- Tony Rinaldo
- Julieta Sarmiento
- Niles Singer



Harvard Museums of Science & Culture

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Harvard Museum of the Ancient Near East

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