



CULTURAL PROGRAMMING  
*for* PEOPLE WITH MEMORY LOSS

# 2021 Virtual Conference Program

## **SPARK! Conference Day 1**

**Tuesday November 2nd**

**12:30 - 1:30 cst**

### **Welcome & What is SPARK!?**

Tricia Blasko, Curator of Education, Racine Art Museum & Jenn Edginton, Director of Interpretation, Illinois State Museum & Ellie Gettinger, Education Director, Jewish Museum Milwaukee & Dawn Kocaja, Accessibility Coordinator, Milwaukee Public Museum & Oliver Zornow, Executive Director, Building for Kids Children's Museum

Learn all about SPARK! from a diverse panel of SPARK! Alliance members. This session will highlight the core values of the overall SPARK! program and how each varying institution caters to it to reflect their organization's mission. See video snippets from programs – to see real SPARK! programs in action – and hear straight from the experts why SPARK! is an important program for any cultural institution to offer. This panel will focus on the history of SPARK!, how to design a meaningful program, the impact to the individual and their families, and how to gain institutional buy-in to implement a program in your community.

**1:30 - 2:30 cst**

### **Keynote Session with Dr Percy Giffin**

#### **Advancing the Science: The Latest in Alzheimer's and Dementia Research**

Percy Griffin (he/him/his), PhD, Director, Scientific Engagement, Alzheimer's Association

Alzheimer's is a global health problem with more than 6 million people living with the disease in the US alone. Tremendous gains have been made in the understanding of the science and basic biology underlying Alzheimer's and other dementias. These advances are leading to great

strides in strategies for prevention, detection, diagnostics, and therapeutic interventions. Despite all the progress we've made so far, disparities still exist in dementia. The Alzheimer's Association is a global leader in research, mobilizing the field to advance the vision of a world without Alzheimer's and all other dementia. This talk will provide a broad overview of the landscape of the disease, highlight early detection and diagnosis, and discuss healthcare disparities.

**2:30 - 3:30 cst**

## **Diversity and Accessibility**

**(Choose one session via breakout rooms, Same sessions offered both days)**

### **DEAI 101**

Jenn Edginton (she/her/hers), Director of Interpretation, Illinois State Museum

DEAI is more than just a buzzword, it's a way of transforming your institution. In this workshop come learn the basics of DEAI, including exploring power dynamics, shared language, and further resources, as well as learn how your institution can be a place of inclusive change to be welcoming to all.

### **Accessibility Awareness & Planning**

Dawn Koceja (she/her), CDAC, Accessibility Coordinator, MPM

**(via breakout room)**

Learn how to expand your programs and services to fit the needs of people with disabilities. During this program, we review the ADA laws and best practices for communication and customer service, discover how to provide appropriate accommodations, and learn how to build partnerships in the community to support inclusive experiences and environments.

**3:30 - 4:30 cst**

## **Engagement Sessions**

**(Choose one session via breakout rooms)**

### **Engaging the Senses through Nature (1A)**

Shelly Rollins (she/her/hers), Education Specialist/Summer Camp Director, Schlitz Audubon Nature Center & Liz Herzmann (she/her/hers), DNR Wildlife Educator, Horicon Marsh Education Center

Singing birds, fragrant flowers, colorful sunsets - these are just a few sensory experiences we can have in nature. Join us as we lead you through a mini SPARK! program based on the programming at our nature centers. Songs, corny jokes, live animals and natural artifacts are some of the tools that we use to engage our participants. Join us to learn about simple activities you can use

to bring nature into your programs. **Optional Materials:** an empty picture frame, leaves, seeds, natural objects

## **Multi-Sensory Art Engagement Program (1B)**

Tricia Blasko, Curator of Education, Racine Art Museum & Claire Carlson, Audience-Centered Program Coordinator, John Michael Kohler Arts Center

**(in the main zoom room)**

Learn the art of engagement for people with memory loss, through the skilled expertise of educators from John Michael Kohler Arts Center and the Racine Art Museum, two of the founding SPARK! Alliance organizations. Explore tips and tricks for using a multi-sensory approach with success! You will walk through a typical program in an art institution and discover ways to make the arts come alive in a fun and refreshing way—that can be catered towards any program or organization. Much emphasis will be on cultivating a stimulating yet safe environment for care couples and families to express themselves creatively. This presentation will focus on the in-person experience, but also show ways to engage an audience virtually. There will be a short time for art making. Either watch as the educators demonstrate the art activities, or feel free to make art along with them. **Materials needed for Project 1:** Pastels, Cardboard or found paper **Materials needed for Project 2:** Watercolor paper, Crayons or craypas, Brush, Watercolors (liquid or pan), Water, Paper towels

## **Globe Trotters: Destination Imagination (1C)**

Michelle Sharp (she/her), Arts Education Coordinator, The Building for Kids & Taylor Moeller-Roy (she/her), Studio Manager, Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass

Join Taylor and Michelle for an imaginary adventure! We'll use RPG (role playing game) techniques to take a pretend journey, overcome imagined obstacles, and collaboratively story-tell.

**Materials needed:** Hats, dice

## **Four Ways to Engage your SPARK! Group (1D)**

Heather Casper (she/her), Curator of Education, Minnesota Marine Art Museum, Winona, MN & Ellie Gettinger (she/her), Education Director, Jewish Museum Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI

Do you present to SPARK! groups? Learn some techniques that might work for you and the broad ways to use stories, objects, and artwork to engage participants, both in person and virtually. Join us as we demonstrate five unique approaches to connect with art and objects, and talk about the concepts behind them. Borrow and re-shape these ideas to spark engagement and connect with your own program participants.

**4:30 - 5:00 cst**

**Breakout Rooms with Alliance Members**

Have more questions? Pick a room and have an open conversation in an intimate setting with a SPARK! Alliance members from a variety of institutions.

**Have more thoughts about the sessions? Want to leave us feedback? Share what you learned! [Please contribute to the Jamboard!](#)**

## **SPARK! Conference Day 2**

**Tuesday November 9th**

**12:30 - 1:30 cst**

### **Welcome Back & The Who, What, Why, and How of Starting and Maintaining a SPARK! Engagement Program**

Tricia Blasko, Curator of Education, Racine Art Museum, PANEL HOST & Heather Casper, Curator of Education, Minnesota Marine Art Museum & Claire Carlson, Audience-Centered Program Coordinator, John Michael Kohler Arts Center & Dawn Koceja, Accessibility Coordinator, Milwaukee Public Museum & Shelly Rollins, Education Specialist/Summer Camp Director, Schlitz Audubon Nature Center & Oliver Zornow, Executive Director, Building for Kids Children's Museum

A great mix of voices from different SPARK! Alliance institutions will share their knowledge and information on how to implement a SPARK! from conception to execution. Learn how to develop and build a successful engagement experience, who will benefit, why they will benefit, what the program needs to flourish, how to create content, and how to build community presence and partnerships, and ways to keep your program sustainable.

**1:30 - 2:30 cst**

### **Keynote Session with Sam Goodrich TimeSlips and More!**

Sam Goodrich, TimeSlips Tele-Stories Program Manager, Master Trainer

Guest speaker Sam Goodrich will share the information about TimeSlips organization –which has been an innovative source of creative engagement for over two decades. Sam will focus on the roots of what Timeslips is along with sharing tips for engaging with elders. Learn about some of the

newer programs that have been developed and cultivated over the years like the Engagement Parties. TimeSlips Engagement Parties are informal, grassroots gatherings for anyone who wants to learn our evidence-based techniques for memory loss. Created with and designed for family caregivers (but fun for anyone), at an Engagement Party, guests will learn simple techniques to improve communication and creatively engage friends, family members, or neighbors in shared moments of imagination -- with no right or wrong answers!

Goodrich oversees various TimeSlips projects such as Tele-Stories, connecting artists with under-connected elders via phone, and Stage Right, a project in which seniors with dementia create and perform in their own original musicals. With a performance background and a personal connection to working with those with memory loss, Goodrich hopes to bring light to the benefits that creativity can have on a person with memory loss, as well as the relief it can bring to loved ones and care partners.

**2:30 - 3:30 cst**

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**(Choose one session via breakout rooms)**

## **Civil War Photo Albums (2A)**

Doug Dammann (he/his), Educational Coordinator, The Kenosha Public Museums

Did you know that soldiers and civilians from the Civil War era collected photos of their friends, families, and fellow soldiers? Many of them did and displayed these photos in elaborate albums. At this program, our group will look at several of these albums and consider the photos that were housed in them. Participants are encouraged to share their own photo albums and stories about the photos they have collected.

## **Joint Programming: Half the Work, Double the Fun (2B)**

Ryan Swadley, Educator at the Neville Public Museum & Connie Roberts, Brown County Memory Cafe Coordinator  
**(in the main zoom room)**

Ryan and Connie discuss how they've partnered in the past year to create joint SPARK! and Memory Cafe programs to serve folks during the pandemic. They'll share some background on how and why they decided to partner, what some of the benefits have been, and put on a modified sample program interspersed with video footage from one of their real programs.

## **The Musical Spirit of Flowers (2C)**

Cristian Anderson, The Trout Museum & Nancy Armitage, SPARK! White Lake

In this multi-sensory session, Cristian and Nancy will lead the group on a discussion of floral paintings, contemporary and representational. Following the discussion of color, line, story, etc., they will invite the group to pair each painting with selected pieces of music.

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**Need help using zoom?** Check out [our Zoom Cheat Sheet!](#)

**For general conference questions contact:**

Tricia Blasko, Racine Art Museum/RAM's Wustum Museum [tblasko@ramart.org](mailto:tblasko@ramart.org) (262.636.9573)

**For technical help or questions days of conference contact:**

Kelsey Raschke, Paine Art Center and Gardens [kraschke@thepaine.org](mailto:kraschke@thepaine.org)