



**Nichelle O'Saurus** *she/her*  
Volunteer Coordinator,  
Natural History Museum of Utah



**Sarah Moshenberg** *she/her*  
Manager, Discovery Room & Family Learning,  
American Museum of Natural History



**Kelly Gascoine** *she/her*  
Manager, Volunteers and Internship Program,  
Carnegie Science Center



Museum of Science.

**Janna Doherty** *she/her*  
Program Manager of Volunteer & Family  
Engagement, Museum of Science

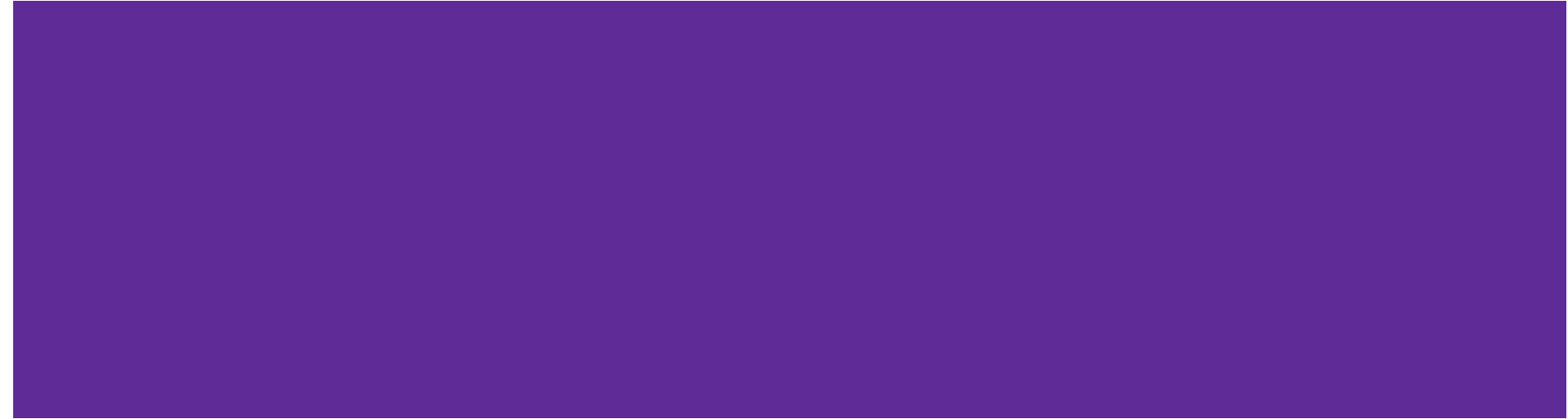


**Mary Potter** *she/her*  
Visitor Experience Manager,  
Discovery Space of Central Pennsylvania

# Getting the Most from Your Volunteer Program, or How to Train Your Dragons

---

# Case Study



# Finding and Maintaining Volunteer Interest

- 30 minute volunteer orientation
- Ask what their interests are
- Work around their personalities

# Finding and Maintaining Volunteer Interest: Volunteer Perks

- Volunteer of the month
- Free membership
- Discount for volunteers

# Volunteers Working with the Public

- **Poll: what front-line positions are staffed by volunteers in your institution?**
  - Volunteers have long been the outward face of institutions to the public
    - What are the positives?
    - What are the challenges?
- First Interaction- Info desk/ticketing
  - Permanent educational spaces
  - On the floor “mobile” education
  - Wayfinding
  - Amenities
  - Other



# Volunteers Working with the Public

- Discovery Room
  - 60-80 volunteers on roster
  - 120,000 visitors annually
  - 30% repeat visitation
  - NYC's indoor playground



# Volunteers Working with the Public

Content vs. Customer Service

Content Booklet

In person modeling/training

Clear guidelines and procedures

Facilitator Agreement

What happens when...

De-escalation techniques

Apologize, Soothe, Listen

<http://bit.ly/volunteercstraining>

Generational differences

<http://bit.ly/volunteergenerations>



# Ongoing Training: “Mini” PD!

- 30 minutes or less
- Hands-on, activity based
- Relevant to their work
- Consistent messaging
  - Connecting same ideas through different activities
- Provides an “aha” moment
  - Deepens understanding or recognition of visitors’ engagement



# Training model from the *Discovery Center*

Supporting early childhood educators through “mini” PD

- “Whole child” approach
- Adult involvement/engagement
- Best practices in interpretation
- Multimodal learning
- Audience awareness/perspective taking



Cognitive Development



Science Process Skills



Physical Development

# Volunteer Management Training for Employees

# Volunteer Management Training

- Volunteer Management 101 Training
- Volunteer Supervisor Handbook

# Volunteer Management 101

## Training Session Content

- Addressing Expectations
- The basics of volunteer management

# Volunteer Supervisor Handbook

- Role of the Volunteer Program Staff
- Onboarding and hiring
- Managing volunteers, including retention and appreciation
- Other Volunteer Program, or volunteer-related, policies and procedures