History Center Receives AAM Accreditation

This fall, the American Association of Museums (AAM) awarded accreditation to the History Center. This recognition is no small accomplishment. Of the estimated 17,500 museums in the United States, only 781 are accredited, meaning they meet the highest standards and set the best practices in our profession. It’s fitting that this honor comes during the 130th anniversary of the History Center, Pittsburgh’s oldest cultural institution.

AAM’s accreditation is further proof that our work is making a positive contribution as a model for other museums and history organizations across the country. Our board leadership and extraordinary community support combined with our staff’s dedication and professionalism have made all the difference.

In addition to AAM accreditation, 2009 was a banner year for the History Center, as the museum witnessed unprecedented attendance growth. The History Center has responded to the “staycation” trend and the interests and priorities of our diverse audiences. Thanks to a strong exhibit and event schedule, robust educational programs, and strategic partnerships, the History Center experienced a 20% increase in overall attendance.

Ford Bell, president of AAM, called the museum’s performance “truly exceptional,” and praised the History Center’s “creative, engaging programs that make it a civic asset, in every sense of the word.”

Up next is the most impressive long-term exhibition schedule in the 130-year history of the organization, including the world premiere of Discover the Real George Washington: New Views from Mount Vernon on February 19 and the new America’s Best Weekly: 100 Years of the Pittsburgh Courier in April.

Congratulations to all who have helped make the History Center such a special place—a place that connects us to the past while inspiring future generations.