

ANNUAL REPORT

WE ARE A MOVEMENT NOT JUST A MUSEUM!

AFRICAN AMERICAN
MUSEUM
OF
SOUTHERN ARIZONA



2024-2025

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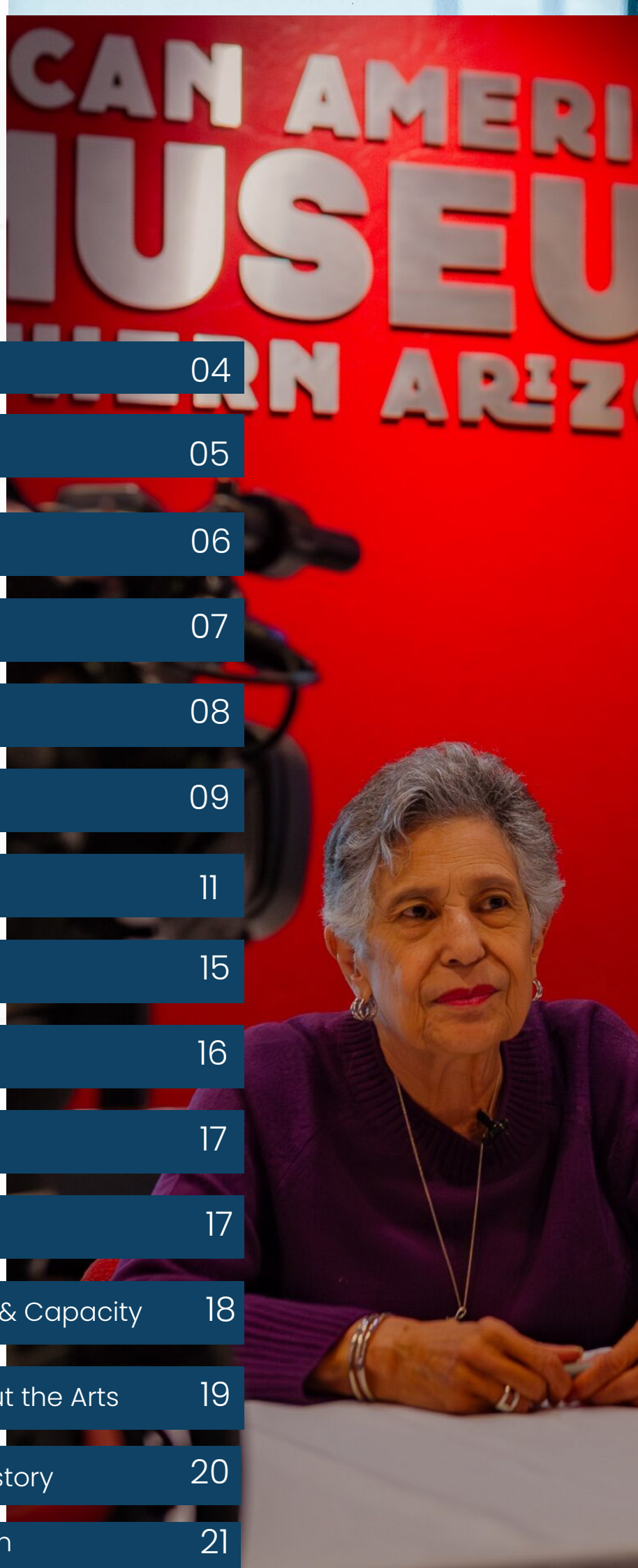
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**AFRICAN
AMERICAN
MUSEUM^{OF}
SOUTHERN
ARIZONA**

*"We are a movement,
not just a museum!"*

By Appointment

To Contact
See Q

WHO WE ARE



Vision

To serve as a resource and to provide the community with an applied and virtual venue and repository for stories, histories, and cultural contributions by African Americans and Blacks in Southern Arizona.



Mission

We are devoted to gathering and sharing stories, images, and artifacts as we document, digitize, and preserve African American and Black life, culture, and history in Southern Arizona to benefit the community.



Values

- **Authentic:** We are an accredited museum that will present a cultural and educational experience by providing items of significance with stories of struggles and triumphs presented by knowledgeable volunteers and staff.
- **Inclusive:** As Lonnie G Bunch II (Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution) stated, "We want everyone to participate, collaborate, and learn more about African American history and culture."
- **Accountable:** With community roots and a solid community base, AAMSAZ will strive to be relevant, accurate, and professional in the work, exhibits, and programming while engaging members and the community in meaningful ways.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

OUR TEAM

Advisory Board of Directors

Robert "Bob" Elliott
Beverly Elliott
Styne Hill
JP Rocznik
Taunya Villicana
Richard Davis
William "Bill" Ponder
Collier Hill
Daisy Jenkins
Greg Pivrotto
Jeffrey Sawyer
Alfredo Prince
Tripp Twyman

Founding Board members no longer on the board

Beah Williams
Lisa Lovallo

Supplemental Board

Doreen Davis
Felicia Jackson
Joe Jackson
Rosanne Neal
Kimberlee Avant
Amber Clark
Brenton Robinson
Jimmy Hart
Larry Hecker
Velvia Evans
Tony Penn
Joyce Green
Tina L. Johnson
Delano Price
Jacque Price
Anthony Wingate
Scott Thompson
Kent Rollins
Tani Sanchez
Sadie Shaw

Founding Supplemental Board members no longer on the board

Aalia Shaheed
Beverly Willis
Marlys Thompson Deen

Founders

Robert "Bob" Elliott
Beverly Elliott
Styne Hill
Richard Davis
Collier Hill
Felicia Jackson
Joe Jackson
Amber Clark
Kimberlee Avant
Brenton Robinson
"Jody"

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Beverly Elliott/Executive Director

Still moving forward with purpose and keeping our mission and vision in mind.

Our fiscal year ended June 30, 2025, and we are proud to report that we met many of our ambitious goals. From the beginning, we set out to deepen our connections with Tucson and the broader Southern Arizona community—and we succeeded. We were honored to be featured on multiple television newscasts and share our message through PAs provided by COX, which reached audiences across the country.

As we continue to grow, adapt, and remain relevant, the response from the community has been overwhelmingly positive. Our base of supporters has expanded, and many have stood with us every step of the way. We are especially thankful for our Legacy Founding Investors—TEP, COX, the Zuckerman Family Foundation, the Lohse Family /Tucson Foundation and the Elliott Family Charities—as well as individual donors like Betsy Bruce, and Alice and Paul Baker.

This report highlights the tremendous work accomplished by the African American Museum of Southern Arizona over the past year. None of it would have been possible without the dedication of our working board—now called our Advisory Board—and the ongoing support of our former Advisory Board, now the Supplemental Board.

Amidst transitions at the University of Arizona and in federal leadership, we've remained flexible. Formerly under the Research, Innovation & Impact (RII) umbrella, we now fall under a newly named division - ORP (Office of Research and Partnerships) with a fresh focus and leadership, including Senior Vice President Tomás Díaz de la Rubia, whom we hope to meet someday.

This year, we proudly supported local initiatives such as ABC (A Better Community), Tucson's Juneteenth Committee, and partnered with Camp Naco and the National Trust for Historic Preservation's HOPE Crew. We welcomed a new Advisory Board member, Tripp Twyman, and said farewell to oral historians who passed away Sam Newsome and Clarence Boykins. In January, we also bid goodbye to Jenny Li, who resigned to reunite with family.

We launched several new exhibitions this year, with more in development. While I was reminded that I am not a Tucson native, that never diminished my commitment. Even without a curator or historian on staff, our hardworking volunteers - Rose Taulton and Jamie Clark -and community supporters - ABC, Juneteenth Festival, AALF (African American Legacy Fund), Pima County, Las Donas, and more have helped us continue this essential work. We are proud to announce that, thanks to your support, we have now hired our very first Museum Director, Ms. Nikieia Johnson, and Digital Specialist, Joshua Wallace.

It's important to remember that this all began with a question from our grandson. That question sparked a vision, one supported by the University of Arizona Foundation, our board members, and the community. I am deeply grateful—for the opportunity, for the people who said “yes,” and for the belief that we could build something meaningful, together.

With heartfelt appreciation

In Community,

Beverly Elliott

Founder, African American Museum of Southern Arizona

FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD



A Grateful Reflection on Our Fourth Year

Bob Elliott (MBA), is a founding member and Chair of the AAMSAZ Advisory Board. Bob has been the chair and served on numerous boards, including UNS Energy–Fortis, the National Basketball Retired Players Association (NBRPA), AAA Mountain West Group, AAA Arizona, Tucson Airport Authority, the Tucson Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, and the Tucson Urban League.

A former NBA player, Bob enjoyed a remarkable 27-year broadcasting career and is the voice behind four EA Sports games. His accolades include being named Tucson’s Man of the Year and Father of the Year. As a college athlete, he earned both Athletic and Academic All-American honors.

As we complete our fourth year, we are deeply grateful for the overwhelming support we have received—more than 700 contributors and over 9,000 visitors have helped shape the African American Museum of Southern Arizona into what it is today. This milestone is not ours alone, but a reflection of the strong, sustained commitment from our community, our supporters, and our partners—including the University of Arizona Foundation.

We owe special thanks to our volunteer Executive Director, Beverly Elliott, whose tireless efforts have elevated the museum’s profile locally, statewide, nationally, and even internationally. With pride and optimism, we welcome our first paid Director, Nikieia Johnson, whose energy and dedication remind us of a young Beverly. Her leadership and deep community ties will help carry our mission forward.

We are also excited to introduce Josh Wallace, our new digital specialist, who is helping us bring our museum’s digital presence up to 2025 standards and beyond.

Our volunteers, including Rose Taulton and Jamie Clark, continue to embody the spirit of service and community that lies at the heart of our work. Their commitment ensures that the stories, artifacts, and legacies we steward remain accessible and alive for generations to come.

We are equally grateful for the wisdom and support of our Board of Directors, whose guidance has helped shape AAMSAZ into an effective and forward-thinking organization.

And finally, a heartfelt acknowledgment to Jody. Though young, his imagination continues to inspire us and remind us why we do this work.

Thank you all—for believing in us, standing with us, and building this legacy together.

FROM THE DIRECTOR



It is with deep gratitude and great excitement that I share this message with you as the newly appointed Director of the African American Museum of Southern Arizona (AAMS AZ). The past few weeks have been both energizing and affirming, as I've stepped into this role and witnessed firsthand the incredible commitment of our community to preserving, honoring, and uplifting African American history and culture in Southern Arizona.

As I wrap up my first six weeks as Director of the African American Museum of Southern Arizona, I'm filled with gratitude and excitement for what lies ahead. It's been a whirlwind of meaningful connections—with university leaders, community partners, and passionate supporters like you—all working together to uplift Black history and culture in our region.

Highlights so far include mapping our strategic plan, advancing the *A Taste of African American History* initiative through the Camp Naco grant, and supporting powerful community events like the Tucson Juneteenth celebration. I've also had the pleasure of working with our dedicated interns and the volunteers who are truly the backbone of this museum.

Thank you for the warm welcome and continued support. I look forward to building this movement together.

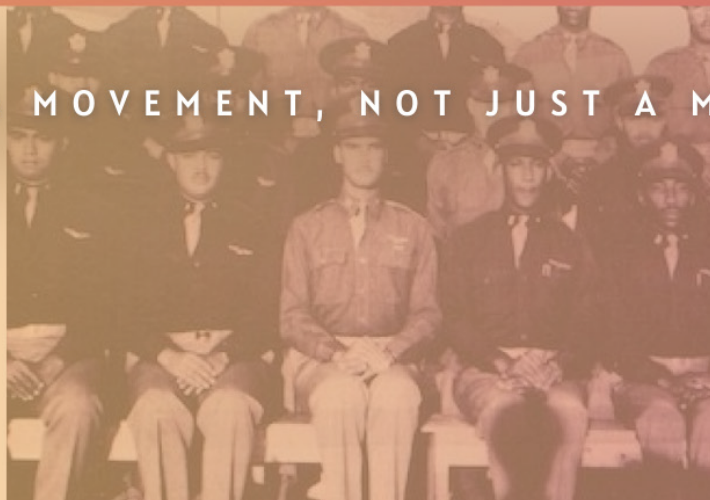
**AFRICAN AMERICAN
MUSEUM
OF
SOUTHERN ARIZONA**



From the Director—Nikieia Johnson

6 weeks into the job

WE ARE A MOVEMENT, NOT JUST A MUSEUM!



2024 – 2025 METRICS

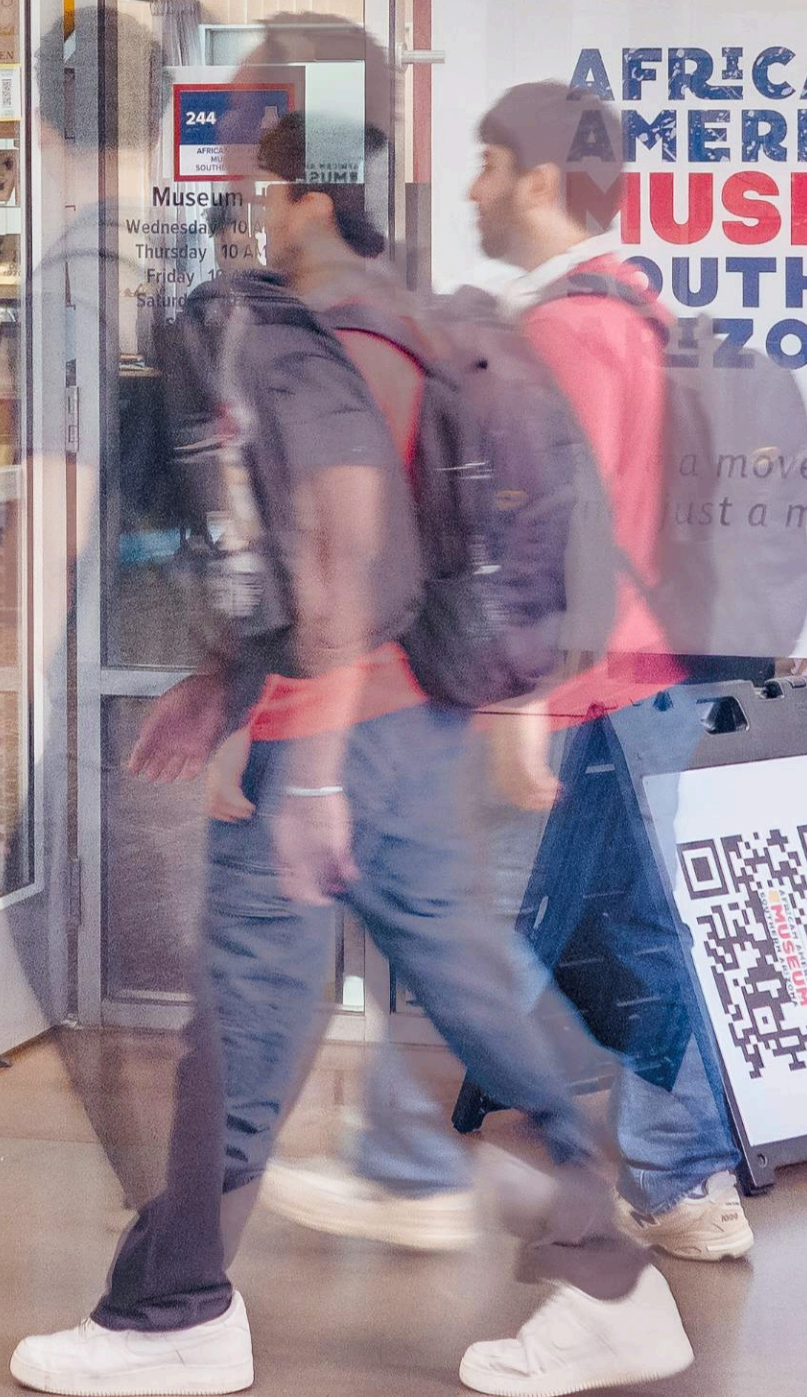
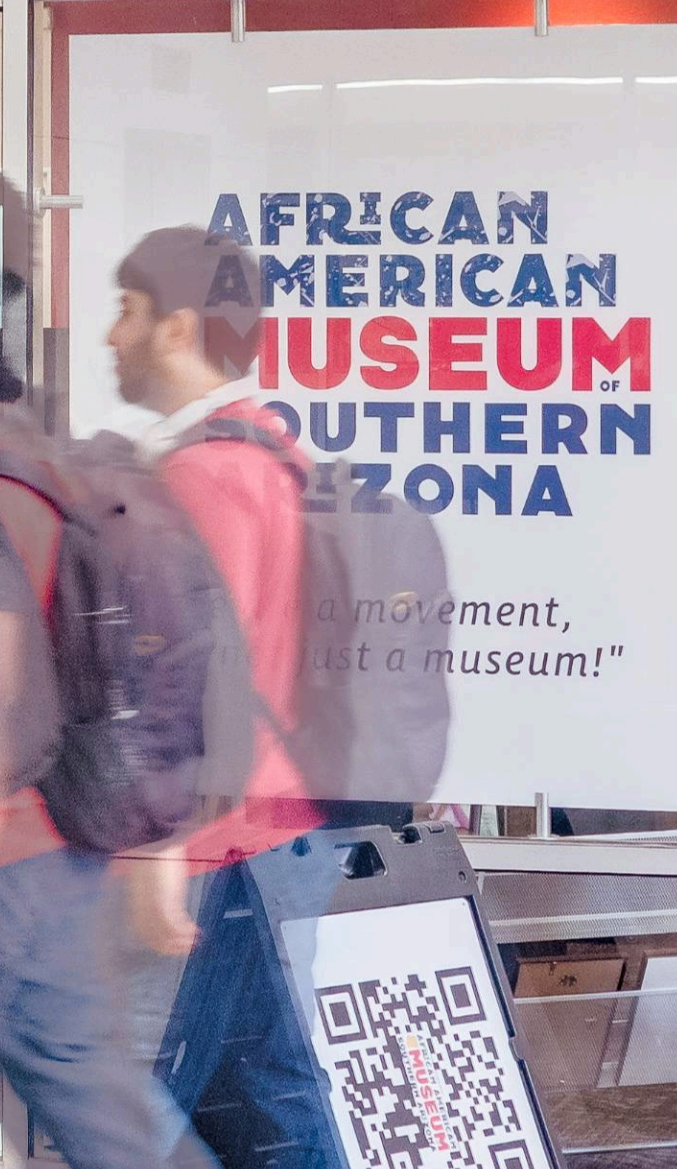
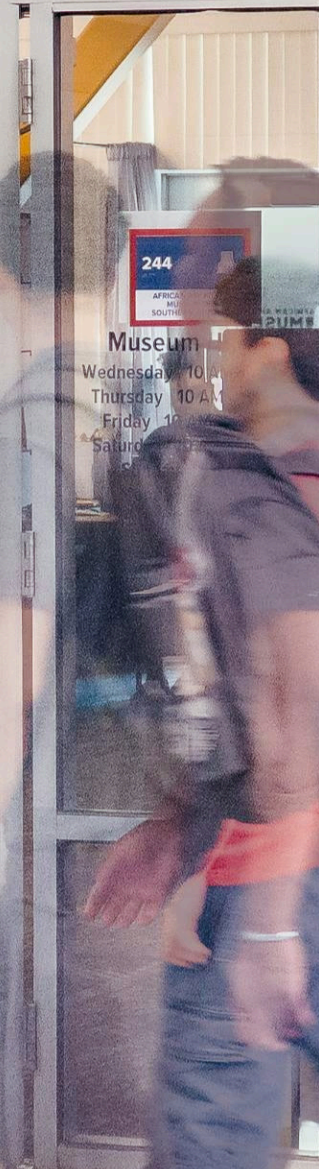
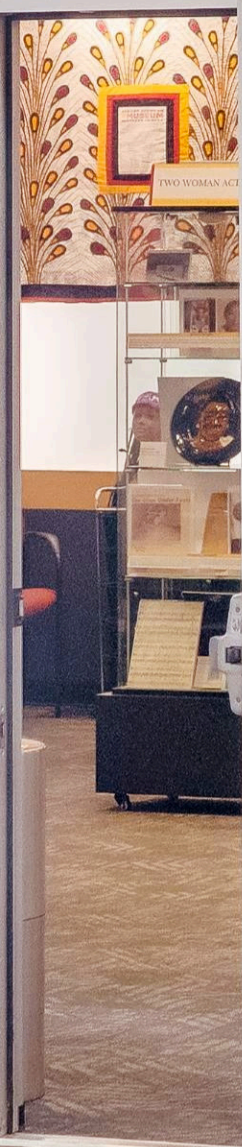
Impact 4 years	June 2022	June 2023	June 2024	June 2025
Members / Total	70	233	539	711
Newsletter Subscribers	289	907	1,375	1,684
Visitors Total	0	1,268	6,223	9,086
Guided Tour Totals	0	75	188	284
Outside Presentations/ Year	2	22	30	61

2024 – 2025 FINANCIALS

Revenues	
Individual Contributions	\$222,600
Corporate Contributions	\$35,745
Financial Contributions	\$14,667
Events	\$112,241
Total Revenues	\$385,253
Expenses	
Administration/Operating	\$52,292
Personnel	\$62,776
Marketing & Promotion	\$1,241
Financial Contributions	\$7,545
Events	\$53,229
Total Expenses	\$177,083
Excess Revenues over Expenses	\$208,170

MUSEUM
SOUTHERN ARIZONA

MUSEUM
AFRICAN AMERICAN
SOUTHERN ARIZONA



PROGRAMS & CELEBRATIONS

June–August 2024



Geico Tabling

Camp Naco Visit

Black History Market at Zeman's

Supported UA Sports Hall of Fame

Honored at Juneteenth Roundtable



September 2024

Added "I Didn't Know That!" to the data we collect

COX shared with us a new PSA!

Community tabling at Arizona Theater Company

Supported Register to vote!

Represented at Fort Lowell Museum opening

Partnered with Buffalo Soldier Chapter (We love our local GSAAC)



October – December 2024

Premiered new exhibit: A Slave Story – The Arnwine Family

Received Black AYO / Dr. Anna Jolivet Community Champion Award

Partnered with Pima Community College for Steeped in Fashion Show

Promoted Mansfield Park to Doris Thompson Park renaming with Dr. Katherine Morrissey (History 102)

Partnered with A Better Community (ABC) at Dunbar Pavilion for HBCU Day

Welcomed Teniqua Broughton, Executive Director for African American Legacy Institute

Shared celebrations for Hanukkah, Christmas, and Kwanzaa

Promoted our January programs

January – 2025

Displayed original program from Dr. Martin Luther King's Tucson visit

Hosted Fireside Chat with Dr. J (Julius Erving)

Promoted Hank Willis Thomas Retrospective for UA Museum of Art

Supported MLK Walk & Festival at Reid Park

Tabling at TUSD MLK Basketball Classic

February 2025

Honored at RTX Raytheon Black Employees Gala

NAACP Luncheon

Partnered with UA Special Collections Library:
Frederick Douglass Days

Partnered with Fox Theater for various performances.

Beverly Elliott was a speaker at the Pima County
Celebration of Black History Month

Present for Black History proclamation with
I Am You 360 (Desiree Cook)

Partnered with Dr. Stephanie Troutman-Robbins
on internships & Ketanji Brown Jackson Bench

March – June 2025

International Women's Day

Cultural Celebrations with Food

Partnered with Tucson Chapter of The Links, Inc. for
Black Family Wellness Expo

Swim lessons for kids with UA Campus Rec back in action

Supported the Tucson Festival of Books

Co-sponsored Frances Harper
national Read-a-thon

Attended installation of UA President Dr. Suresh Garimella

Completed Ketanji Brown Jackson Bench dedication
(Ben Taylor, Esq. keynote speaker)

Guests of Dr. Jenna Hatcher at Dr. Henry Louis Gates' lecture

Partnered with UA Memory Lab (digitizing family photos)

Developed AAMSAZ breast cancer awareness door
hanger

OUR IMPACT IN WORDS



Rose Taulton,
Volunteer

“ As a young girl I was interested in learning about African American History in Tucson. What life was like as a person, how living in Tucson back then, to who we are now. I also get to let others who don't know the stories I heard from my elders and from myself things about our rich history to pass it on to their family members. To keep it alive for generations to come. Plus to see that I didn't know look on their faces.



Josh Forte-Barry,
Intern/History
Major

Project: Mapping
Racist Covenants

Pictured with
Director, Nikieia
Johnson

“ I've not been at the museum for very long but in my time there this summer I have learned so much about Black history in Southern Arizona and gotten to connect with the community here in Tucson. I'm very thankful for the opportunity I've been given here and I'm excited to keep working with the museum.

OUR IMPACT IN WORDS



Joshua Wallace,
Multi Media
Specialist

“ This summer at the museum has been enlightening. Though I’ve just begun, I’ve already explored Southern Arizona’s Black history and felt its vibrancy. What stands out most is connecting with the community and understanding the significance of this place. It’s a powerful reminder that this work revolves around people, memory, and connection, making each day worthwhile.



Jamie Clark,
Volunteer

“ I’ve been with the African American Museum of Southern Arizona before the museum opened. During my time there as a volunteer I’ve learned a whole lot about Southern Arizona Black history that I didn’t know. I also learned how to do tabling events, network, and spoke with others in our community. Every time I step into the museum it warms my heart and gives me this good feeling of knowing we’re helping others to learn about Black history.



AAMSAZ Visitors

HONORS AND CERTIFICATIONS

- 01 We were in compliance and were once again awarded the Tier II Certification – Arizona Historical Society
- 02 Black AYO /Bob and Beverly received the Dr. Anna Jolivet Community Champion Award
- 03 Beverly Elliott was a speaker at the Pima County Celebration of Black History Month

Social Justice

- 01 Tucson Chapter of The Links, Incorporated – Black Family Wellness Expo
- 02 Developed our own – AAMSAZ – door hanger for women – self exam – for breast cancer.
- 03 Worked with Dr. Stephanie Troutman-Robbins on the Bench in honor of SPJ Ketanji Brown-Jackson
- 04 Still working on HB 1432 regarding Housing / CC&R's and how to show it existed without wiping out language.
- 05 Get Out the Vote – League of Women Voters
- 06 History 102 to promote the name change of Mansfield Park to Doris Thompson Park.



Community Outreach

We receive requests from various organizations to present information about the museum and share highlights of some of our exhibitions. We have fulfilled many of these requests in person and virtually. Our vision is to serve our community as a valuable resource and deliver impactful information as we foster and share educational experiences.

Walk with Ruby Day U of A History Department

ABC – A Better Community Tucson Parks and Recreation

Palo Verde High School Tucson Unified School District

Welcome Back – Black Community Council Broadway in Tucson

GEICO UA Office of Black Advancement and Engagement

Broadway of Tucson

St. Vincent de Paul / Phoenix

K – 8 Schools

Tucson Chapter of the Links, Incorporated

Juneteenth Festival Committee

City of Vail / Juneteenth Festival Committee





City of Tucson:
Juneteenth Proclamation



TUSD Tabling
Event



Tucson Juneteenth
Festival: Black
Womanhood Unfiltered

New Exhibitions

A Slave Story – The Arnwine Family – US Department of Congress

George Washington Carver Crossing the Delaware – Print by Robert Colescott

Music in Arizona – Developed by Intern Esme Canelos and Beverly Elliott

Ketanji Brown Jackson Bench Initiative

Fireside Chat Speakers: Julius Erving, Carlotta Walls LaNier, Stacey Snowden, and Ruby Bridges

Collaborators

UA Center for Digital Humanities – Dr. Bryan Carter

UA Women and Gender Studies – Dr. Stephanie Troutman Robbins

Mission Garden – Emily

UA Black Community Council – Daisy Jenkins, Esq.

Tucson Chapter of the Links, Incorporated – Jeanette Washburn, President

Joe Jackson Photography – J3 Photography /Owner

Juneteenth Festival, Inc. – Larry Starks, President

COX Communication – Alfredo Prince, Trevor Davis

Tucson Electric Power

Donors:
and more..



ORGANIZATIONAL SUMMARY AND CAPACITY

We have a very strong volunteer Advisory Board and Supplemental Board. These amazing people are composed of prominent community leaders who provide guidance and support ensuring that our initiatives are in alignment with our mission and vision.

African American History Programs

- 01 Education: We have a robust educational program. We will offer fun hands-on projects for students as they learn about African American History, which is American History.
- 02 We offer STREAM experiences (Science, Technology, Religion, Arts and Math). Some projects will begin in the classroom and be completed here while other projects will begin during the students visit to the Museum. Family History.
- 03 We are often at tabling events such as GEICO, TUSD, ABC, Senior Open Houses, and more.



Alice and Paul Baker

Betsy Bruce

LEGACY STORIES

We often lose history and the stories of those who have passed away. When a person is able to tell the story of one of their ancestors, a friend, or foe, the legacy of someone who has died allows their life story to be told. These are great life histories and stories that represent the richness, contributions, accomplishments, and the impact a person had on a community, our lives, and the lives of others. The details in these stories share meaning and information about a person or a people, and this is a reflection of their Legacy.

Our griots give a voice to the past for those who can no longer tell their stories about their journeys and experiences. The griots share the oral histories with a sense of family, heritage, culture, space, place, and time. Many journeys one can only experience today through one's imagination and hearing the voices of the past.

All About the Arts

We honor the idea of Sankofa (an African word from the Akan tribe in Ghana)

– that there is wisdom in your past and in your roots. Go back and retrieve information but the journey must be based on patient investigation and critical thought. The Arts and Culture are truly a clear way of understanding struggles, heritage, celebrations and love. Painting, Dancing, Singing, Performing Music, Writing, the Spoken Word, Religion, Acting, Film and Food all are art forms that express the social, personal and life journeys of people. At times these expressions push you from your comfort zone and demonstrate a different perspective which can allow you to grow emotionally and spiritually. As they say, Art imitates life and legacy. Join us as we present authors, dancers, sculptures, painters, poets and more.



ORAL HISTORIES

Our Oral History collection was initially sponsored by the Elliott Family Charities in conjunction with the African American Museum of Southern Arizona. The collection includes some of the most colorful and fascinating stories of African American experiences in Southern Arizona about various topics including community centers, education, housing, employment, faith, and more. From slavery to Juneteenth and the 26th Amendment to the Civil Rights Act, African Americans have a rich history steeped in diverse experiences.

Arizona History

Arizona's history is woven with the diverse narratives of its inhabitants, particularly the African American experiences that embody resilience and contribution. From Buffalo Soldiers in Southern Arizona to pioneers in various fields, Black Arizonans have significantly influenced the region's growth. AAMSAZ emphasizes that these stories are not isolated but crucial to Arizona's overall history. This section will continue to spotlight vital moments, individuals, and movements that showcase the lasting impact of African Americans in Arizona.



CELEBRATIONS

We honor
and
celebrate
the following
holidays!

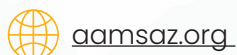
Juneteenth
The Crown
Act – Crown
Day

Black History
Month
Women's
History Month

Martin
Luther King
Jr. Holiday
Kwanzaa

4th of July
Black
Business
Month

STAY IN TOUCH



aamsaz.org



aamuseumofsouthernaz@gmail.com



[instagram.com/aamsaz/](https://www.instagram.com/aamsaz/)



[facebook.com/AAMuseumOfSouthernAZ](https://www.facebook.com/AAMuseumOfSouthernAZ)

CONTACT US

