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# Chicago Museum Director Develops Programs That Engage The Public

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For every \$1 dollar spent on the arts, there's a tax return of over \$7, according to The American Alliance of Museums. In a nation of sports fans and theme park enthusiasts, it may come as a surprise that Americans still visit museums more often than those two big events



Photo Courtesy of Carol Ng-He

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Museums beat out books, teachers and family as the best source for history, according to the site. But with museums getting 55 million visits per year and employing over 4.1 million full-time Americans, their financial success makes sense.

Carol Ng-He, a K-12 & continuing education program developer at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, used her love for museums and education to dive into her career.

"I have always been interested in both teaching and creating a learning experience for the public in cultural organizations, such as museums," said Ng-He.

She holds a master's in Art Education from the Art Institute of Chicago and a bachelor's in Art Management from Columbia College in Chicago. Ng-He also holds a certificate in Museum Studies from Northwestern University.

After working as a classroom and online instructor for several universities, she settled into her current position with the Oriental Institute. Her day-to-day duties include managing a program budget and grant development, as well as primary duties developing educational programs for K-12 students and adults.

"I enjoy seeing people engaged in the process of learning and exploring the art history and culture through the programs I have developed," said Ng-He. "Having a background in art opens my mind to think more creatively and work more effectively with people."

Those programs include teacher workshop series, after-hour events for young professionals and summer art programs for teens. Two courses that were especially helpful to her in finessing her career field were courses on Arts & Community Development and Nonprofit Philanthropy/Fundraising.

Museums are the home of over a billion objects and receive 524 million online visits annually from



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Museums are the home of over a billion objects and receive 524 million online visits annually from adults. And even with technology gaining in popularity for museum displays and tutorials, Ng-He looks on the bright side for the future of museum jobs

"There are more opportunities for us to utilize technology for exhibitions and public program development to extend the museum experience anywhere," said Ng-He

Judging from the most recent estimate that museums contribute \$21 billion to the U.S. economy, this industry is a triple source for entertainment, education and the job market

*Shamontel L. Vaughn is a professional journalist who has work featured in AXS, Yahoo!, Chicago Defender and Chicago Tribune. She's been an Examiner since 2009 and currently writes about 10 categories on Examiner.com.*

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