The Campaign for the
ANACOSTIA COMMUNITY MUSEUM

Smithsonian Campaign
The Anacostia Community Museum seeks to raise $1.7 million as part of the Smithsonian's first-ever comprehensive campaign. The campaign will work across museums and research centers to create a 21st-century catalyst for learning and change. With your support, we will strengthen this unique asset belonging to the American people.

Cover: Children dress up at Anacostia Community Museum Mardi Gras Family Day. Photograph by Steven Cummings

This page: Young and old come together to celebrate the African American holiday Kwanzaa at the historic Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church in Southeast Washington, D.C. The museum hosts the largest Kwanzaa observance in the metropolitan area.
The Anacostia Community Museum approaches the subject of community with passion, rigor and the understanding that without it, a place is just an address on a map. The ties of history, family, friends and neighbors shape who we are and offer strength and comfort.

Our work is driven by issues that directly affect Anacostia neighborhoods and resonate with urban communities throughout the region, the nation and the world.

The museum was founded in 1967 as the Smithsonian’s premier initiative to serve local citizens who traditionally did not venture into museums on the National Mall. Through extensive community engagement, it remains a pioneer in fostering the concept of the museum as a tool for social change and a voice for the aspirations and creative expression of the people for which it was created. The museum addresses the history, culture, and contemporary issues that impact urban communities and its citizens, preserves the cultural legacy of the region and documents history.

We are dedicated to the belief that active citizen participation in the recovery, preservation, and presentation of cultural and historical assets is vital to creating and maintaining a sense of community pride and civic ownership.
The Power of Community

The Smithsonian established the Anacostia Neighborhood Museum to create a presence in one of Washington, D.C.’s underserved African American neighborhoods. From the start, the museum has engaged local residents in building community knowledge and pride. Inspired to expand its study to include cultural issues that affect communities everywhere, the museum evolved to address community on a global scale, while retaining its focus on the surrounding area.

In 2006, it became the Anacostia Community Museum and soon adopted a new mission: to challenge perceptions, broaden perspectives, generate new knowledge and deepen understanding about the ever-changing concept of community. This mission drives research and provides content and context for documentation, programs and exhibitions.

The museum is strengthening its position as a leader in innovative community museology.

A father’s handwritten journal and photos of trips, military service and family from the Dale-Patterson Family Historic collection (Anacostia Community Museum Archives) help tell the multi-generational history of an east of the Anacostia River family. These artifacts chronicle the museum’s evolution from its sole focus on African American heritage to the examination of issues impacting the global community. Photographs by Susana Raab
This group portrait of Freemasons from Washington, D.C., is just one of the museum’s archival treasures that demonstrates the personal empowerment these social and civic clubs provide and deepens our understanding of their important role in urban communities. Credit: Norman Davis Photographic Collection, Anacostia Community Museum Archives
Global Community
The Anacostia Community Museum interprets community in a broad, inclusive context. It examines issues that impact diverse urban neighborhoods and citizens’ quality of life. Research leads to programs that spark conversations and serve as catalysts for critical analysis. Studies document distinctions and draw universal connections, providing a repository of data, documents and material culture. Through engaging exhibitions, dynamic lectures, performances, screenings, hands-on activities and special events, the museum aims to broaden understanding and appreciation of family and community life.

**Global experiences**

Through research, exhibitions and programs, the museum taps into issues that almost all global communities share: environment, health, cultural encounters, community history, the importance of family legacy and neighborhood stability.

**Meaningful celebration**

Museum visitors explore objects, stories and artwork of the local neighborhood and of communities around the world. Lively public programs include such themes as music, history and the fundamentals of collecting and preservation.

**Groundbreaking research**

The museum’s standards for quality and best practices are shared by community museums everywhere and its model for community museology has been replicated as far away as Mexico and Senegal. Research findings benefit the surrounding neighborhood by fostering communication, collaboration and the sharing of resources. A recent survey of local faith-based organizations prompted changes to eliminate wasteful redundancies and fill important gaps in social services.
At a time when the term “community” has come to mean almost anything, the Anacostia Community Museum offers wisdom about those still defined by geography. The museum also inspires us to think about the different ways communities are made and sustained — creative communities of artists, dancers and writers, faith-based communities, communities of service workers, local merchants and others.

Your financial support will help the museum to sustain and expand its role as a guardian and purveyor of all things that define community. Global access to information has made our community yours and your gift will ensure that we can take advantage of opportunities to conduct and share our work with a wider audience.

The museum’s success in raising $1.7 million through the Smithsonian’s comprehensive campaign will help attract scholars, increase technological and interactive capabilities for the collection and dissemination of information, facilitate production of teaching aids and foster the establishment of the museum as a learning lab for community citizens of all ages.

**Treasures: $800,000**
Collections care, acquisitions and exhibitions

**People: $500,000**
Curator, urban history and culture

**Programs: $400,000**
Museum Academy, documentation and public programming

Quilters are a community within a community. An aspiring quilter learns tips from a seasoned artisan at the 2012 Smithsonian Folklife Festival. *Citified: Arts and Creativity East of the Anacostia River* showcased traditional arts to tattooing. Such projects help to build bridges and bonds among people in the community with shared creative interests. Photograph by Susana Raab
The Campaign
The museum’s archivist takes great care in showing visitors delicate photographs of family history. People are the museum’s intellectual engine and are the key to sustaining a museum that will serve communities of the world. Photograph by Susana Raab
TREASURES
Fund collections and exhibitions: $800,000

Collections Care and Acquisition: $200,000
Your support will allow the museum to preserve and restore existing treasures and acquire new works that grow and diversify our collections.

Exhibitions: $600,000
New funds generated by this campaign will enable the museum to develop a rich series of exhibitions that explore other communities historically or thematically connected to the local experience.

PEOPLE
Invest in leadership: $400,000
The support generated by this campaign will fund, for three years, an additional curator with skills fundamental to the museum’s new direction.

Curator, Urban History and Culture: $400,000
This new position will add critical expertise in urban studies, community development and social justice. The curator will facilitate mission-related project development and ensure that the museum’s research data is shared widely.
Museum Academy Program: $200,000
In a unique multi-tiered program, the Anacostia Community Museum contributes to the development of neighborhood children in grades three through five by working with the same students year round. Each year the curriculum focuses on current exhibitions such as *Reclaiming the Edge: Urban Waterways and Civic Engagement* (2012/13) when students from eight public schools took trips on the Anacostia River and visited the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center. On their journeys, they made art with found objects, tested soil and water samples and recorded their fieldwork in journals. This program model helps boost reading, writing and math skills, enhances creativity and fosters social and intellectual development. Some children go on to participate in the museum’s Career Awareness Program as middle schoolers, and in its internship program as high school students.

The Museum Academy Program has a direct impact on the local community — and engages local young people in shaping the work of the museum. With the resources generated by this campaign, the museum will be able to replicate the program in more schools in the area, reaching hundreds of additional children.

Community Documentation Initiative: $150,000
There is no substitute for research done at the micro level by people talking to their neighbors. Block by city block, a small army of college interns and volunteers continuously researches the social and economic life of neighborhoods east of the Anacostia River, documenting community history in real time and gaining insights no outsider could discern. Each year, the museum focuses on a different area, such as education, elder care, faith and creativity. Previously isolated communities east of the Anacostia River are now the focus of a multibillion-dollar restoration and revitalization project that is sure to have a profound impact on long-established neighborhoods.

The Community Documentation Initiative is at the heart of everything the museum does, from education and exhibitions to public programming.

The museum has a wealth of information on process and outcomes in urban communities. New funding will allow it to develop and sustain the technological infrastructure to make this extraordinary resource more accessible and to sponsor a conference that would boost the nascent field of community research.

Children enjoy hands-on learning through public programming related to *Reclaiming the Edge*, the exhibition on urban waterways, which looked at densely populated watersheds and rivers as barriers to racial and ethnic integration. Here, they repurposed discarded beverage bottles into fish sculptures.
Public Programs: $150,000

The museum hosts between 120 and 150 public programs each year, offering visitors a more personal experience than is available in larger venues and providing a forum for ongoing community engagement.

- **Music, dance and art programs** — live jazz, Latin music, vocal, dance theatre and storytelling performances; artists workshops, lectures

- **Outreach programs** — compelling activities and events for young people, including Career Day, George Washington Carver Nature Trail tours, scavenger hunts and exhibition-related school-based workshops that enrich the museum experience

- **Exhibition-specific programs** — behind-the scenes museum tours, tours of the Anacostia watershed, specialized art workshops, Environmental Film Festival screenings, tours of local artists’ studios and bus tours to local public art sites

- **Signature programs** — Community History Series, Community Issues Forums, Family Day and Summer Family Festival

Gullah Family Day, featuring the Georgia-based Geechee-Gullah Ring Shouters and highlighting the *Word, Shout, Song* exhibition, brought aspects of African culture to life. Photograph by Michael Barnes
The Anacostia Community Museum engages more community members in research, documentation and program and exhibition planning than any other Smithsonian museum.

It is poised to build on its valuable work — strengthening service to community, scaling up research methods and offering its findings to a global audience.

You can help serve the Anacostia community and others worldwide by spreading the message about our museum and helping us welcome new visitors and participants in the study of the place called home.

We invite your support to help enrich our collective understanding of modern urban communities and our potential within them.

Donations may be made online or by mail. For more information on giving, please call the Anacostia Community Museum’s Office of Advancement at 202.633.4834.

Photograph by John Francis Ficara