



ARIZONA
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

arizonahistoricalociety.org

2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT



CONNECTING PEOPLE THROUGH THE POWER OF ARIZONA'S HISTORY



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT VOIE S. CHASE COY, PH.D.

Dear Members and Friends,

"A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin, and culture is like a tree without roots." Marcus Garvey.

In my first year as Board President, the Arizona Historical Society (AHS) experienced a time of immense change that is moving us to carry out our revised mission of "Connecting people through the power of Arizona's history".

In April 2018 after an extensive nationwide search, the board of directors was unanimous in selecting W. James Burns, Ph.D. as the executive director of AHS. Dr. Burns' background is versatile, having worked in history, anthropology, and art museums in four states over a period of nearly 30 years, including

organizations in Flagstaff, Phoenix, Tempe, Tucson, and Wickenburg. His academic background is grounded in Arizona history, and the relationships he has built over the years will aid the Society in its fundraising efforts.

With the hiring of a new executive director, it was appropriate for the AHS Executive Board and staff to examine the vision, mission and governance of the Society. After many meetings and intense discussion, the Board approved a new mission statement that reflects the energy and goals for making the AHS a leader among historical organizations.

"Connecting people through the power of Arizona's history."

With this revised mission statement, our new vision will help guide our path forward into the future and in creating a strategic plan that reflects these goals and values.

"The Arizona Historical Society seeks to be the driving force strengthening Arizona's communities by promoting history through leadership, partnership and scholarship."

Following those revisions, the Executive Committee recommended a new Policy Governance Model which was approved by the AHS Executive Board and by the full board at the Tombstone board meeting. The strength of this governance model is to encourage results for people rather than promoting organizational busy-ness.

In closing, there are many who need to be thanked. An important and vital component for the success of the AHS is the support groups. They contribute countless volunteer hours and thousands of dollars for the love of history. The board, staff, and citizens of Arizona are most appreciative of your efforts

I would like to express deep gratitude to the State Board of Directors during this transition and for all their work during the search. Thank you to all the board committees for their time, expertise, and support to continue the work of AHS.

I would also like to thank the AHS staff and volunteers for their hard work in all locations across Arizona. Staff and volunteers make our spaces welcoming to visitors, students, families, and researchers from all over the world to experience our museums, programs, events, exhibits, archives, and more.

Finally, I would like to recognize and personally thank Mr. William Ponder, Deputy Director and Chief Operating Office for serving as Interim Executive Director during the Executive Director search. His background with the Society, knowledge, insightfulness, and efficaciousness made the selection process run smoothly.

It is my honor to have served as your 2018 President. I look forward to the future as we continue to change, grow, and share our progress with you.

Voie Chase Coy, Ph.D.

Board President

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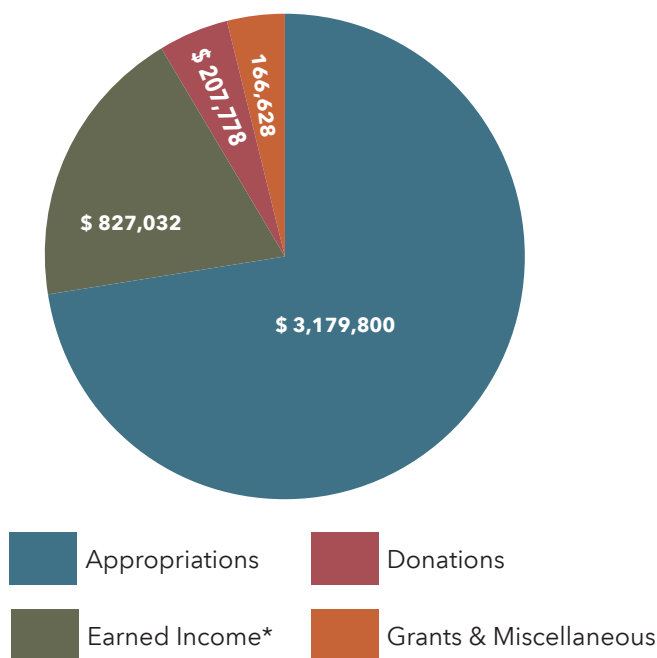
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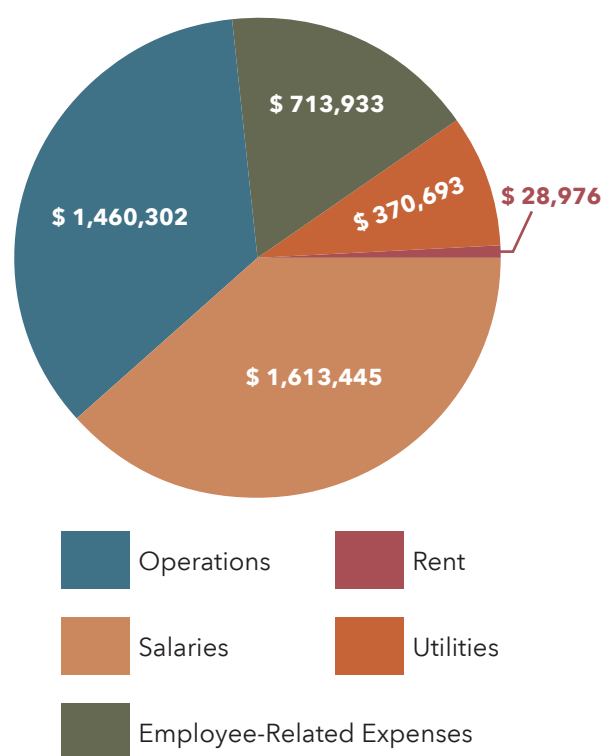
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW: JULY 1, 2017-JUNE 30, 2018

Revenue \$4,381,238



*Earned Income includes membership dues, admissions, rental and program fees

Expenditures \$4,187,349



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Arizona Historical Society celebrates its members. Below we give special recognition and thanks to those who have contributed a total of \$100 or more in gifts and/or through membership between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018.

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LETTER FROM THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR & COO WILLIAM PONDER

2017-2018: A Step Into the Future

The fiscal year 2018 proved to be a year of transition for the Arizona Historical Society (AHS). Our former Executive Director retired at the beginning of the year, and ten months later our new Executive Director, Dr. James Burns, stepped in to chart a new course. During that time period, the Board of Directors appointed me to the interim position.

An interim position can be challenging, especially if it is for an extended period. Do you follow the previously established course or is there the freedom to make changes? Moreover, how much change is acceptable; especially knowing that the agency has launched a national search for a director who will undoubtedly bring his or her own vision?

I was very fortunate that I had strong support from the entire Board of Directors. In addition, Dr. Voie Coy, Board President, and I developed an excellent working relationship. We collaborated on a daily basis on the key issues facing the agency; from choosing the search firm and managing the selection process to working with the Governor's Office, legislature and support groups. We also spent a great deal of time working together on the established Board and Executive priorities.

During this period of transition, the staff continued to work together to accomplish their goals, adapting to the changing environment. Their support and continued focus on the tasks at hand in the face of dramatic change, and a nearly 25% reduction in staffing due to retirements and relocation, was critical to the successful achievement of the Executive's priorities. Those priorities included establishing and testing new technologies, expanding National History Day, and working to develop exhibits based on our January 8th Foundation collection. A major priority was to increase targeted earned income categories by 5%. This team of dedicated professionals also attacked and exceeded the fiscal goals by 10%.

Looking back on this time of transition, my appreciation and heartfelt thanks extend to both the Board of Directors and the wonderful staff for the energy and effort they placed into making fiscal 2018 so successful. Having this success made it all the easier to turn over the reins to Dr. Burns and begin to focus on making his dynamic vision for AHS a success.

Following an extensive nationwide search, Dr. Burns accepted the Board's offer to become the new Executive Director of the Arizona Historical Society effective April 9, 2018. Burns came to AHS after leading esteemed cultural institutions across the state, including the Desert Caballeros Western Museum in Wickenburg. His background is grounded in Arizona history, and the relationships he has built during his career will help guide AHS into its new future. We are excited to work together with Dr. Burns during this transformative time and build a national reputation for AHS as a leader among 21st-century historical organizations.



Interim Executive Director, 2017-2018



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