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## Lehigh Valley Museums Showcase “The Arc of Innovation” During National Museum Conference Workshop

By Tamara Krizek

BETHLEHEM AND ALLENTOWN, PA — Three leading Lehigh Valley institutions joined forces this week to welcome museum professionals from around the world for a sold-out experiential workshop during the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) Annual Conference in Philadelphia.

Hosted collaboratively by Historic Bethlehem Museums & Sites, the National Museum of Industrial History, and Da Vinci Science Center, the immersive workshop, The Arc of Innovation, brought approximately 50 museum professionals to the Lehigh Valley for a full-day exploration of the region’s rich history of innovation, industry, and STEAM education.

The unique excursion traced the evolution of the Lehigh Valley from Colonial-era craftsmanship to today’s advanced manufacturing economy through visits to each institution’s distinctive campus and exhibits.

Participants began their journey in Bethlehem’s Colonial Industrial Quarter, where they explored the story of Moravian craftspeople and tradespeople in the mid-1700s and their contributions to early American industry and wartime manufacturing efforts. The experience continued at the National Museum of Industrial History on the former Bethlehem Steel site, where attendees examined the Lehigh Valley’s pivotal role in iron, steel, cement, textile, and industrial production throughout the 19th and 20th centuries.

The workshop concluded at Da Vinci Science Center at PPL Pavilion in Allentown, where museum professionals experienced how modern informal learning institutions are helping inspire the next generation of innovators through interactive exhibits, career pathway programs, and partnerships with regional companies including Mack Trucks, Air Products, and Martin Guitar.

Together, the three organizations demonstrated how museums and science centers can help sustain regional competitiveness by connecting history, innovation, workforce development, and STEAM education to spark curiosity and strengthen the talent pipeline for a resilient manufacturing economy.

“This workshop highlighted the incredible story of innovation that continues to define the Lehigh Valley,” said representatives from the participating institutions. “By working together, we were able to showcase how cultural and educational organizations can connect the past to the future while creating meaningful learning experiences for visitors of all ages.”

Throughout the day, participants engaged in discussions about educational programming, field trips, camps, outreach initiatives, public events, and exhibit interpretation strategies that help connect audiences to local history and emerging career opportunities.

The institutions extend their sincere gratitude to Discover Lehigh Valley for generously donating transportation for the excursion and to Lehigh Valley Restaurant Brands for providing lunch for participants.

The collaboration reflects the growing role of museums and science centers as community anchors that support education, tourism, workforce development, and economic growth across the region.



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Sponsorship proceeds will benefit The Bangor Exchange Club and our outreach programs for the Slate Belt Community and Scholarship funds.

Opening ceremony to be determined, read the **Blue Valley Times** for up dates to come

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