



PAULA WILLIAMS AND RIPLEY BELL MAKE THE CASE FOR MUSEUMS ON CAPITOL HILL

Local Museum Leaders Join Hundreds of Citizen-Advocates From Across the Country Feb. 26-27

[For Release February 28, 2018 – Albany, GA] – Executive Director Paula Williams and AMA Board President Ripley Bell were in Washington, D.C., February 26-27 to petition our government and make the case for museums.

Joined by other museum leaders from Georgia, Williams and Bell visited members of Congress and their staff to make the case for federal support of America’s museums. They were among more than 300 museum professionals and supporters from across the country participating in the 10th annual [Museums Advocacy Day](#), organized by the [American Alliance of Museums](#).

Williams and Bell have risen to the occasion to educate elected officials and inspire support for museums at a critical time—just as Congress begins its work for the year.

“Today, legislators have a lot of issues on their plates, and we can’t expect them to fully appreciate our field unless we bring the message to their doorstep,” said Williams. “We want to make sure Congress knows about the vital work museums do, and their role as educational and economic assets.”

Bell cited the programs the Albany Museum of Art provides to Albany and Southwest Georgia and the importance of the AMA to the community.

- Inspiring lifelong learning in the community through teaching from the AMA’s permanent collection, offering free admission and its outreach programs.
- Crossing generational lines with programs and events such as Toddler Tuesdays and Coffee with the Curator.
- Strengthening family bonds with Spring and Fall Family Days that have drawn thousands of children, parents and grandparents, all of whom attended with free admission.
- Reaching into the community with programs at organizations such as the Boys & Girls Club and Girls Inc., places that are nurturing our future leaders.

This is emblematic of the work museums of all types and sizes are doing nationally. According to the [American Alliance of Museums](#), there are more than 850 million museum visits annually in the U.S.— more than the attendance at all major league sporting events combined. Museums support 726,000 jobs nationwide, contribute more than \$50 billion to the U.S. economy, and invest more than \$2 billion in educational programs each year, serving Americans of all ages

and income levels in a variety of ways. There are more than 55 million visits by schoolchildren to U.S. museums each year, and museums are among the most trusted sources of information for Americans.

Another [study](#) found that for every \$1 invested in museums and other cultural organizations, over \$5 is returned in tax revenues through cultural tourism and related economic activity.

Williams and Bell shared these and other facts about museums with the Georgia Congressional delegation.

“Museums are essential to communities everywhere, as part of our educational infrastructure, as economic engines, and as community assets that improve the overall quality of life,” said **Alliance President and CEO Laura Lott**.

Lott said she felt “privileged that Paula Williams and Ripley Bell” joined with the Alliance in Washington, D.C, for Museums Advocacy Day.

“The Albany Museum of Art is doing extraordinary work in Albany and the members of Congress from Georgia need to hear from constituents about how the museum serves its community,” she said.

This is the fourth year that the AMA has been represented for Museum Advocacy Day.

For more information on the Albany Museum of Art, visit www.albanymuseum.com. For more information on museums and their impact on communities nationally, visit www.aam-us.org.

###