July 2024 MAMC FAC Recommendations

Rules Subcommittee

1. Recommended a set of rules for the Advisory Commission to follow

Enhanced Interpretation Subcommittee

1. Utilize Shuttle Buses, encourage use of public transportation and collaborate with women’s groups that conduct tours to women’s history sites and conduct webinars in Washington, DC to increase visitation.
2. NPS should promote more broadly, on the website, the existence and use of the NPS Passport as a tool for increasing visitation. Encouraging visitors to get their Passport stamped at each site they visit creates an interactive relationship between the visitor and the Park visited.
3. Recommended that Mary McLeod Bethune’s life and legacy be seen through a multi- dimensional lens that reflects her national impact. Additionally, Mary McLeod Bethune’s Last Will and Testament should be utilized to promote her global impact as she worked to improve the status of women of color around the world. Recent books and other scholarly resources will enhance the NPS Staff’s knowledge of Bethune as a national figure. Additionally, Dr. Ashley Robertson Preston will be teaching a course this fall on Mrs. Bethune at Howard University using her recent book as the focus. A specific, clear, and detailed arrangement has been made with Howard, using this class, and the students will get research credit by interning at the Bethune Home.
4. At respective conferences, organize panel sessions to discuss the life and legacy of Mary McLeod Bethune.
5. To create a renewed relationship between African American public history
6. and **STEAM** education, we recommend meeting the public’s preferred mode of information gathering, by creating podcasts, short films, curating museum exhibitions, and animations to broaden the public’s awareness of Mrs. Bethune.
7. Recommended replicating NPS docent training incorporating the successes of the collaboration with Kiamsha and Dunbar High School students to increase the number of peer-to-peer trainers that will benefit in the interpretation of the Bethune legacy. The “transfer of knowledge” methods utilized will impact the expansion of the knowledge of Bethune. Recommend also utilizing the senior community as docents, many who have skills in transcribing and digitizing.
8. For the website, we recommend utilizing computer-generated work such as interactive maps, oral histories, etc. to promote Mrs. Bethune.
9. Recommended that the training session for interns begin with an introduction to the National Park System. Day one would be Park Service 101. Kiamsha has an excellent presentation that introduces audiences of all ages to the National Park System and a song entitled “Save the Children” that the lyrics were changed to reflect “Save the Parklands.” Consider utilizing these resources, especially to engage youth populations, to bring the Bethune legacy to life.
10. In addition to Morgan State University, we recommend in class presentations to recruit from Howard, UDC, Bowie and other HBCUs in the region such as Virginia Union, Virginia State and Hampton. Additionally recruit from local colleges and universities such as Georgetown, George Washington, American, George Mason, Catholic and other PWIs in the other.
11. We recommend engaging the community in receptions and programs at the Bethune House.

Archives Subcommittee

1. Research the viability of utilizing Amazon’s Azure Cloud for long-term digital preservation and public access. Based on your findings, review outside vendors for public access.
2. Research and develop a robust metadata schema and digitization standard.
3. Connect with local organizations with similar collections and digitization capabilities. This would allow MAMC to explore partnerships with local institutions such as Howard University, community organizations, and local government organizations. We would also recommend following up with other Park Service sites that focus on Black and Women’s history, like the Maggie Lena Walker site, as possible collaborators.

Communications and Community Engagement Subcommittee

1. Develop formal partnerships with relevant organizations including the Smithsonian, NCNW, Bethune Cookman University, NAACP, NTHP, UNCF, BWH, NMAAHC and schools named for Bethune. This would provide opportunities for the NPS to better communicate and engage with the local community/neighborhoods as well as with associated organizations, locally and beyond.
2. Address prohibitive factors, namely not being open on Saturdays. Expanding the hours the Mary McLeod Bethune Council House (MMBCH) is open would increase the opportunities for the community and public to visit the MMBCH and acquire more knowledge of Dr. Bethune and the MMBCH programs and available resources.
3. Provide literature in the Capitol Visitor Center – connecting the Bethune statue in the capital with the NHS and statue in Lincoln Park. Thousands of people regularly visit the Capitol Visitor Center. Availability of literature in the Visitor Center would provide information to the public about the MMBCH for potential tours and to see the historic Mary McLeod Bethune statue in Lincoln Park.
4. Expand and engage schools with visits and virtual relationships. This would increase students’ knowledge of Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune and her contributions nationally and internationally. Her upbringing and her life could inspire students to realize anything is possible with a dream, belief in yourself, hard work, and teamwork.
5. Develop a brief video and circulate with a brochure. Target Black History Month, Women’s History Month, May – Bethune’s passing and July – birth month. This would increase the opportunities for the community and public to acquire more knowledge of Dr. Bethune and her contributions.
6. Consider creating a YouTube channel. YouTube is said to be one of the most popular sites on the web, with visitors watching around 6 billion hours of video every month. Creation of a YouTube channel would allow the opportunity for MMBCH to create and share selected videos via the channel on an ongoing basis and thereby increase engagement with schools and universities, communities, and the public.