

# Black Belt Museum

## Detailed Assessment Report 2013-2014

### Mission / Purpose

The Black Belt Museum is dedicated to educating students and the community about the natural and cultural history of the Black Belt of Alabama and Mississippi with collections, preservation, exhibits, and programs that will promote a positive self-image for the region.

### I. Goals and Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives, with Any Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

#### A. Goal: Address the major educational and cultural issues of the region

Address the major educational, social, cultural, and economic issues of the region and in doing so promote a positive self-image of the institution and the area.

#### 1. Outcome: Increase student knowledge of the Black Belt

Students who are involved with the Black Belt Museum through volunteering, student assistantships, and participation in programs will broaden their knowledge about the region's natural and cultural history.

##### a. Measure: Increased student volunteers

Every year, some undergraduates in Anthropology, History, or Biology courses express an interest in the activities and progress of the Black Belt Museum. Museum staff would like to capture that interest by recruiting these students as volunteers at the Museum's Archaeology and Paleontology laboratories. They will benefit from hands-on activities involving collections from the Black Belt and learn about the processes of basic analysis and conservation of these materials.

#### 1. Achievement Target:

At least two students serve as volunteers at some point during the Fall, Spring, or Summer semesters.

#### 2. Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met

Three students volunteered in the archaeology laboratory during the archaeological field school between mid-May and mid-June 2014.

#### 3. Action Plan:

##### Recruit volunteers

As space is renovated and programs are increased, the number of volunteers that can be used will increase.

**Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** Low

**Implementation Description:** Advertise for volunteers among the UWA and local community and keep a record of their hours worked to use as in-kind contributions and demonstrated support for grants.

**Projected Completion Date:** 08/28/2011

**Responsible Person/Group:** Museum staff

##### Implementation Notes:

**8/20/2014** The Museum continues to attract a few student volunteers to work in the Archaeology and Paleontology laboratories. Staff has discussed having a regular

volunteer night in the lab for students and community members to educate them about Museum projects, local natural history, and to help complete the processing tasks. There are models for successful volunteer nights at other museums. However, none of the museum staff qualified to oversee such an activity live in the local area and/or have small children. Museum staff is now considering establishing a morning or afternoon volunteer day in the laboratories, and staff will continue to welcome those who find the Museum on their own and wish to volunteer during regular operating hours.

## **II. Goals and Other Outcomes/Objectives, with Any Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans**

### **A. Goal: Address the major educational and cultural issues of the region**

Address the major educational, social, cultural, and economic issues of the region and in doing so promote a positive self-image of the institution and the area.

#### **1. Objective: Increase stakeholder awareness of museum**

The Facebook page and Division of Educational Outreach newsletter, "The Black Belt Connection," are very effective tools for building public awareness of Museum activities and promoting events. Plans to increase stakeholder awareness are to a) continue regular updates on the Museum's Facebook page and promotion of the page in written materials, and b) include a list of feature stories about the region, written by Museum staff, to be included in "The Black Belt Connection."

##### **a. Measure: Increased number of Facebook fans and newsletter articles**

Increases in the number of Facebook "fans" of the Museum usually occur with event announcements or posts of event photos. With continued, persistent attention to updating the page, especially with tagged photos, and advertising the page on all printed public documents, the distribution of information should increase each year. Awareness of the Museum--its mission and potential--also will strengthen with the inclusion of articles on regional topics by Museum staff in The Black Belt Connection newsletter.

##### **1. Achievement Target:**

The Facebook page will attain 30 new "fans," and Museum staff will write 3 articles on a Black Belt specific topic for The Black Belt Connection.

##### **2. Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

On August 11, 2013, the Museum's Facebook page had 202 "Likes," and on August 11, 2014, there were 320 "Likes." This represents a net gain of 118. Museum staff member Rosa Hall wrote 5 articles for The Black Belt Connection under the Black Belt Gardener heading. Director John Hall wrote 3 articles under the heading Natural Wonders of the Black Belt. Assistant Director Ashley Dumas wrote 2 articles relating to Fort Tombeche and 2 articles about a Sumter County cemetery research project. Paleontologist and Collections Manager James Lamb wrote an article about a teacher's fossil workshop in the Black Belt and an article about his research on a fossilized dinosaur egg from Dallas County. This is a total of 14 articles on Black Belt specific topics.

#### **2. Objective: Continue improvement to McMillan Building**

Continue to make improvements to the McMillan Building in downtown Livingston to serve as the physical home of the Black Belt Museum, its exhibits, programs, most of its staff, and most of its collections.

##### **a. Measure: Progress on next construction project**

Renovations to the plumbing and Programs side of the first floor will have begun.

**1. Achievement Target:**

At least 50% of the improvements to the plumbing and Programs side will have been completed and at least 50% of the \$170,852 PBI grant will have been expended on the project.

**2. Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

At least 50% of the improvements were made to the Programs side of the building, and all but \$600 of the original PBI grant funds were spent on new electrical and heating/cooling service on the first floor of the McMillan Building. There was also a fire and intruder alarm system installed, and the main water service lines were stubbed in for the bathrooms and sprinkler system.

**3. Action Plans:**

**a. Continue fund-raising**

The perpetual funding needs of a museum for its programs, exhibits, and maintenance of collections requires the aid of a development officer to raise annual and long-term funds, develop relationships with donors, and create fund-raising goals and policies. Museum staff needs to meet with the appropriate people in UWA's Development office and Sponsored Programs to ensure that they are aware of the museum's current needs and opportunities for fund-raising.

**Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** High

**Implementation Description:** Establish a regular meeting with Development staff and the Office of Sponsored Programs

**Projected Completion Date:** 11/27/2011

**Responsible Person/Group:** Museum staff

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** Should UWA continue to support the development of the Black Belt Museum, Museum staff will initiate meetings with the Development office and other personnel in Institutional Advancement, as well as the Office of Sponsored Programs to update them on the progress and current funding needs.

**b. Implement Phase 2 of McMillan building renovation**

The second phase of the renovation to the McMillan building will involve renovating the programs side.

**Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012

**Implementation Status:** Finished

**Priority:** High

**Implementation Description:** Raise funds for the renovation through "asks" to private donors and writing grants.

**Projected Completion Date:** 08/28/2012

**Responsible Person/Group:** Museum staff

**Additional Resources Requested:** Construction materials, contractor fees, and key equipment, as estimated from architectural plans.

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/13/2014** Phases I and II of the McMillan project were completed and passed the state building inspection in June 2014.

Phase I included demolition of the structurally unsound rear wall, construction of the new rear structural wall, mandated fire escape rear stairs, fire-rated barrier wall and new exterior rear building facade, freight elevator shaft, and construction of the loading dock. Phase II included construction of a new structurally sound roof deck and new roof membrane, establishing new electrical and heating/cooling

service to the first floor to comply with current code, mold remediation, fire and intruder alarm system, repair to some exterior brick work, renovation/replacement of exterior cornice details and painting of same, and stubbing in of main water lines for future bathrooms and sprinkler systems.

**5/29/2013** The back wall, roof, electricity, and roof (Phase I) should be complete by August 2013. Funds from a Department of Education PBI grant and remaining funds from the Black Belt Museum budget can be used for Phase II of the renovations.

**c. Develop museum construction shop**

The Black Belt Museum is fortunate to have James Lamb, who has extensive experience in designing and building world-class museum exhibits, like those at the McWane Science Center in Birmingham. As renovations to the McMillan Building now are underway, it is time to begin thinking about exhibits. Lamb already has established a section of the Black Belt Museum Laboratory (in Truelove Place) to serve as the museum construction shop. The equipment and tools essential for fabricating cases and other elements of exhibits include the following: cabinet saw, jointer, belt sander, drill press, thickness planer, grinding motor, radial arm saw, and a dust collection system. The shop also would be used to maintain and repair museum equipment, such as archaeological and paleontological tools, and to construct the items required for excavations in both fields. A designated museum shop is necessary, because the sorts of projects museum staff are making are not portable (say, to another shop on campus), require a lot of space, and involve weeks of continuous work. Museum staff is experienced at borrowing, scavenging, and begging used equipment--and staff will continue to do so as necessary--but the shop, once established, is an investment that will prevent having to hire outside contractors to do the fabrication work, ultimately saving UWA hundreds of thousands of dollars.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Finished

**Priority:** High

**Implementation Description:** Purchase and install shop equipment

**Responsible Person/Group:** James Lamb

**3. Objective: Seek funds from public and private sources**

Seek funding for exhibit planning and construction, programs, and collections by: (a) updating a list of specific exhibits needing sponsorship, to be sent to the UWA Director of Development and the Office of Sponsored Programs, and (b) applying for grants from appropriate government organizations and private foundations.

**a. Measure: Receive funding**

Success in seeking funds will be evidenced by (a) receiving funds for specific exhibits in the museum from private individuals, families, or foundations, and/or (b) full or partial funding of grants for exhibit development and construction.

**1. Achievement Target:**

(a) 25% of asks for exhibit sponsorship will be partially or fully funded, and/or (b) 50% of the grants applied for will be partially or fully funded.

**2. Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

(a) The Dr. R.C. & Emily M. Hill Fund for museum programs has grown to \$23,074.

(b) Four grant applications were submitted for the Black Belt Museum during 2013-2014, and three (75%) were funded. From the Tombigbee RC&D Council, the Museum received \$3,363 for the Fort Tombecbe Living History Project. The Alabama Humanities Foundation granted \$742 to support staff travel expenses to

programs, and \$500 were awarded from the Professional Disc Golf Association to assist in transforming and upgrading part of UWA's existing disc golf trail into a nature trail. In addition, the Museum received \$81,890 in PBI funds for the 2014-2015 FY, which will be used for Phase III of the McMillan Building project.

### **3. Action Plan:**

#### **Continue fund-raising**

The perpetual funding needs of a museum for its programs, exhibits, and maintenance of collections requires the aid of a development officer to raise annual and long-term funds, develop relationships with donors, and create fund-raising goals and policies. Museum staff needs to meet with the appropriate people in UWA's Development office and Sponsored Programs to ensure that they are aware of the museum's current needs and opportunities for fund-raising.

**Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** High

**Implementation Description:** Establish a regular meeting with Development staff and the Office of Sponsored Programs

**Projected Completion Date:** 11/27/2011

**Responsible Person/Group:** Museum staff

#### **Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** Should UWA continue to support the development of the Black Belt Museum, Museum staff will initiate meetings with the Development office and other personnel in Institutional Advancement, as well as the Office of Sponsored Programs to update them on the progress and current funding needs.

### **4. Objective: Curation of collections**

The curation of existing and new collections into appropriate containers, facilities, and with appropriate labels is a continual museum process.

#### **a. Measure: Storage and labeling of collections**

The most basic steps in the curation of collections include putting them into acid free containers, as necessary, organizing them in a logical order in the museum collections room, and labeling boxes.

##### **1. Achievement Target:**

At least 80% of existing and new collections will be curated.

##### **2. Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

A large donation of prehistoric pottery from Monroe County was washed and placed in archival bags in the Archaeology Laboratory. A large new donated collection from a local estate was placed in climate-controlled storage, and the process of labeling and recording the items is well underway.

### **3. Action Plans:**

#### **a. Continue VISTA volunteer program**

Need VISTA volunteer to continue at Black Belt Museum in collections curation, organization of public programs, and other duties, as necessary, to keep the museum active on a daily basis.

**Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** High

**Implementation Description:** Seek \$10,000 to fund 1 VISTA volunteer

**Responsible Person/Group:** Ashley Dumas

**Additional Resources Requested:** All office equipment already in place.

**Budget Amount Requested:** \$10,000.00 (recurring)

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** Emily Boersma is returning this year as a VISTA volunteer with the Black Belt Museum.

**b. Recruit volunteers**

As space is renovated and programs are increased, the number of volunteers that can be used will increase.

**Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** Low

**Implementation Description:** Advertise for volunteers among the UWA and local community and keep a record of their hours worked to use as in-kind contributions and demonstrated support for grants.

**Projected Completion Date:** 08/28/2011

**Responsible Person/Group:** Museum staff

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** The Museum continues to attract a few student volunteers to work in the Archaeology and Paleontology laboratories. Staff has discussed having a regular volunteer night in the lab for students and community members to educate them about Museum projects, local natural history, and to help complete the processing tasks. There are models for successful volunteer nights at other museums. However, none of the museum staff qualified to oversee such an activity live in the local area and/or have small children. Museum staff is now considering establishing a morning or afternoon volunteer day in the laboratories, and staff will continue to welcome those who find the Museum on their own and wish to volunteer during regular operating hours.

**c. Develop museum construction shop**

The Black Belt Museum is fortunate to have James Lamb, who has extensive experience in designing and building world-class museum exhibits, like those at the McWane Science Center in Birmingham. As renovations to the McMillan Building now are underway, it is time to begin thinking about exhibits. Lamb already has established a section of the Black Belt Museum Laboratory (in Truelove Place) to serve as the museum construction shop. The equipment and tools essential for fabricating cases and other elements of exhibits include the following: cabinet saw, jointer, belt sander, drill press, thickness planer, grinding motor, radial arm saw, and a dust collection system. The shop also would be used to maintain and repair museum equipment, such as archaeological and paleontological tools, and to construct the items required for excavations in both fields. A designated museum shop is necessary, because the sorts of projects museum staff are making are not portable (say, to another shop on campus), require a lot of space, and involve weeks of continuous work. Museum staff is experienced at borrowing, scavenging, and begging used equipment--and staff will continue to do so as necessary--but the shop, once established, is an investment that will prevent having to hire outside contractors to do the fabrication work, ultimately saving UWA hundreds of thousands of dollars.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Finished

**Priority:** High

**Implementation Description:** Purchase and install shop equipment

**Responsible Person/Group:** James Lamb

**d. Establish a part-time laboratory assistant position**

At least one part-time, bi-weekly, laboratory assistant position is needed in the Black Belt Museum on a year-round basis to process artifacts from archaeological sites and paleontological collections. Museums are rooted in collections, and collections require continual maintenance and curation. Having a part-time assistant would allow James Lamb more time to focus on exhibit preparation and research. This position or positions would be excellent hands-on positions with real student learning outcomes, especially for those on track for an Anthropology minor. However, the position could be filled by anyone from the public who has the temperament and genuine interest in museum work.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Finished

**Priority:** Medium

**Implementation Description:** Hire assistant under bi-weekly employment status

**Responsible Person/Group:** Ashley Dumas and James Lamb

**Additional Resources Requested:** Salary for assistant: \$7.25/hr x 20 hrs/week x 16 wks/semester x 3 semesters=\$6,960

**Budget Amount Requested:** \$6,960.00 (recurring)

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/13/2014** Tim Truelove was hired as a 30 hour/week laboratory assistant in January 2014.

## **5. Objective: Hire VISTA volunteer**

The museum would like to continue funding a VISTA volunteer to process collections, coordinate volunteers and museum programs, and other tasks associated with keeping the museum active as necessary. Museum studies, public history, or other educational outreach experience is preferred.

### **a. Measure: Funding for VISTA**

Continue existing funding for VISTA volunteer to work with the Black Belt Museum.

#### **1. Achievement Target:**

100% of \$10,000 funding for 1 VISTA volunteer.

#### **2. Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

100% of the \$10,000 funding for a Black Belt Museum VISTA volunteer was obtained and an appropriate candidate, Emily Boersma, was hired as a programs and educational assistant.

#### **3. Action Plans:**

##### **a. Continue fund-raising**

The perpetual funding needs of a museum for its programs, exhibits, and maintenance of collections requires the aid of a development officer to raise annual and long-term funds, develop relationships with donors, and create fund-raising goals and policies. Museum staff needs to meet with the appropriate people in UWA's Development office and Sponsored Programs to ensure that they are aware of the museum's current needs and opportunities for fund-raising.

**Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** High

**Implementation Description:** Establish a regular meeting with Development staff and the Office of Sponsored Programs

**Projected Completion Date:** 11/27/2011

**Responsible Person/Group:** Museum staff

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** Should UWA continue to support the development of the Black Belt Museum, Museum staff will initiate meetings with the Development office and other personnel in Institutional Advancement, as well as the Office of Sponsored Programs to update them on the progress and current funding needs.

**b. Continue VISTA volunteer program**

Need VISTA volunteer to continue at Black Belt Museum in collections curation, organization of public programs, and other duties, as necessary, to keep the museum active on a daily basis.

**Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** High

**Implementation Description:** Seek \$10,000 to fund 1 VISTA volunteer

**Responsible Person/Group:** Ashley Dumas

**Additional Resources Requested:** All office equipment already in place.

**Budget Amount Requested:** \$10,000.00 (recurring)

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** Emily Boersma is returning this year as a VISTA volunteer with the Black Belt Museum.

**6. Objective: Foster staff research and publication**

Successful museums, whether focusing on art, culture, or natural history, are not static, and their staffs are not mere technicians. Museum exhibits and programs must change to reflect new information on relevant topics and to maintain the public's interest, and knowledgeable curators are required to design, order, and label exhibits. These needs can be met when museum staff remains current in their respective areas of expertise through research and publication. For example, an exhibit on prehistoric Indians of the Black Belt using 30 year-old information would poorly inform, or misinform, students and the community, conflict with UWA's goals to improve education through research, and be detrimental to UWA's ability to recruit highly qualified faculty and to its reputation. For these reasons, fostering the ability of Museum staff to conduct research and write is a continual goal. Specifically, this means seeking assistance, from peers, administrators, and students, to allot time for research and publication. Students should increasingly be involved in research projects, thereby benefitting their academic and intellectual growth as well as the research. Museum staff and administrators should help one another with time management and the efficient completion of tasks not associated with research and writing so that there will be more time for the latter.

**a. Measure: Publication or presentation of research**

The ultimate academic measure of success for research is publishing the results in a professional journal. Presenting the information at a professional conference is often an important initial step towards publication and is, therefore, also an acceptable measure of success.

**1. Achievement Target:**

At least one Museum staff member will publish on their research, interests, or activity in an extramural venue, and/or at least one Museum staff member will present on their research, interests, or activity at a professional conference.

**2. Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

Ashley Dumas had research related to Fort Tombecbe presented in January at the Society for Historical Archaeology conference in Quebec City, Quebec, Canada, and a co-authored book chapter was published in an edited volume. She also published a book review in the journal North American Archaeologist. Brian Mast presented at

the National Association for Interpretation Regional Workshop and published a book review in *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies*.

### **3. Action Plans:**

#### **a. Acquire a truck for Black Belt Museum programs**

The Black Belt Museum archaeology, paleontology, and living history programs regularly transport large amounts of equipment and gear to program or expedition sites. The staff currently use their own vehicles because state cars are too small, state vans are too big, state mini-vans are too nice, and none are off-road worthy. A 4-door, 4-wheel drive, long bed truck would be used at least once a month, and several times a year it would be used for a few days or weeks at a time. It is believed that there is a similar need for Biological Sciences staff. The needs of both groups might be met if the UWA Motor Pool added a truck that would be reserved for use only by these groups.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Implementation Description:** Select a truck for purchase by the UWA Motor Pool.

**Responsible Person/Group:** Ashley Dumas

**Additional Resources Requested:** Funds to purchase the truck and to add it to state insurance.

**Budget Amount Requested:** \$30,000.00 (one time)

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** The need for a field truck is continual. This year, the assistant director regularly transported field equipment and staff in her personal car to and from Fort Tombecbe, before and after field school. James Lamb has used his personal truck for paleontological collection trips to numerous places in Sumter, Greene, Hale, and Choctaw counties in the past two months alone.

#### **b. Establish a part-time laboratory assistant position**

At least one part-time, bi-weekly, laboratory assistant position is needed in the Black Belt Museum on a year-round basis to process artifacts from archaeological sites and paleontological collections. Museums are rooted in collections, and collections require continual maintenance and curation. Having a part-time assistant would allow James Lamb more time to focus on exhibit preparation and research. This position or positions would be excellent hands-on positions with real student learning outcomes, especially for those on track for an Anthropology minor. However, the position could be filled by anyone from the public who has the temperament and genuine interest in museum work.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Finished

**Priority:** Medium

**Implementation Description:** Hire assistant under bi-weekly employment status

**Responsible Person/Group:** Ashley Dumas and James Lamb

**Additional Resources Requested:** Salary for assistant: \$7.25/hr x 20 hrs/week x 16 wks/semester x 3 semesters=\$6,960

**Budget Amount Requested:** \$6,960.00 (recurring)

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/13/2014** Tim Truelove was hired as a 30 hour/week laboratory assistant in January 2014.

### **7. Objective: Increase partnerships**

The Museum can increase the success of its programs and expand its reach by partnering with other institutions.

**a. Measure: Establish a new partnership**

To help support a program, event, or research activity, the Museum will partner with an organization or institution with whom it has not worked before.

**1. Achievement Target:**

At least 1 new partnership will be established during this cycle.

**2. Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

The Museum partnered with the National Association for Interpretation Region 3 to host its Certified Interpretive Guide course in September 2013 and its regional interpretive workshop in February 2014.

**8. Objective: Complete Lophorhodon cast**

One of the keystone exhibits for the future Black Belt Museum will be a 16-foot long cast skeleton of a Lophorhodon dinosaur. James Lamb has finished making molds of the original fossils and has begun to make casts. When the casts are completed, they must be painted and then assembled into an articulated skeleton. After beginning the project in his home garage, Lamb has been able to move it to the new Paleontology Laboratory space in Truelove Place, where casting and assembly can be completed. Museum staff hopes to assemble the completed Lophorhodon skeleton for limited display near the end of the 2013-2014 cycle.

**a. Measure: Assemble Lophorhodon**

The entire Lophorhodon skeleton cast will be complete and on temporary display either in part or whole, somewhere on campus.

**1. Achievement Target:**

100% of the Lophorhodon skeleton will be cast and 25% (at least the skull) will be on display on campus.

**2. Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Partially Met**

100% of the Lophorhodon skeleton has been cast but none of it has been assembled for display.

**3. Action Plans:**

**a. Begin exhibit construction**

Regardless of a museum's many functions, the one that is most visible to the public, and therefore critical to complete as soon as possible, is installation of permanent exhibits. Construction of exhibits will begin as soon as the exhibits side of the McMillan building is completed (see 2010-2011 cycle). In addition to raising the funds necessary for exhibit construction, the museum will need to hire an exhibits and collections specialist to carry out most of the work. This person will be the hands-on manager of exhibit design, construction, and maintenance for the permanent as well as the traveling and other temporary exhibits. This person also will handle all curation duties associated with selecting materials from collections and preparing them for display.

**Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** Medium

**Implementation Description:** (a) Advertise for position, conduct interviews, and hire exhibits specialist; (b) obtain funding through private and public sources, bid for specialized electrical and plumbing work; (c) construct exhibits in-house

**Projected Completion Date:** 08/28/2012

**Responsible Person/Group:** Museum staff

**Additional Resources Requested:** (a) 54,000 (40,000 for Exhibits Specialist + 35% benefits) + 3000 non-recurring (computer, large monitor, large-format printer, scanner, external hard drive + 1500 non-recurring (travel for job candidates) + (b) 100,000 (exhibit construction materials) recurring for 3 years

**Budget Amount Requested:** \$158,500.00 (recurring)

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** Because Phase II of the McMillan project was completed this year, resulting in a heated, cooled, and water-tight building, Museum staff can now use the building for exhibit construction. Additional specialized tools and equipment that are necessary for exhibit construction have been acquired. The exhibit side of the McMillan Building has been cleared of construction debris and can now be used as a temporary museum shop for fabrication of exhibit cases and mounts. Tools and equipment will be moved from Truelove Place to this space as they are needed for specific projects.

**b. Complete Lophorothon cast**

The remainder of the Lophorothon dinosaur cast will be completed and painted within the 2014-2015 cycle.

**Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** High

**Implementation Description:** James Lamb will continue to cast fossils and then paint them for local display.

**Projected Completion Date:** 09/28/2014

**Responsible Person/Group:** James Lamb

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** Significant progress was made on this project due to the addition of Tim Truelove in February 2014 as a part-time laboratory assistant and the course-release for James Lamb. Nearly 100% of the skeleton has been cast and sculpted. It has not been painted yet.

**c. Hire a full-time laboratory assistant**

Museum exhibit development and construction requires at least one employee who can spend 40 hours per week dedicated to this task. Now that the casting and molding of all skeletal pieces is complete, they must be assembled and label copy must be written to accompany the display. The head of the Lophorothon will receive priority for assembly because it can serve as a stand-alone display. The rest of the skeleton will be assembled and mounted independently. Label copy for accompanying signs will be written and printed on durable media.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Implementation Description:** Assembly of the head and accompanying explanatory signage will be completed first, followed by the remainder of the skeleton.

**Projected Completion Date:** 08/30/2015

**Responsible Person/Group:** James Lamb

**Additional Resources Requested:** A full-time laboratory assistant for the Black Belt Museum is needed to insure that progress continues on exhibit projects, like casting and molding of fossils, while James Lamb continues to serve as the Museum's project manager for the McMillan Building and as collections manager, in addition to teaching one course per semester. The loss of Ashley Dumas as Assistant Director of the Black Belt Museum will only add to Mr. Lamb's duties and further prevent him from being able to work on exhibits. The museum staff requests that Tim Truelove, currently a part-time employee limited to 30 hours per

week, become a full-time employee. He currently makes approximately \$14,040 a year (\$9/hour x 1560 hours). The additional 520 hours a year plus 52% benefits for a full-time employee would bring his total compensation to \$28,454.40. The amount needed to do this is reflected in the budget amount requested for this Action Plan.

**Budget Amount Requested:** \$14,414.00 (recurring)

**9. Objective: Complete marine turtle and baby mosasaur casts**

Each of these casts will be made from loaned fossil material that must be returned to the lending institutions before the end of the calendar year. The casts will be assembled for travelling and temporary exhibits.

**a. Measure: Assemble turtle and mosasaur**

The casts and assembly of these two fossils will be completed over a two-year period, ending in 2015.

**1. Achievement Target:**

50% of the two fossils will be cast and assembled, and preparations will be made to display one of them.

**2. Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

The turtle has been 90% cast and nearly 50% of the mosasaur has been prepared for casting and molding. This progress was made due to the presence of a part-time laboratory assistant, Tim Truelove.

**3. Action Plans:**

**a. Begin exhibit construction**

Regardless of a museum's many functions, the one that is most visible to the public, and therefore critical to complete as soon as possible, is installation of permanent exhibits. Construction of exhibits will begin as soon as the exhibit side of the McMillan building is completed (see 2010-2011 cycle). In addition to raising the funds necessary for exhibit construction, the museum will need to hire an exhibits and collections specialist to carry out most of the work. This person will be the hands-on manager of exhibit design, construction, and maintenance for the permanent as well as the traveling and other temporary exhibits. This person also will handle all curation duties associated with selecting materials from collections and preparing them for display.

**Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** Medium

**Implementation Description:** (a) Advertise for position, conduct interviews, and hire exhibits specialist; (b) obtain funding through private and public sources, bid for specialized electrical and plumbing work; (c) construct exhibits in-house

**Projected Completion Date:** 08/28/2012

**Responsible Person/Group:** Museum staff

**Additional Resources Requested:** (a) 54,000 (40,000 for Exhibits Specialist + 35% benefits) + 3000 non-recurring (computer, large monitor, large-format printer, scanner, external hard drive + 1500 non-recurring (travel for job candidates) + (b) 100,000 (exhibit construction materials) recurring for 3 years

**Budget Amount Requested:** \$158,500.00 (recurring)

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** Because Phase II of the McMillan project was completed this year, resulting in a heated, cooled, and water-tight building, Museum staff can now use the building for exhibit construction. Additional specialized tools and equipment that are necessary for exhibit construction have been acquired. The exhibit side of

the McMillan Building has been cleared of construction debris and can now be used as a temporary museum shop for fabrication of exhibit cases and mounts. Tools and equipment will be moved from Truelove Place to this space as they are needed for specific projects.

**b. Add annual budget for Programs supplies and travel**

The modern museum cannot exist and be relevant to society without programs. The number of Museum programs is growing. Living history programs are popular with school groups, civic groups, local and state parks. These programs involve the use of consumable supplies (such as gun powder, paper, and cleaning supplies) and travel funds that are currently largely paid for with museum staff's personal funds. The museum budget currently has a budget line for instructional supplies that is used for laboratory supplies (archaeology and paleontology) and is encumbered by the McMillan building project. The museum's travel budget is encumbered by the fees for staff on-campus apartments. Additionally, the programs require printing brochures and flyers and educational materials to be distributed to thousands of people every year. Currently, this money comes from the Black Belt Museum general printing fund. A designated programs budget would greatly ease the production and implementation of expanding the reach of all programs.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Responsible Person/Group:** Brian Mast and Ashley Dumas

**Additional Resources Requested:** Funds for consumables and travel for Museum programs, at least until the Museum's travel and supply budgets are not encumbered by construction expenses.

**Budget Amount Requested:** \$1,500.00 (recurring)

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** Funds for travel and supplies have come largely from the Division of Educational Outreach Dean's budget, as the Museum still reserves most of its UWA-allocated budget for the McMillan Building project.

**c. Hire a full-time laboratory assistant**

Museum exhibit development and construction requires at least one employee who can spend 40 hours per week dedicated to this task. Now that the casting and molding of all skeletal pieces is complete, they must be assembled and label copy must be written to accompany the display. The head of the Lophorothon will receive priority for assembly because it can serve as a stand-alone display. The rest of the skeleton will be assembled and mounted independently. Label copy for accompanying signs will be written and printed on durable media.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Implementation Description:** Assembly of the head and accompanying explanatory signage will be completed first, followed by the remainder of the skeleton.

**Projected Completion Date:** 08/30/2015

**Responsible Person/Group:** James Lamb

**Additional Resources Requested:** A full-time laboratory assistant for the Black Belt Museum is needed to insure that progress continues on exhibit projects, like casting and molding of fossils, while James Lamb continues to serve as the Museum's project manager for the McMillan Building and as collections manager, in addition to teaching one course per semester. The loss of Ashley Dumas as Assistant Director of the Black Belt Museum will only add to Mr. Lamb's duties

and further prevent him from being able to work on exhibits. The museum staff requests that Tim Truelove, currently a part-time employee limited to 30 hours per week, become a full-time employee. He currently makes approximately \$14,040 a year (\$9/hour x 1560 hours). The additional 520 hours a year plus 52% benefits for a full-time employee would bring his total compensation to \$28,454.40. The amount needed to do this is reflected in the budget amount requested for this Action Plan.

**Budget Amount Requested:** \$14,414.00 (recurring)

**10. Objective: Maintain and expand Museum programs**

Museum programs include Black Belt Cafe series of talks, a Living History Camp and numerous other living history programs, fossil workshops, Community Day at Fort Tombecbe, Black Belt Garden children's programs, and others. The Museum would like to maintain all of these events and increase the number of Black Belt cafe talks. Museum staff would also like to participate in National Fossil Day (October 16) and National Archaeology Day (October 19) as well as natural history events such as comet-viewing.

**a. Measure: Host programs**

Events held during each academic/assessment cycle will be expanded and new events will be planned.

**1. Achievement Target:**

Attendance at all currently held events will increase by 10%. (Black Belt Cafe will add 5 people from its 2012-2013 high of 45) (Living History Camp will add 6 people from its 2012-2013 high of 52) (Community Day will add 4 people from its 2012-2013 high of 34) At least 1 new program will be held during the 2013-2014 cycle. This program will not necessarily become an annual event.

**2. Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Partially Met**

The Black Belt Cafe program has been transformed through a partnership with the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, who had control over the programming for 2013-2014 and did not meet the previous high participation numbers. Living History Camp participation was down for the 2014 event because it coincided with the Easter holiday. Community Day was not held because of concerns for site security. Instead, the Museum had an invitation-only "open house" that was attended by 12 people

**3. Action Plans:**

**a. Continue fund-raising**

The perpetual funding needs of a museum for its programs, exhibits, and maintenance of collections requires the aid of a development officer to raise annual and long-term funds, develop relationships with donors, and create fund-raising goals and policies. Museum staff needs to meet with the appropriate people in UWA's Development office and Sponsored Programs to ensure that they are aware of the museum's current needs and opportunities for fund-raising.

**Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** High

**Implementation Description:** Establish a regular meeting with Development staff and the Office of Sponsored Programs

**Projected Completion Date:** 11/27/2011

**Responsible Person/Group:** Museum staff

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** Should UWA continue to support the development of the Black Belt Museum, Museum staff will initiate meetings with the Development office and

other personnel in Institutional Advancement, as well as the Office of Sponsored Programs to update them on the progress and current funding needs.

**b. Recruit volunteers**

As space is renovated and programs are increased, the number of volunteers that can be used will increase.

**Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** Low

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Implementation Description:** Advertise for volunteers among the UWA and local community and keep a record of their hours worked to use as in-kind contributions and demonstrated support for grants.

**Projected Completion Date:** 08/28/2011

**Responsible Person/Group:** Museum staff

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** The Museum continues to attract a few student volunteers to work in the Archaeology and Paleontology laboratories. Staff has discussed having a regular volunteer night in the lab for students and community members to educate them about Museum projects, local natural history, and to help complete the processing tasks. There are models for successful volunteer nights at other museums. However, none of the museum staff qualified to oversee such an activity live in the local area and/or have small children. Museum staff is now considering establishing a morning or afternoon volunteer day in the laboratories, and staff will continue to welcome those who find the Museum on their own and wish to volunteer during regular operating hours.

**c. Acquire a truck for Black Belt Museum programs**

The Black Belt Museum archaeology, paleontology, and living history programs regularly transport large amounts of equipment and gear to program or expedition sites. The staff currently use their own vehicles because state cars are too small, state vans are too big, state mini-vans are too nice, and none are off-road worthy. A 4-door, 4-wheel drive, long bed truck would be used at least once a month, and several times a year it would be used for a few days or weeks at a time. It is believed that there is a similar need for Biological Sciences staff. The needs of both groups might be met if the UWA Motor Pool added a truck that would be reserved for use only by these groups.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Implementation Description:** Select a truck for purchase by the UWA Motor Pool.

**Responsible Person/Group:** Ashley Dumas

**Additional Resources Requested:** Funds to purchase the truck and to add it to state insurance.

**Budget Amount Requested:** \$30,000.00 (one time)

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** The need for a field truck is continual. This year, the assistant director regularly transported field equipment and staff in her personal car to and from Fort Tombeche, before and after field school. James Lamb has used his personal truck for paleontological collection trips to numerous places in Sumter, Greene, Hale, and Choctaw counties in the past two months alone.

**d. Add annual budget for Programs supplies and travel**

The modern museum cannot exist and be relevant to society without programs. The number of Museum programs is growing. Living history programs are popular with school groups, civic groups, local and state parks. These programs involve the use of consumable supplies (such as gun powder, paper, and cleaning supplies) and travel funds that are currently largely paid for with museum staff's personal funds. The museum budget currently has a budget line for instructional supplies that is used for laboratory supplies (archaeology and paleontology) and is encumbered by the McMillan building project. The museum's travel budget is encumbered by the fees for staff on-campus apartments. Additionally, the programs require printing brochures and flyers and educational materials to be distributed to thousands of people every year. Currently, this money comes from the Black Belt Museum general printing fund. A designated programs budget would greatly ease the production and implementation of expanding the reach of all programs.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Implementation Description:** Acquire supply and travel budget to support Museum Programs

**Responsible Person/Group:** Brian Mast and Ashley Dumas

**Additional Resources Requested:** Funds for consumables and travel for Museum programs, at least until the Museum's travel and supply budgets are not encumbered by construction expenses.

**Budget Amount Requested:** \$1,500.00 (recurring)

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** Funds for travel and supplies have come largely from the Division of Educational Outreach Dean's budget, as the Museum still reserves most of its UWA-allocated budget for the McMillan Building project.

**e. Establish a part-time laboratory assistant position**

At least one part-time, bi-weekly, laboratory assistant position is needed in the Black Belt Museum on a year-round basis to process artifacts from archaeological sites and paleontological collections. Museums are rooted in collections, and collections require continual maintenance and curation. Having a part-time assistant would allow James Lamb more time to focus on exhibit preparation and research. This position or positions would be excellent hands-on positions with real student learning outcomes, especially for those on track for an Anthropology minor. However, the position could be filled by anyone from the public who has the temperament and genuine interest in museum work.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Finished

**Priority:** Medium

**Implementation Description:** Hire assistant under bi-weekly employment status

**Responsible Person/Group:** Ashley Dumas and James Lamb

**Additional Resources Requested:** Salary for assistant: \$7.25/hr x 20 hrs/week x 16 wks/semester x 3 semesters=\$6,960

**Budget Amount Requested:** \$6,960.00 (recurring)

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/13/2014** Tim Truelove was hired as a 30 hour/week laboratory assistant in January 2014.

**f. Evaluate program scheduling**

Attendance goals for programs sometimes are not met due to conflicts with holidays, weather events, and other unforeseen circumstances. Scheduling programs far in advance, making sure that they are advertised to the appropriate

audiences, and developing contingency plans may be helpful to avoid low turnouts.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** High

**Implementation Description:** Programs for the 2014-2015 academic year will be scheduled and advertising strategies made.

**Projected Completion Date:** 10/30/2014

**Responsible Person/Group:** Brian Mast

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** Staff continues to evaluate programs and work to develop new ones based on those subjects, events, and times that best meet student and community needs. Staff will be discussing with the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics how to alter the Science Coffee Shop series to increase attendance.

## **11. Objective: Expand geographical reach**

While building local awareness for its programs, the Museum primarily has served Livingston and Sumter County. However, as a regional Museum, the Museum staff must expand the Museum's geographical reach. One way to do this is to host programs or talks in other Black Belt towns, especially those with larger populations.

### **a. Measure: Host event outside of Sumter County**

The Black Belt Cafe series and Living History Camp are ideally suited to be held at a town outside of Sumter County. Demopolis and Meridian are within practical distance of UWA and contain University stakeholders in the form of current and potential students and their families, as well as resident faculty and staff.

#### **1. Achievement Target:**

At least 1 Museum program will be held outside of Sumter County with an attendance of at least 15 people.

#### **2. Findings (2013-2014) - Target: Met**

Brian Mast held a traditional fishing demonstration at the Alabama Wildlife Federation's Nature Center in Millbrook, Etowah County, Alabama in June 2014 with an attendance of 16 people.

#### **3. Action Plans:**

##### **a. Continue fund-raising**

The perpetual funding needs of a museum for its programs, exhibits, and maintenance of collections requires the aid of a development officer to raise annual and long-term funds, develop relationships with donors, and create fund-raising goals and policies. Museum staff needs to meet with the appropriate people in UWA's Development office and Sponsored Programs to ensure that they are aware of the museum's current needs and opportunities for fund-raising.

**Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** High

**Implementation Description:** Establish a regular meeting with Development staff and the Office of Sponsored Programs

**Projected Completion Date:** 11/27/2011

**Responsible Person/Group:** Museum staff

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** Should UWA continue to support the development of the Black Belt Museum, Museum staff will initiate meetings with the Development office and other personnel in Institutional Advancement, as well as the Office of Sponsored Programs to update them on the progress and current funding needs.

**b. Acquire a truck for Black Belt Museum programs**

The Black Belt Museum archaeology, paleontology, and living history programs regularly transport large amounts of equipment and gear to program or expedition sites. The staff currently use their own vehicles because state cars are too small, state vans are too big, state mini-vans are too nice, and none are off-road worthy. A 4-door, 4-wheel drive, long bed truck would be used at least once a month, and several times a year it would be used for a few days or weeks at a time. It is believed that there is a similar need for Biological Sciences staff. The needs of both groups might be met if the UWA Motor Pool added a truck that would be reserved for use only by these groups.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Implementation Description:** Select a truck for purchase by the UWA Motor Pool.

**Responsible Person/Group:** Ashley Dumas

**Additional Resources Requested:** Funds to purchase the truck and to add it to state insurance.

**Budget Amount Requested:** \$30,000.00 (one time)

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** The need for a field truck is continual. This year, the assistant director regularly transported field equipment and staff in her personal car to and from Fort Tombeche, before and after field school. James Lamb has used his personal truck for paleontological collection trips to numerous places in Sumter, Greene, Hale, and Choctaw counties in the past two months alone.

**c. Add annual budget for Programs supplies and travel**

The modern museum cannot exist and be relevant to society without programs. The number of Museum programs is growing. Living history programs are popular with school groups, civic groups, local and state parks. These programs involve the use of consumable supplies (such as gun powder, paper, and cleaning supplies) and travel funds that are currently largely paid for with museum staff's personal funds. The museum budget currently has a budget line for instructional supplies that is used for laboratory supplies (archaeology and paleontology) and is encumbered by the McMillan building project. The museum's travel budget is encumbered by the fees for staff on-campus apartments. Additionally, the programs require printing brochures and flyers and educational materials to be distributed to thousands of people every year. Currently, this money comes from the Black Belt Museum general printing fund. A designated programs budget would greatly ease the production and implementation of expanding the reach of all programs.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Implementation Description:** Acquire supply and travel budget to support Museum Programs

**Responsible Person/Group:** Brian Mast and Ashley Dumas

**Additional Resources Requested:** Funds for consumables and travel for Museum programs, at least until the Museum's travel and supply budgets are not encumbered by construction expenses.

**Budget Amount Requested:** \$1,500.00 (recurring)

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** Funds for travel and supplies have come largely from the Division of Educational Outreach Dean's budget, as the Museum still reserves most of its UWA-allocated budget for the McMillan Building project.

### III. Other Plans for Improvement

#### A. Begin exhibit construction

Regardless of a museum's many functions, the one that is most visible to the public, and therefore critical to complete as soon as possible, is installation of permanent exhibits. Construction of exhibits will begin as soon as the exhibit side of the McMillan building is completed (see 2010-2011 cycle). In addition to raising the funds necessary for exhibit construction, the museum will need to hire an exhibits and collections specialist to carry out most of the work. This person will be the hands-on manager of exhibit design, construction, and maintenance for the permanent as well as the traveling and other temporary exhibits. This person also will handle all curation duties associated with selecting materials from collections and preparing them for display.

**Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** Medium

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Assemble Lophorhodon | **Outcome/Objective:** Complete Lophorhodon cast

**Measure:** Assemble turtle and mosasaur | **Outcome/Objective:** Complete marine turtle and baby mosasaur casts

**Implementation Description:** (a) Advertise for position, conduct interviews, and hire exhibits specialist; (b) obtain funding through private and public sources, bid for specialized electrical and plumbing work; (c) construct exhibits in-house

**Projected Completion Date:** 08/28/2012

**Responsible Person/Group:** Museum staff

**Additional Resources Requested:** (a) 54,000 (40,000 for Exhibits Specialist + 35% benefits) + 3000 non-recurring (computer, large monitor, large-format printer, scanner, external hard drive + 1500 non-recurring (travel for job candidates) + (b) 100,000 (exhibit construction materials) recurring for 3 years

**Budget Amount Requested:** \$158,500.00 (recurring)

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** Because Phase II of the McMillan project was completed this year, resulting in a heated, cooled, and water-tight building, Museum staff can now use the building for exhibit construction. Additional specialized tools and equipment that are necessary for exhibit construction have been acquired. The exhibit side of the McMillan Building has been cleared of construction debris and can now be used as a temporary museum shop for fabrication of exhibit cases and mounts. Tools and equipment will be moved from Truelove Place to this space as they are needed for specific projects.

#### B. Continue fund-raising

The perpetual funding needs of a museum for its programs, exhibits, and maintenance of collections requires the aid of a development officer to raise annual and long-term funds, develop relationships with donors, and create fund-raising goals and policies. Museum staff need to meet with the appropriate people in UWA's Development office and Sponsored Programs to ensure that they are aware of the museum's current needs and opportunities for fund-raising.

**Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Funding for VISTA | **Outcome/Objective:** Hire VISTA volunteer  
**Measure:** Host event outside of Sumter County | **Outcome/Objective:** Expand geographical reach  
**Measure:** Host programs | **Outcome/Objective:** Maintain and expand Museum programs  
**Measure:** Progress on next construction project | **Outcome/Objective:** Continue improvement to McMillan Building  
**Measure:** Receive funding | **Outcome/Objective:** Seek funds from public and private sources  
**Implementation Description:** Establish a regular meeting with Development staff and the Office of Sponsored Programs  
**Projected Completion Date:** 11/27/2011  
**Responsible Person/Group:** Museum staff  
**Implementation Notes:**  
**8/20/2014** Should UWA continue to support the development of the Black Belt Museum, Museum staff will initiate meetings with the Development office and other personnel in Institutional Advancement, as well as the Office of Sponsored Programs to update them on the progress and current funding needs.

**C. Continue VISTA volunteer program**

Need VISTA volunteer to continue at Black Belt Museum in collections curation, organization of public programs, and other duties, as necessary, to keep the museum active on a daily basis.  
**Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012  
**Implementation Status:** In-Progress  
**Priority:** High  
**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**  
**Measure:** Funding for VISTA | **Outcome/Objective:** Hire VISTA volunteer  
**Measure:** Storage and labeling of collections | **Outcome/Objective:** Curation of collections  
**Implementation Description:** Seek \$10,000 to fund 1 VISTA volunteer  
**Responsible Person/Group:** Ashley Dumas  
**Additional Resources Requested:** All office equipment already in place.  
**Budget Amount Requested:** \$10,000.00 (recurring)  
**Implementation Notes:**  
**8/20/2014** Emily Boersma is returning this year as a VISTA volunteer with the Black Belt Museum.

**D. Implement Phase 2 of McMillan building renovation**

The second phase of the renovation to the McMillan building will involve renovating the programs side.  
**Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012  
**Implementation Status:** Finished  
**Priority:** High  
**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**  
**Measure:** Progress on next construction project | **Outcome/Objective:** Continue improvement to McMillan Building  
**Implementation Description:** Raise funds for the renovation through "asks" to private donors and writing grants.  
**Projected Completion Date:** 08/28/2012  
**Responsible Person/Group:** Museum staff  
**Additional Resources Requested:** Construction materials, contractor fees, and key equipment, as estimated from architectural plans.  
**Implementation Notes:**  
**8/13/2014** Phases I and II of the McMillan project were completed and passed the state building inspection in June 2014.

Phase I included demolition of the structurally unsound rear wall, construction of the new rear structural wall, mandated fire escape rear stairs, fire-rated barrier wall and new exterior rear building facade, freight elevator shaft, and construction of the loading dock. Phase II included construction of a new structurally sound roof deck and new roof membrane, establishing new electrical and heating/cooling service to the first floor to comply with current code, mold remediation, fire and intruder alarm system, repair to some exterior brick work, renovation/replacement of exterior cornice details and painting of same, and stubbing in of main water lines for future bathrooms and sprinkler systems.

**5/29/2013** The back wall, roof, electricity, and roof (Phase I) should be complete by August 2013. Funds from a Department of Education PBI grant and remaining funds from the Black Belt Museum budget can be used for Phase II of the renovations.

#### **E. Recruit volunteers**

As space is renovated and programs are increased, the number of volunteers that can be used will increase.

**Established in Cycle:** 2011-2012

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** Low

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Host programs | **Outcome/Objective:** Maintain and expand Museum programs

**Measure:** Increased student volunteers | **Outcome/Objective:** Increase student knowledge of the Black Belt

**Measure:** Storage and labeling of collections | **Outcome/Objective:** Curation of collections

**Implementation Description:** Advertise for volunteers among the UWA and local community and keep a record of their hours worked to use as in-kind contributions and demonstrated support for grants.

**Projected Completion Date:** 08/28/2011

**Responsible Person/Group:** Museum staff

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** The Museum continues to attract a few student volunteers to work in the Archaeology and Paleontology laboratories. Staff has discussed having a regular volunteer night in the lab for students and community members to educate them about Museum projects, local natural history, and to help complete the processing tasks. There are models for successful volunteer nights at other museums. However, none of the museum staff qualified to oversee such an activity live in the local area and/or have small children. Museum staff is now considering establishing a morning or afternoon volunteer day in the laboratories, and staff will continue to welcome those who find the Museum on their own and wish to volunteer during regular operating hours.

#### **F. Complete Lophorothon cast**

The remainder of the Lophorothon dinosaur cast will be completed and painted within the 2014-2015 cycle.

**Established in Cycle:** 2012-2013

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Assemble Lophorothon | **Outcome/Objective:** Complete Lophorothon cast

**Implementation Description:** James Lamb will continue to cast fossils and then paint them for local display.

**Projected Completion Date:** 09/28/2014

**Responsible Person/Group:** James Lamb

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** Significant progress was made on this project due to the addition of Tim Truelove in February 2014 as a part-time laboratory assistant and the course-release for James Lamb. Nearly 100% of the skeleton has been cast and sculpted. It has not been painted yet.

### **G. Acquire a truck for Black Belt Museum programs**

The Black Belt Museum archaeology, paleontology, and living history programs regularly transport large amounts of equipment and gear to program or expedition sites. The staff currently use their own vehicles because state cars are too small, state vans are too big, state mini-vans are too nice, and none are off-road worthy. A 4-door, 4-wheel drive, long bed truck would be used at least once a month, and several times a year it would be used for a few days or weeks at a time. It is believed that there is a similar need for Biological Sciences staff. The needs of both groups might be met if the UWA Motor Pool added a truck that would be reserved for use only by these groups.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Host event outside of Sumter County | **Outcome/Objective:** Expand geographical reach

**Measure:** Host programs | **Outcome/Objective:** Maintain and expand Museum programs

**Measure:** Publication or presentation of research | **Outcome/Objective:** Foster staff research and publication

**Implementation Description:** Select a truck for purchase by the UWA Motor Pool.

**Responsible Person/Group:** Ashley Dumas

**Additional Resources Requested:** Funds to purchase the truck and to add it to state insurance.

**Budget Amount Requested:** \$30,000.00 (one time)

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** The need for a field truck is continual. This year, the assistant director regularly transported field equipment and staff in her personal car to and from Fort Tombecbe, before and after field school. James Lamb has used his personal truck for paleontological collection trips to numerous places in Sumter, Greene, Hale, and Choctaw counties in the past two months alone.

### **H. Add annual budget for Programs supplies and travel**

The modern museum cannot exist and be relevant to society without programs. The number of Museum programs is growing. Living history programs are popular with school groups, civic groups, local and state parks. These programs involve the use of consumable supplies (such as gun powder, paper, and cleaning supplies) and travel funds that are currently largely paid for with museum staff's personal funds. The museum budget currently has a budget line for instructional supplies that is used for laboratory supplies (archaeology and paleontology) and is encumbered by the McMillan building project. The museum's travel budget is encumbered by the fees for staff on-campus apartments. Additionally, the programs require printing brochures and flyers and educational materials to be distributed to thousands of people every year. Currently, this money comes from the Black Belt Museum general printing fund. A designated programs budget would greatly ease the production and implementation of expanding the reach of all programs.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Assemble turtle and mosasaur | **Outcome/Objective:** Complete marine turtle and baby mosasaur casts

**Measure:** Host event outside of Sumter County | **Outcome/Objective:** Expand geographical reach

**Measure:** Host programs | **Outcome/Objective:** Maintain and expand Museum programs

**Implementation Description:** Acquire supply and travel budget to support Museum Programs

**Responsible Person/Group:** Brian Mast and Ashley Dumas

**Additional Resources Requested:** Funds for consumables and travel for Museum programs, at least until the Museum's travel and supply budgets are not encumbered by construction expenses.

**Budget Amount Requested:** \$1,500.00 (recurring)

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** Funds for travel and supplies have come largely from the Division of Educational Outreach Dean's budget, as the Museum still reserves most of its UWA-allocated budget for the McMillan Building project.

#### **I. Develop museum construction shop**

The Black Belt Museum is fortunate to have James Lamb, who has extensive experience in designing and building world-class museum exhibits, like those at the McWane Science Center in Birmingham. As renovations to the McMillan Building now are underway, it is time to begin thinking about exhibits. Lamb already has established a section of the Black Belt Museum Laboratory (in Truelove Place) to serve as the museum construction shop. The equipment and tools essential for fabricating cases and other elements of exhibits include the following: cabinet saw, jointer, belt sander, drill press, thickness planer, grinding motor, radial arm saw, and a dust collection system. The shop also would be used to maintain and repair museum equipment, such as archaeological and paleontological tools, and to construct the items required for excavations in both fields. A designated museum shop is necessary, because the sorts of projects museum staff are making are not portable (say, to another shop on campus), require a lot of space, and involve weeks of continuous work. Museum staff is experienced at borrowing, scavenging, and begging used equipment--and staff will continue to do so as necessary--but the shop, once established, is an investment that will prevent having to hire outside contractors to do the fabrication work, ultimately saving UWA hundreds of thousands of dollars.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Finished

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Progress on next construction project | **Outcome/Objective:** Continue improvement to McMillan Building

**Measure:** Storage and labeling of collections | **Outcome/Objective:** Curation of collections

**Implementation Description:** Purchase and install shop equipment

**Responsible Person/Group:** James Lamb

#### **J. Establish a part-time laboratory assistant position**

At least one part-time, bi-weekly, laboratory assistant position is needed in the Black Belt Museum on a year-round basis to process artifacts from archaeological sites and paleontological collections. Museums are rooted in collections, and collections require continual maintenance and curation. Having a part-time assistant would allow James Lamb more time to focus on exhibit preparation and research. This position or positions would be excellent hands-on positions with real student learning outcomes, especially for those on track for an Anthropology minor. However, the position could be filled by anyone from the public who has the temperament and genuine interest in museum work.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Finished

**Priority:** Medium

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Host programs | **Outcome/Objective:** Maintain and expand Museum programs

**Measure:** Publication or presentation of research | **Outcome/Objective:** Foster staff research and publication

**Measure:** Storage and labeling of collections | **Outcome/Objective:** Curation of collections

**Implementation Description:** Hire assistant under bi-weekly employment status

**Responsible Person/Group:** Ashley Dumas and James Lamb

**Additional Resources Requested:** Salary for assistant: \$7.25/hr x 20 hrs/week x 16 wks/semester x 3 semesters=\$6,960

**Budget Amount Requested:** \$6,960.00 (recurring)

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/13/2014** Tim Truelove was hired as a 30 hour/week laboratory assistant in January 2014.

#### **K. Evaluate program scheduling**

Attendance goals for programs sometimes are not met due to conflicts with holidays, weather events, and other unforeseen circumstances. Scheduling programs far in advance, making sure that they are advertised to the appropriate audiences, and developing contingency plans may be helpful to avoid low turnouts.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** In-Progress

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Host programs | **Outcome/Objective:** Maintain and expand Museum programs

**Implementation Description:** Programs for the 2014-2015 academic year will be scheduled and advertising strategies made.

**Projected Completion Date:** 10/30/2014

**Responsible Person/Group:** Brian Mast

**Implementation Notes:**

**8/20/2014** Staff continues to evaluate programs and work to develop new ones based on those subjects, events, and times that best meet student and community needs. Staff will be discussing with the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics how to alter the Science Coffee Shop series to increase attendance.

#### **L. Hire a full-time laboratory assistant**

Museum exhibit development and construction requires at least one employee who can spend 40 hours per week dedicated to this task. Now that the casting and molding of all skeletal pieces is complete, they must be assembled and label copy must be written to accompany the display. The head of the Lophorhodon will receive priority for assembly because it can serve as a stand-alone display. The rest of the skeleton will be assembled and mounted independently. Label copy for accompanying signs will be written and printed on durable media.

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014

**Implementation Status:** Planned

**Priority:** High

**Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):**

**Measure:** Assemble Lophorhodon | **Outcome/Objective:** Complete Lophorhodon cast

**Measure:** Assemble turtle and mosasaur | **Outcome/Objective:** Complete marine turtle and baby mosasaur casts

**Implementation Description:** Assembly of the head and accompanying explanatory signage will be completed first, followed by the remainder of the skeleton.

**Projected Completion Date:** 08/30/2015

**Responsible Person/Group:** James Lamb

**Additional Resources Requested:** A full-time laboratory assistant for the Black Belt Museum is needed to insure that progress continues on exhibit projects, like casting and molding of fossils, while James Lamb continues to serve as the Museum's project manager for the McMillan Building and as collections manager, in addition to teaching one course per semester. The loss of Ashley Dumas as Assistant Director of the Black Belt Museum will only add to Mr. Lamb's duties and further prevent him from being able to work on exhibits. The museum staff requests that Tim Truelove, currently a part-time employee limited to 30 hours per week, become a full-time employee. He currently makes approximately \$14,040 a year (\$9/hour x 1560 hours). The additional 520 hours a year plus 52% benefits for a full-time

employee would bring his total compensation to \$28,454.40. The amount needed to do this is reflected in the budget amount requested for this Action Plan.

**Budget Amount Requested:** \$14,414.00 (recurring)

#### **IV. Analysis Questions and Analysis Answers**

##### **A. What specific strengths did your assessments show? (Strengths)**

The Museum's ability to maintain a diverse and active schedule of programs, in addition to research projects, without the benefit of a completed museum as a center of operations demonstrates that the staff is committed, versatile, and extraordinarily adaptable. The staff has begun to make a name for themselves outside of Sumter County, thus bringing recognition to the Black Belt and the University of West Alabama. The staff is able to do all of this with mostly part-time staff and no budget dedicated to programs, often performing construction and maintenance related to these projects themselves.

##### **B. What specific weaknesses or challenges did your assessments show? (Weaknesses)**

The biggest challenges are a lack of full-time staff and a limited base of support in the community. Despite the hard work and creativity of the current staff, a museum simply cannot be sustained with part-time employees. Attendance at the programs is challenging, because the museum tends to draw from the same several dozen individuals in the Livingston community who may be interested in natural or cultural history, and these individuals can be expected to attend or support only so many programs.

##### **C. What plans were implemented?**

With the addition of Physical Plant involvement, Phase II of the McMillan Building project was finally completed and approved by state building inspectors this year (May-June 2014). With the support of the Office of Sponsored Programs, the Museum has received portions of a significant PBI grant toward completion of the McMillan Building, and staff continues to be successful in obtaining grants to support Museum programs. Although the Museum still does not have a facility to which staff can bring the public, the staff has been successful in sharing knowledge about the Black Belt by taking it to the public in the form of workshops, living history events, and through social media. Recently, a faculty member said to the assistant director, "Everywhere I go in the state, when I tell people where I work, they always mention that they know about the Black Belt Museum and the Center [for the Study of the Black Belt] and the cool things that y'all are doing. You are really putting UWA on the map for many people in the state."

##### **D. What plans were not implemented?**

Progress in the paleontology lab toward casting various fossils for exhibit continues to be uneven, because the Museum's paleontologist, James Lamb, also serves as building project manager, zoology instructor, and collections manager, in addition to completing his own research and publication and hosting workshops. The addition of a part-time laboratory assistant, Tim Truelove, has significantly increased progress toward these activities and on specimen collection trips. The other plan not implemented involves increasing participation at programs. This was partly due to uncontrollable factors, but is also a symptom reflective of the challenges of being in a small community. Programs scheduled for campus or nearby tend to have low attendance, but based on response to off-site field trips, workshops, and social media information, there is a healthy interest in the Museum's activities.

##### **E. How will assessment results be used for continuous improvement?**

Museum staff needs to re-examine Museum programming to decide which best meet the needs and interests of the local community and then focus limited resources on those events. In an effort to improve community engagement, staff has drafted a survey about what people envision the Black Belt Museum to be. The results will help staff assess current plans and

ensure that future exhibits and events are not only informative, but relevant. The museum's Facebook page analytics indicate a strong and growing base of support from people outside of Sumter County, so staff should make a concerted effort to host even more programs in other Black Belt counties. Staff has seen steadily growing interest but probably will not reach a tipping point in support and involvement until the McMillan Building is open to public. That physical representation and base of operations is necessary to fully legitimize the Museum's existence. Finally, the staff has made some improvement in setting feasible goals for building and exhibit construction, but staff should continue to keep expectations reasonable, as any increase in staff or funding is very unlikely.

## **V. Annual Report Section Responses**

### **A. Key Achievements**

The key achievements in the 2013-2014 cycle are as follows: completion of Phase II of the McMillan Building reaching more than 30,000 people through programs, workshops, and other events; completion of a major archaeological excavation at Fort Tombecke through the field school; obtaining \$4,605 in private grants, \$81,890 in federal grants, and nearly \$5,000 in private donations organization of the paleontology and archaeology laboratories at Truelove Place

### **B. Faculty Achievements**

See associated document for Ashley Dumas' Faculty Achievement Report.

### **C. Staff Achievements**

See associated documents for Brian Mast, James Lamb, Emily Boersma, and John Hall's Achievement Report.

### **D. Public/Community Service**

Highlights of the Black Belt Museum's public/community service for the 2013-2014 cycle include: hosting a Certified Interpretive Guide course; hosting the National Association for Interpretation Region 3 conference; had multiple staff present living history programs to more than 30,000 people at over a dozen venues across the state; and hosted teacher workshops and public workshops on natural history topics.

Planning and Assessment Approval

Department or Division: Black Belt Museum

Chair or Director: Dr. John Hall

Dean or Vice President: Dr. Tina Jones

**ANNUAL PLAN**

Item	Approved	Remarks
<p><b>Goals</b> Goals are broad statements describing what the unit wants to accomplish. Goals relate to both the unit's mission and the University's mission. The goal(s) is stated as the University goal(s) a unit is attempting to meet.</p>	<p>YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p><b>Outcomes/Objectives</b> Outcomes and objectives are statements that describe in some detail what the unit plans to accomplish. Outcomes/objectives are associated with all applicable goals, strategic plans, standards, and institutional priorities.</p> <p>Objectives are active-verb descriptions of specific points or tasks the unit will accomplish or reach. Outcomes are active-verb descriptions of a desired end result related to student learning and the unit's mission.</p>	<p>YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>The Black Belt Museum's are very clear + specific.</p>
<p><b>Measures</b> Measures are statements to judge success in achieving the stated outcome or objective. Measures contain information on the type of evidence and assessment tool that a unit will use to verify if stated outcome/objective has been met.</p>	<p>YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p><b>Achievement Targets</b> Achievement targets are the thresholds that the measures must meet for the unit to determine that it has been successful in meeting its specified outcomes/objectives. Achievement targets are measurable statements.</p>	<p>YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>NO <input type="checkbox"/></p>	

**SELF-STUDY**

Item	Approved	Remarks
<b>Findings</b> Findings are indications whether an outcome/objective was met or not. Findings are put into the system under each achievement target. Findings include an interpretation of results, possible uses of results, reflection on problems encountered, indicated improvements/changes and strengths or weakness.	YES <u>  X  </u>  NO <u>      </u>	
<b>Action Plans</b> Action plans are detailed plans created by the unit to meet an outcome/objective that was only partially met or not met or to make improvement to those outcomes/objectives that were met but still need some strengthening. The plan includes a projected completion date, implementation description, responsible person(s)/group, resources required, and budget amount (if applicable).  Action plans created in previous cycles have been updated with implementation notes.	YES <u>  X  </u>  NO <u>      </u>  YES <u>  X  </u>  NO <u>      </u>	
<b>Annual Report</b> The Annual Report section contains information on key achievements, faculty and/or staff achievements, and community/public.	YES <u>  X  </u>  NO <u>      </u>	
<b>Analysis Report</b> The unit has reflected on and created narratives for each of the following areas: specific strengths and progress made on outcomes/objectives, specific weaknesses or challenges, plans that were and were not implemented, and how assessment results will be used for continuous improvement.	YES <u>  X  </u>  NO <u>      </u>	I appreciate the directness of the Museum's staff's analysis.

Approved by: James M. Jones Date: 12-3-14  
Signature of Dean or Vice President

Received by OIE: Hayley S. Johnson Date: 12/3/14  
Signature of Coordinator of Planning and Assessment