

# NEW LEADERSHIP, NEW FUNDING & NEXT STEPS

## *The Kansas City Museum's Momentum in Full Swing*

By Anna Marie Tuter



Allen Dillingham



Sonié Joi Thompson-Ruffin



Shomari Benton



Alex Bergman

**T**housands of people have visited the Kansas City Museum since the restored and renovated Corinthian Hall reopened on October 21, 2021. Three months after reopening, in January 2022, the Kansas City Museum Foundation announced new officers to the Board of Directors, new funding, and next steps for the expansive Kansas City Museum project.

New officers for the Kansas City Museum Foundation include Allen Dillingham, Chair; Sonié Joi Thompson-Ruffin, Vice Chair; Shomari Benton, Treasurer; and Alex Bergman, Secretary. Allen is the Government Relations Director for The Builders' Association. Sonié is the founder of the African American Artists Collective, an independent curator, and a fiber artist. Shomari is a partner at Benton Lloyd & Chung. Alex is the Director of Wine Operations at Bourgmont Winery.

The new leadership comes after the death of Dr. Mary Davidson on December 6, 2021, who served as the Foundation's Chair. Mary was a one-of-a-kind, generous and fearless woman who led the Kansas City Museum at a critical time of transition, growth and transformation. The Foundation has expressed profound loss and enormous gratitude for Mary, whose immense legacy and contributions in Missouri and Kansas are far-reaching, meaningful and lasting.

The Kansas City Museum Foundation Board and staff also announced two new funders to the Corinthian Hall project.

Both the Hall Family Foundation and the Sosland Foundation are providing support for the creation of digital interactives for the core history exhibits in Corinthian Hall. These interactives will build additional layers of learning that expand the exhibit content, making it even more accessible, dynamic, participatory and engaging. The Kansas City Museum is working with museum design firm Gallagher & Associates to develop the interactives. Gallagher & Associates designed all the exhibits for Corinthian Hall.

In addition to completing the interactives for Corinthian Hall, the board and staff are focused on finalizing the master plan and overall timeline for the restoration and renovation of the rest of the property, and they have started architectural design with International Architects Atelier for the Carriage House, Conservatory, and the James Turrell Skyspace. More details will be announced about these projects in the coming months.

The Kansas City Museum is open Thursday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. General admission is free. Wisteria, the museum's boutique, is open during regular hours Thursday through Sunday. The museum's food and beverage program for Café at 3218 and Elixir, the museum's soda fountain, will open in summer 2022. Visit [kansascitymuseum.org](http://kansascitymuseum.org) for information about upcoming monthly public and education programs.