

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Washington, D.C. March 15, 2018 – The Museum Education Roundtable is pleased and proud to announce the recipients of its inaugural Awards for Writing Excellence and Editorial Excellence for the *Journal of Museum Education*: Melanie Adams, Anna Forgeron Hindley, Julie Olsen Edwards, and Esther J. Washington. All four are being honored for their exemplary contributions to the issues of the JME published in 2017.

Adams has received the Award for Writing Excellence for her individual article, "Deconstructing Systems of Bias in the Museum Using Critical Race Theory," in issue 42.3 of the JME. This article provides a new point of view on a topic of critical importance to museums today and presents information and ideas that are useful across the field. Adams presented an earlier version of this paper at the EdCom Awards Luncheon at the American Alliance of Museums Annual Meeting in St. Louis, MO, in May 2017, where it was well received.

Hindley and Edwards have received the Award for Writing Excellence for their co-authored article "Early Childhood Racial Identity – The Potential Powerful Role for Museum Programing," in the guest edited section of issue 42.1 of the JME. This article examines how the National Museum of African American History and Culture approaches conversations on race with young children and their families and teachers.

Washington and Hindley have received the Award for Editorial Excellence for their work co-guest editing issue 42.1 of the JME "Race, Dialogue and Inclusion: A Museum on the National Stage." Their guest-edited issue "focused on the knowledge that race is a social construct that has a powerful and lasting impact on society, and how the renewed national discourse about race has impacted and will continue to impact the work of our museum and others." Their issue also celebrates the opening and achievements of the 19th Smithsonian Institution museum, the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

The Award for Writing Excellence goes to the author(s) of articles deemed by members of the Museum Education Roundtable Board of Directors to



be novel, thought-provoking, and of the highest caliber of scholarship and writing. Any article accepted for publication and published within a calendar year is automatically eligible for consideration for the Award for Writing Excellence.

The Award for Editorial Excellence goes to the guest editor(s) of the themed section from which the Writing Excellence article was chosen. Any guest editor or guest editorial team is automatically eligible for consideration for the Award for Editorial Excellence.

All awardees are recognized for their high levels of scholarly dedication, original thought, leadership, and synthesis required to be published in the JME. The guest editors of the themed section from which an article is awarded are further honored for the relationship and effort involved between author and editor in the creation of quality content.

More information and links to the winners' articles can be found here: <http://www.museumedu.org/journal/jme-online/>

About MER:

The mission of the Museum Education Roundtable is to inspire innovative thinking for the field through engagement with scholarly and practiced-based content explored in the Journal of Museum Education.

Formed in 1969, the Museum Education Roundtable fosters professionalism among museum educators by encouraging leadership, scholarship and research in museum-based learning. MER provides leadership in professional development for a broad and diverse audience of museum practitioners and educators. Through its publications, programs, and active communications network, MER supports professionalism among peers and others committed to excellence in museum-based learning, encourages leadership, scholarship and research, and advocates for the inclusion and application of museum-based learning in general education and life-long learning.

About the JME:

The Museum Education Roundtable is proud to serve the field through publication of Journal of Museum Education. The Journal of Museum Education (JME) is the premier peer-reviewed publication exploring and reporting on theory, training, and practice in the museum education field. Journal articles—written by museum, education, and research professionals—explore such relevant topics as learning theory, visitor evaluation, teaching strategies for art, science, and history museums, and



the responsibilities of museums as public institutions. Published 4 times a year, each issue consists of a guest edited section focused on a specific theme and articles about new research, current trends, tools, frameworks, and case studies, perspectives, and book, exhibit, and program reviews. The JME began publishing in 1973 as Roundtable Reports. Since 1985, MER has published the journal as Journal of Museum Education. MER members receive the Journal as a benefit of membership.

About the award winners:



Melanie Adams is the Senior Director of Guest Experience and Educational Services at the Minnesota Historical Society where she oversees education, exhibitions, and 26 historic sites. In this role she is responsible for developing and implementing strategies to create a statewide belief in the power of history to transform lives. Before joining MNHS, she served as the Managing Director for Community

Education and Events at the Missouri Historical Society for twelve years. She is past president of the Association of Midwest Museums and current council member of the American Association of State and Local Historical Societies. She received her B.A from the University of Virginia, her M.Ed from the University of Vermont, and her Ph.D from the University of Missouri.



Anna Forgeron Hindley works at the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) as a supervisory education specialist and head of the museum's early childhood education initiative. Her work focuses on positive identity development with young children at museums and interrupting structures of racism and inequity. Previously she served as the Senior Museum Education Specialist at the Smithsonian Early

Enrichment Center, where she shared her passion for museums and early childhood education. Through her experiences as an educator at a variety of museums, including the National Museum of American History and the Orange County Regional History Center, and her work in curatorial departments at the National Portrait Gallery and the Corcoran Gallery of Art, she is committed to uplifting museums and objects to provide powerful opportunities for learning and personal meaning making.





Julie Olsen Edwards, the co-author of "Anti-bias Education for Young Children and Ourselves" was the founding director of the Cabrillo College Children's Center, Director of the Department of Early Childhood and Family Life Education at Cabrillo and served on their faculty since 1971. She was a national board member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) from 2003 to 2007. Her work has been published in multiple journals and she is a frequent consultant and speaker on issues of child development and family support in a highly diverse and still inequitable world.



Esther J. Washington has been an educator for three decades, specializing in museum education for most of that time. She is currently the Director of Education at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African American History and Culture. This is the second time she has established a Smithsonian education department and its inaugural volunteer, student and public programs. Previously she was the Head of Education at the Smithsonian's National Postal Museum and prior to that served as the Intern Services Coordinator at the Office of Museum Programs, coordinating the Institution's 700 interns annually. Ms. Washington began her career working in Washington D.C. independent and public schools and her museum career at the then Capital Children's Museum.

