



Retention Reimagined: Elevating Member Engagement for Lasting Impact

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VEX, Field Museum Chicago

Hello, my name is

Stephanie Ticas

- Chicago native, Salvadorian-American
- Dog-mom of 2, Zumba, pink+green
- June 2014- Field Museum internship in Visitor Services
- May 2021- Joined Membership Team
- Dec 2024- Membership Operations Manager
 - Oversee internal efforts
 - VS team Liaison for onsite sales
 - Public presence & signage
 - Event and daily operations support





Today's Talk

- A World Paused
- Rebuilding & Reopening
- What works? What fails?
- Highlights & Takeaways
- Questions?

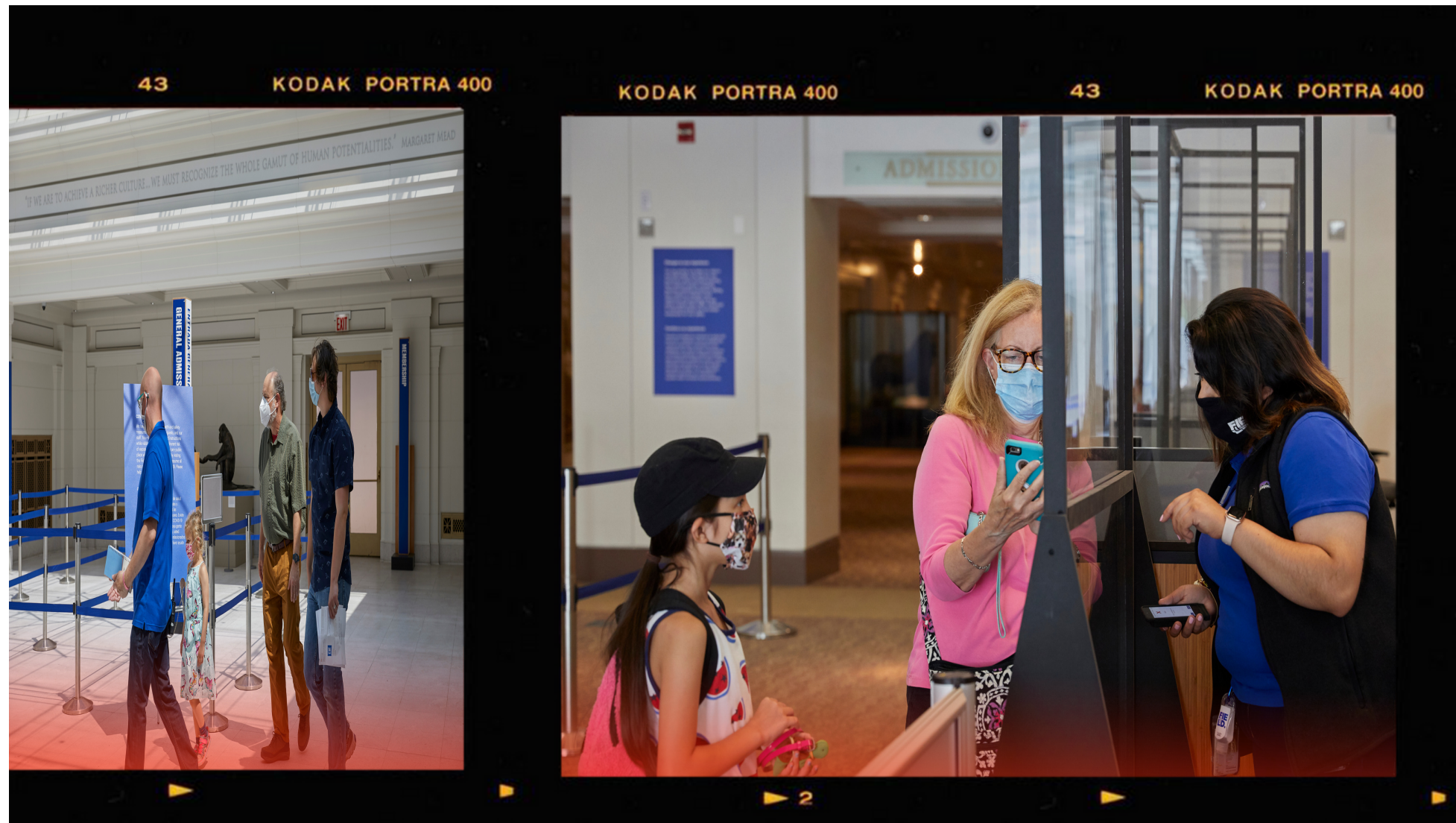
A World Paused- 2020

The Pandemic Effect

- Museum **closed** to visitors from mid-March to late July 2020, again in November 2020
 - Safety concerns
 - Financial uncertainties
 - Social crisis
- Collectively learning how to operate in the ever-changing world



Member Support as a Lifeline



- Member loyalty provided vital operational & financial support during 2020 closures.
 - 2370 total sales
 - 1030 renewals
- Since Jan 2021
 - **16,488** active members
 - Reintroduced in-person and virtual programming
 - Increased membership prices in 2022 and 2025
- Membership revenue & loyalty allowed the museum to reopen and reimagine operations.

Rebuilding & Reopening



Happy Holidays

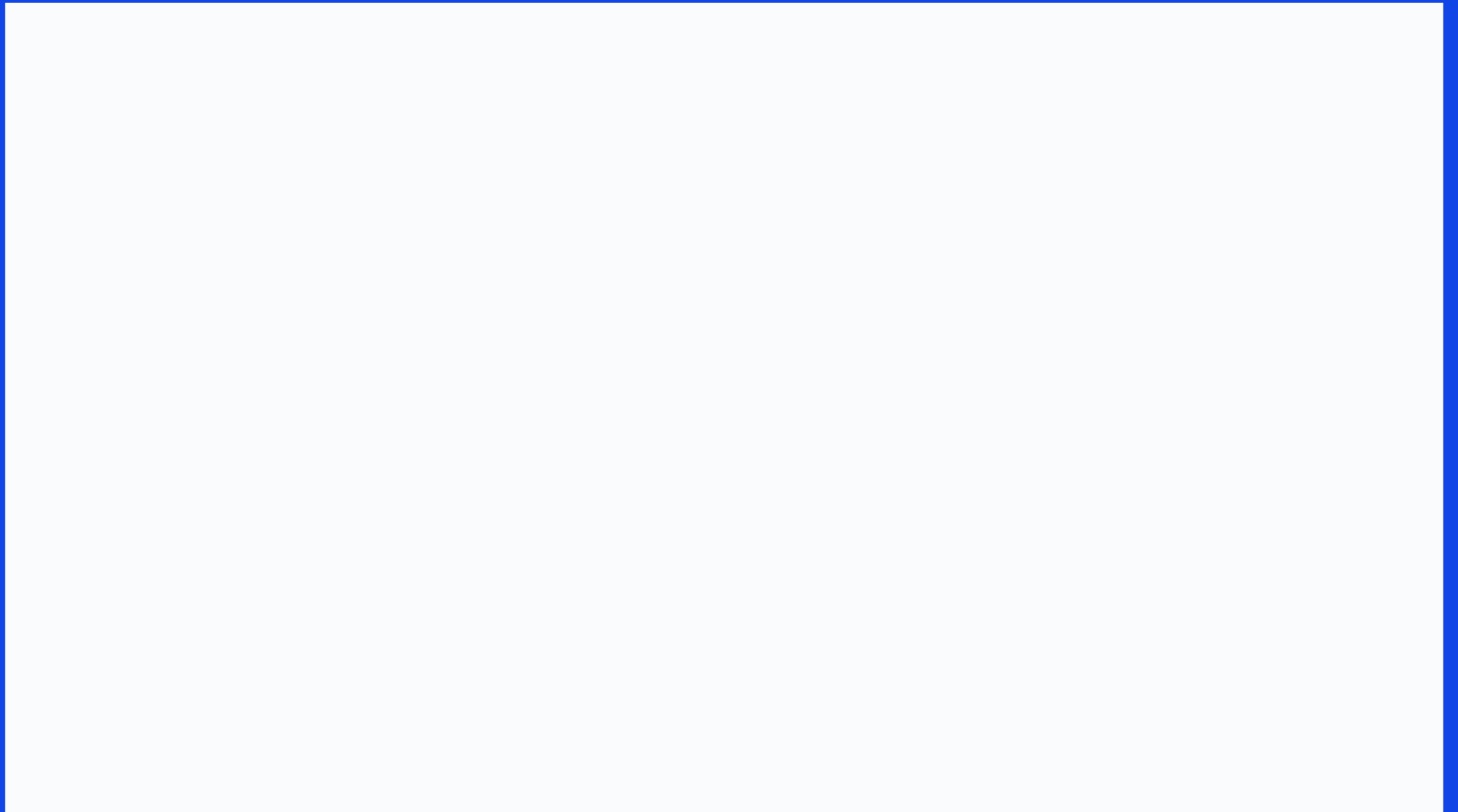
FIE LD.

What Works?
What Needs Work?

A child wearing a large, detailed T-Rex costume is shown from the chest up. The costume is orange with black stripes and has a large head with a wide, toothy mouth. The child is holding a clear plastic jar filled with a snakeskin patterned material. The background is blurred, showing an indoor setting with other people and tables.

Field Fan Favorites

- Exclusive Events & Programming
- Elevated Customer Service
- Access to Collections & Scientist
- Family Engagement



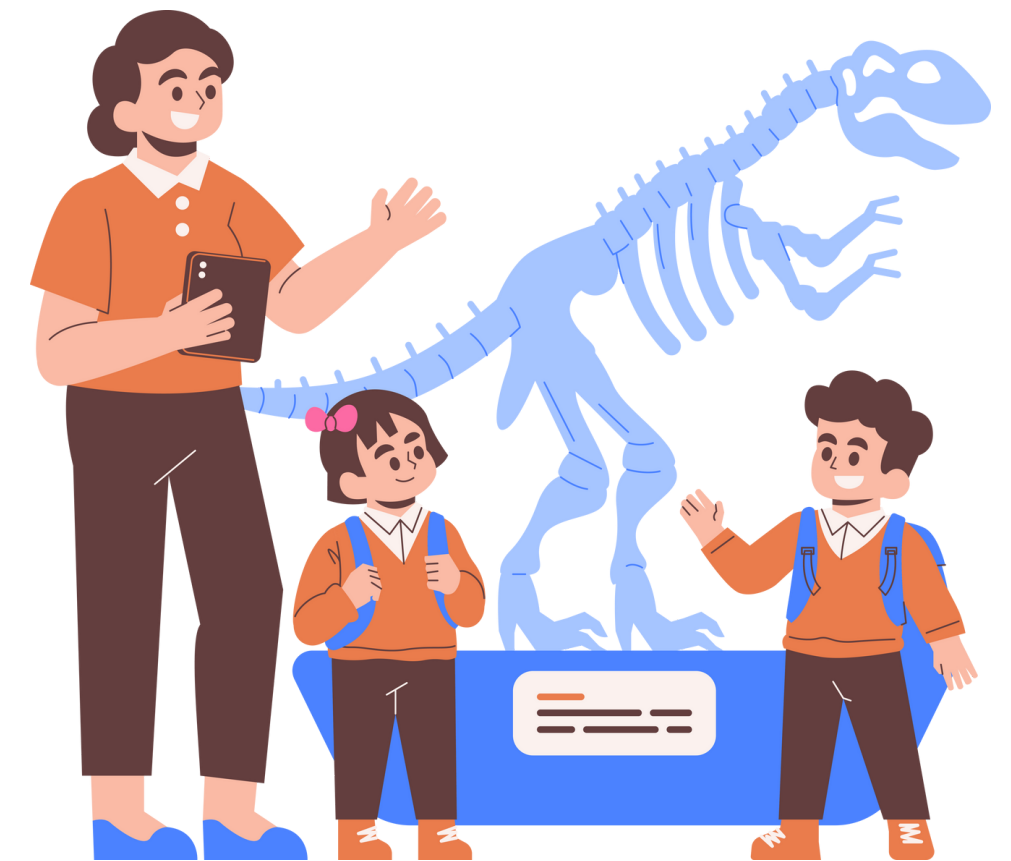
Annual Members Nights

- Two-day, after-hours event in Spring
- FREE for Members, Donors, Staff & Volunteers, family & friends
- Access to most spaces in the Museum, including BTS
- Meet scientists, learn about research & conservation, and access to specimens



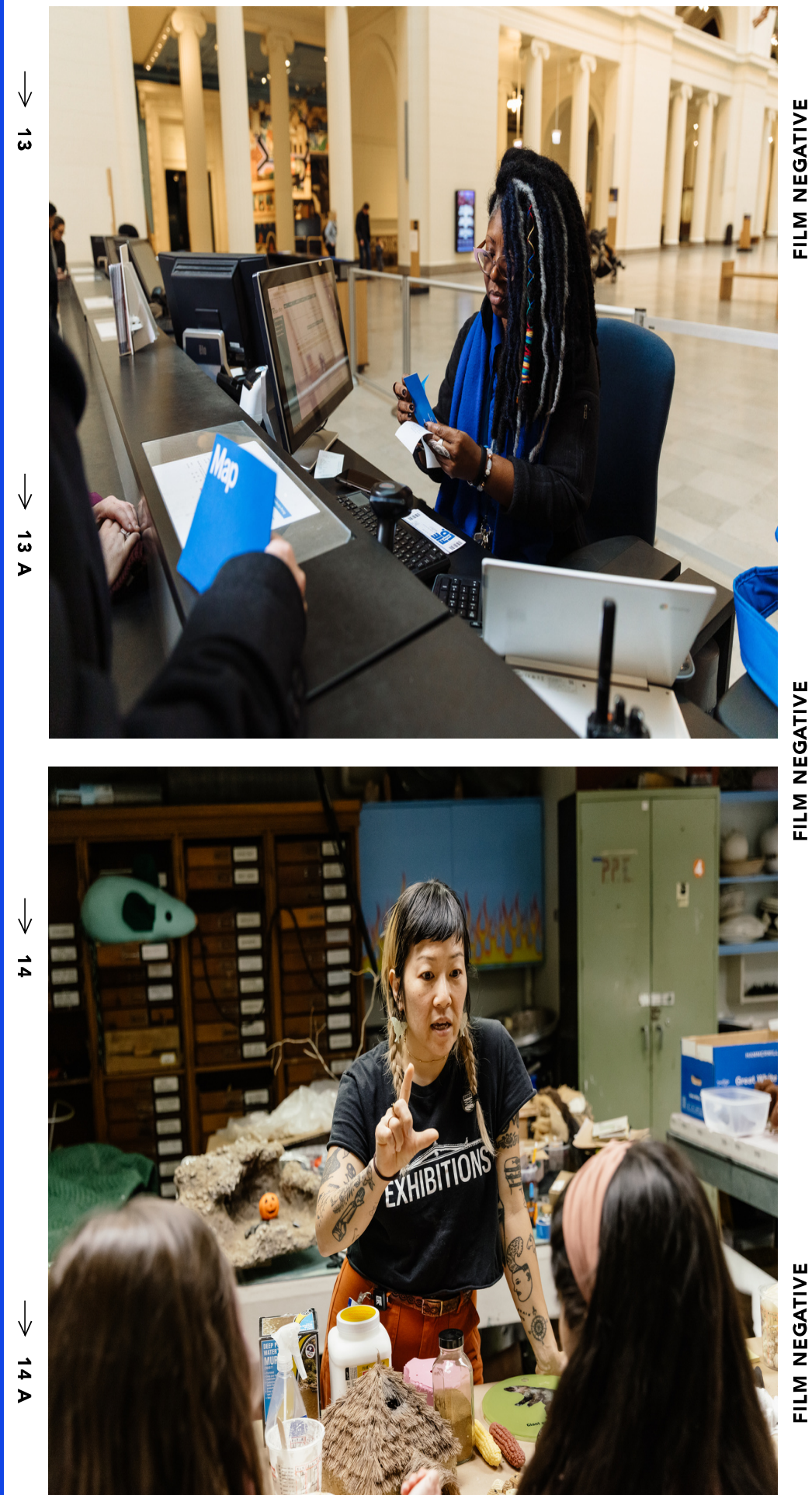
Access, Exclusivity, & Family Friendly

- Virtual and hybrid offerings give members access to the collection from anywhere in the world!
- Recognize Member loyalty and support
 - Active customer service
 - Accommodate as needed
- Create opportunities specific to families with:
 - Engaging activities, crafts, or touchables
 - Collaborations with education teams and scientists
 - Sensory spaces



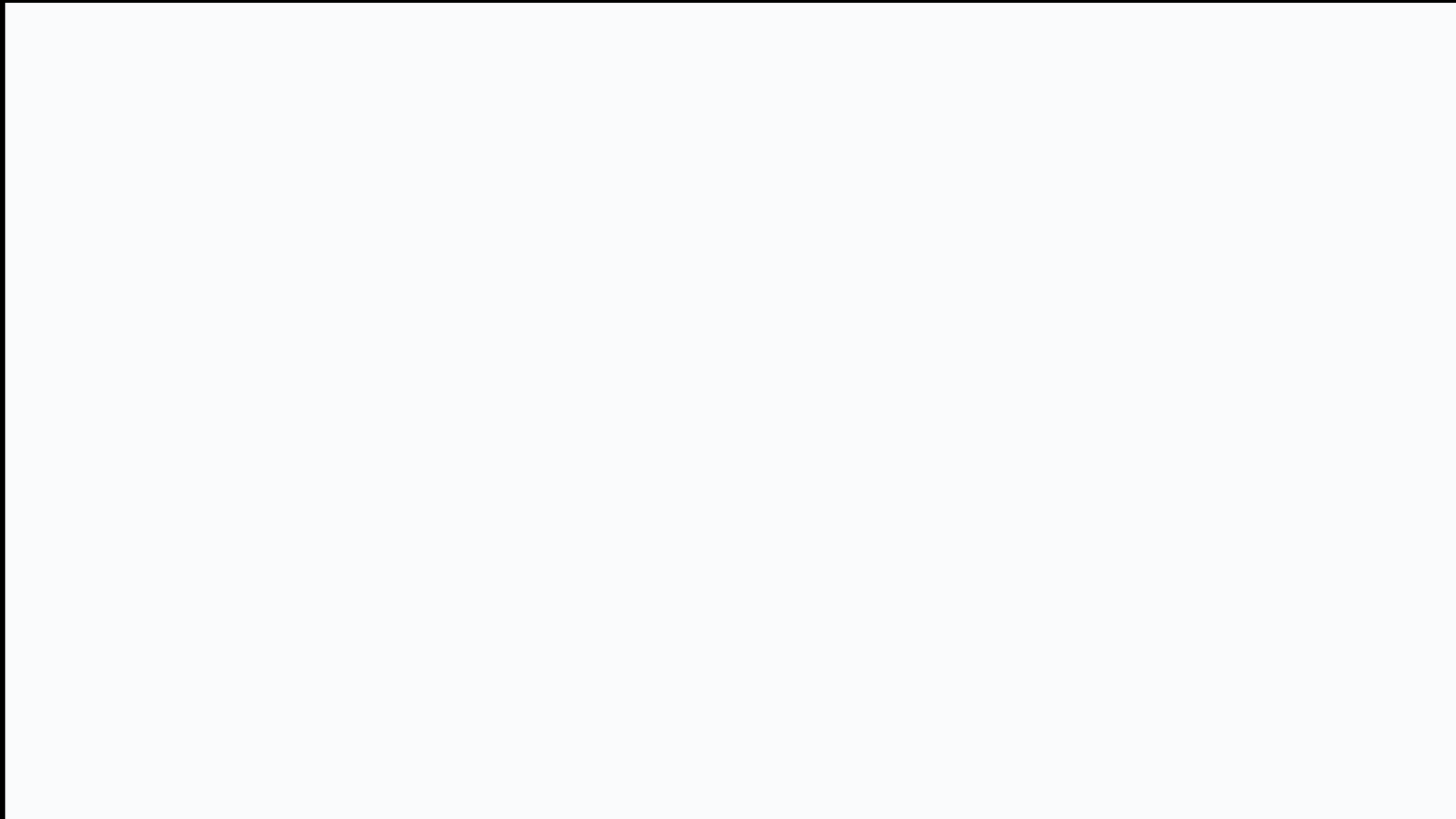
Bring Everyone Onboard

- Effective collaboration with Sales staff:
 - Understanding the Value of Membership
 - Incentivized Sales (Top Sellers, Department-wide goals, Individual commission)
 - Transparency, Consistent Communications, Development & Support
- Science & Collections
 - Share what you love to do!
 - Staff Memberships
 - Highlight expertise



Always Evolving

- Member Platforms
- Increase Visitation
- Enhance Experiences
- Internal Organization



Future of Membership



- Digital Opportunities
 - Member Portal
 - User-friendly Digital Cards
 - Virtual Events
- Encourage Multiple Visits
 - Free/discounted parking
 - Guest passes
 - Daytime programming
- Member Perks
 - Refreshments at events
 - Fast entry
 - Year-round Member Lounge

Internal Enhancements

- Membership Team
 - Events & Programming
 - External Efforts
 - Internal Operations
- Prioritize all areas equally
- Provide support and professional development opportunities
- Goal Setting
 - Team Objectives
 - Individual Goals



Highlights & Takeaways

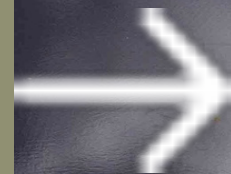
Today's Takeaways

- Member support sustains institutions in crisis.
- Engagement is a continuum, not a transaction.
- Retention thrives when members feel valued, connected, & essential.

Lifecycle of a Member

Join

A new member
comes onboard



Engage

Connect through
programs and
benefits



Renew

Satisfied members
continue their
support



Advocate

Members
champion the
mission to others

Thank you!

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