

Arizona Convocation



Convocation attendees participate in a creative writing exercise. Photo by Sarah Weber

State Library staff coordinated and attended the annual Arizona Convocation, an opportunity for professionals from cultural institutions to get together for informational, educational and networking opportunities. The tenth annual Arizona Convocation was held in Tucson in March.

Nearly 200 librarians, archivists, historians, and museum professionals from around the state attended the Convocation. Ninety-one percent of participants who completed evaluations reported that they learned something new that would help them do their job better, and 94% reported that they met people with whom they will collaborate on projects and programs.

This year's Keynote Speaker was award-winning science fiction writer, Jeff VanderMeer. Mr. VanderMeer gave a behind-the-scenes look into a novelist and short fiction writer's processes and techniques and how attendees could apply those processes and techniques to their own problem-solving and creative enterprises.

Mr. VanderMeer and his wife Ann, a respected editor, publisher and anthologist, ran a workshop, partnering attendees up and using a combination of in-workshop research and imagination, to create a "secret life of Arizona." This workshop showed paths toward greater diversity of thought and ideas as Arizona prepares for its centennial commemoration.

The conference also included a presentation by University of Arizona doctoral student in History, Sal Acosta. He presented his research on the history of Hispanics in Arizona, addressing topics such as immigration, politics and labor.

Finally, a panel made up of museum professionals and city leaders and developers discussed the urban revitalization and the transformation of downtown Tucson by the Rio Nuevo Project.