

# Brucemore Client Project

In partnership with the Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities



## Philanthropy Communication in a Digital World Spring 2014



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Supported by Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities, University of Iowa

## Executive Summary

Over the course of approximately six weeks, the *Philanthropy Communication in a Digital World* class at the University of Iowa worked on a client project for Iowa's only National Historic Site: the Brucemore Historic Estate in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities (IISC), a campus-wide effort at the University of Iowa that matches Iowa faculty and students with economic, environmental, and social-cultural needs in the community in order to make a more sustainable world, supported this project.

Five teams tackled various needs at Brucemore and produced outputs based on their research, assessment, and findings. The membership team was responsible for researching Brucemore's current membership situation, assessing their findings, and proving suggestions on how to increase and retain members. This team sent out an original survey to Brucemore's current and lapsed members and received 144 total responses.

The area organization team was charged with the tasks of researching Brucemore's direct competition as well as researching other organizations in the Iowa Cultural Corridor. From these findings they compiled a list of recommendations for Brucemore to increase its recruitment.

The internal communications team focused on the people who make Brucemore work—volunteers, docents, and staff. The team made multiple training handouts tailored to each of these groups and also developed a membership pitch to aid docents and tour guides. Members of this team also developed a docent incentive program aimed at encouraging docents to recruit new members. Finally, this team made a plan to revitalize the final room on Brucemore's typical tour, the laundry room, into a landing place for docents to make an effective "ask."

The digital media team created a total of four videos featuring archived and contemporary images of Brucemore, footage of Brucemore, and interviews with staff and volunteers. This team produced a longer promotional video and three short videos, each focused on a different aspect of Brucemore.

These five teams worked to create this comprehension report that outlines research on Brucemore's current membership situation, its competition, and its current policies and practices. The *Philanthropy Communication in a Digital World* class has provided several feasible recommendations, many with their own timelines and suggestions for implementation, to ultimately increase Brucemore's membership at all levels and sustain its mission for years to come.

## **Membership**

### **Introduction**

Membership to Brucemore allows constituents to receive certain specialty discounts and tours, gain invitations to members-only events, and invest in the preservation of Brucemore. Brucemore has several membership levels, all of which have the same basic foundation, but the higher the level the greater the benefits. The basic components of each membership include discounts at events, discounts at the museum store, a newsletter, free standard tours, and recognition in the annual report. Membership is a way an organization can connect to its constituents and also receive annual funds. The mission of the Membership Team was to look at different sections of the membership program, analyze the current situation, and respond with effective suggestions to improve the existing program. We conducted a survey to gather information from current and lapsed members concerning how Brucemore communicates with its members and how Brucemore runs its membership program. We used the findings from the survey and additional research to develop plans for communicating with lapsed members, household members, and corporate members. We also developed a social media engagement and promotion plan for Brucemore to better reach out to and connect with its constituents.

To conduct the survey, we sent out two different surveys to both lapsed members and current members through Brucemore's ConstantContact email list. The questions included demographics of members, what they liked or did not like about the membership program, why they did or did not renew their memberships, and if they had any suggestions. The other teams then used the survey data to generate their strategies and tactics.

We contacted lapsed members in a separate survey to gather data on why they did not renew their membership and how renewal is communicated. Lapsed members are those who do not renew their annual membership. The goals of the lapsed member team were to figure out

why people were lapsing, how to encourage renewal of membership, and how to communicate reminders of renewal in a more effective way.

We also assessed Brucemore's current and potential household membership. Household membership at Brucemore is the membership level directed towards families. The main goals of this team were to come up with suggestions on how to get more families to become household members and ways to get families and their children to come and enjoy the estate and its events.

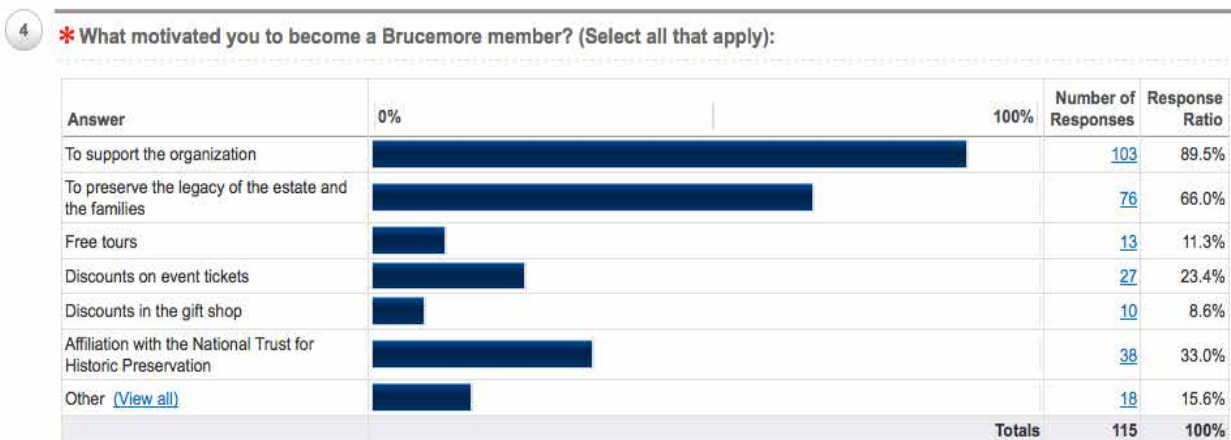
Another group focused on corporate members. The main goal of this team was to provide suggestions on how to retain current corporate members and how to attract new ones. This group reached out to Brucemore's current corporate members via email to gauge why they became corporate members, how they use their corporate membership, and what would motivate them to increase their giving level

The final group developed a social media strategy for Brucemore. Social media is an important way to contact and connect with constituents. Currently Brucemore has a website, newsletter, Facebook page, Twitter account, Instagram account, YouTube account, and Pinterest account. The social media team analyzed each of these aspects of social media and provided suggestions on how to improve these pages and better engage a wider audience through them.

We provide suggestions and a timeline of implementation for Brucemore to consider. The suggestions from the groups provide information to strengthen the membership program at Brucemore. Each section looked at the current situation as well as additional research and the survey results to develop these suggestions.

## Membership Survey

There are currently nine membership levels at Brucemore, and each is accompanied by an increasing financial commitment for yearly access to Brucemore: student (\$35), individual (\$50), grandparent (\$60), household (\$75), patron (\$100), donor (\$250), benefactor (\$500), trustees club (\$1,000), and the George and Irene Douglas Circle (\$2,500). Depending on the membership level, benefits increase, but many include tours of the Brucemore mansion, exclusive membership events such as member dinners, and an option to join the National Trust for Historic Preservation for a discounted price. The most popular membership level among respondents was the patron membership (28%), followed by individual membership (23%). The following graph shows responses pertaining to why respondents purchased Brucemore memberships, with most people selecting “to support the organization” as their primary reason for membership.



The survey received responses from 116 of the 457 current members of Brucemore with email addresses, a response rate of approximately 25%. Thirty-four percent of the sample consisted of members in their 60s, and 43% of respondents stated they were members of Brucemore for 10 years or more.

The survey was sent out to the members through Constant Contact, a free online program used by Brucemore and other nonprofit organizations to send emails and newsletters to members.



It featured a range of question types, including multiple choice, ranking different situations and statements on a 1–5 scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”, and open-ended questions soliciting comments from respondents.

The responses to the survey about membership and its benefits were extremely positive. The small number of negative comments in this section mentioned the need for more benefits, stating the tours are nice but not an activity to do multiple times per year. The survey asked people to rate the following questions on the aforementioned scale:

10 \* Please rate your agreement with each of the following statements according to the scale: Feel free to elaborate on your thoughts in the comment box.

1 = Strongly Disagree , 2 = Somewhat disagree , 3 = Neutral , 4 = Somewhat agree , 5 = Strongly agree							
Answer	1	2	3	4	5	Number of Responses	Rating Score*
The membership benefits are satisfactory						110	4.5
My membership is appropriately recognized						110	4.5
Brucemore makes it easy to donate						110	4.4
Brucemore solicits donations with appropriate frequency						110	4.0
Brucemore notifies me of my expiring membership with enough time to renew						110	4.4
Brucemore clearly communicates the organization's goals						110	4.4
I believe in Brucemore's goals						110	4.6
I am confident Brucemore is being run efficiently						110	4.6
I believe the programs or events run by Brucemore are valuable						110	4.7
I trust Brucemore's leadership to behave with integrity						110	4.7

\*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.

[View comments \(20\)](#)

In the comments, multiple members stated that they believe that Brucemore needs to be more communicated to people living outside of the Cedar Rapids area.

Respondents were also questioned about their feelings about Brucemore increasing its fundraising efforts. This question was the lowest rated question on the survey with an average of 3.9 out of 5 approval rating from participants. Many respondents left comments that showed they would be okay with Brucemore asking for more money if it was for the right reasons, and if it was presented to them in ways they, as potential or current donors, found appropriate. One

person commented that s/he didn't want to receive a phone call asking for a donation, for instance. Many also stated that they didn't quite know how Bruce more received its funds: "The community is not accustomed to Bruce more actively fundraising; I hope they can think of creative ways to do it consistent with Bruce more's mission," a participant stated in the comments. With the need to increase funds in order to remain viable, it is crucial that Bruce more places utmost importance on how it approaches fundraising to make sure that its goals are met through ways that inspire potential donors instead of turning them off to giving.

People who participated in the survey seemed very active with Bruce more and satisfied with the programming currently offered. The respondents stated that Bruce more's cultural programs, such as *A Modern Salon* and *Cabaret in the Courtyard*, are the most popular programming options, followed by garden events, such as plant sales, and the *Garden and Art Show*. Respondents did, however, note that they wanted to see more programs offered for children, an area of potential development for Bruce more. However, only 10% of respondents stated that they had children currently living in their household, with some stating in comments that while they did not have children currently living in their home, they are grandparents. Multiple commenters complained about previous events that had been canceled, such as the Easter egg hunt. This call for a greater variety of children's programming could be a result of grandparents looking for activities to do with their grandchildren.

\* Please rate your likelihood with each of the following statements: Feel free to elaborate on your thoughts in the comment box.

1 = Least Likely , 2 = Somewhat unlikely , 3 = Neutral , 4 = Somewhat likely , 5 = Most Likely

Answer	1	2	3	4	5	Number of Responses	Rating Score*
I will continue my membership to Brucemore in the future						110	4.9
I would recommend Brucemore membership to a colleague or friend						110	4.8
I would bring out-of-town guests to visit Brucemore						110	4.8
On a given weekend when looking for something to do, I would consider taking my family to Brucemore						110	4.2
I think Brucemore has good activities for children						110	4.2

\*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.

[View comments \(22\)](#)

A central feeling about Brucemore from the survey respondents was a strong belief in the organization and the importance of its programming for the Cedar Rapids community. The overall outlook of the survey results was positive: these members, with most of them holding memberships for multiple years, care about Brucemore and its mission. The organization could be very successful in its future fundraising endeavors if it focuses heavily on the culture that it has surrounding it. The organization has become a focal point in Cedar Rapids, summarized well by one respondent's comment: "I think it is important to tell 'The Brucemore Story' in relationship to the historic development of the area and how it continues to impact our lives today, not only for our local friends but for the visitors who come from afar."

## Lapsed Members Communication Strategy

A different was sent to the list of Bruce more’s 273 lapsed members. A lapsed member is a previously registered member of the organization who has not renewed his or her membership after a certain period of time. The survey predictably had a much smaller response rate of approximately 10 percent (28 out of 273 possible respondents). Because of this small sample size, there is not a large amount of information pertaining to why former members chose not to renew their membership. Those who did respond and who were unsatisfied with their time spent at Bruce more gave varied answers. Some former members left because of programming changes, others because of price increases. One respondent stated that volunteers were rude, and that there was a sense of exclusivity that was associated with being involved with Bruce more: “You need to belong to a country club or live near Bruce more to belong at some of the events,” the former member wrote. The first image below is the breakdown of the response for the survey question that asked why lapsed members chose not to renew memberships. Since 56% of the respondents chose the “other” option, the comments to the survey are also attached, which show the variety of responses to the question, from event cancellations to a lack of information about membership renewal.



[View comments \(14\)](#)

Comment(s) for:

7 \* Why did you decide not to renew your membership? Feel free to elaborate your reasoning in the comment box.

14 Responses 20 per page Update

Answer	
I did not receive a renewal reminder.	
I found that events I wanted to attend were not held on the weekend. Were always on weekday nights and inconvenient since I work. Also I wanted to volunteer and was never contacted. I was disappointed and questioned the management if people who offered to volunteer were never contacted.	
No particular reason. I'd be happy to renew just send a request. Background - I forgot to renew our membership after receiving the membership notice and I thought it odd there was no follow up to the initial notice and there has been not follow up since. I love Bruce more and support it with dollars beyond membership.	
I was hoping to be heavily involved in helping with events at Bruce more. I found out instead that there were groups of people(current volunteers) that I did not feel were welcoming to new people just coming on board.	
I honestly didn't realize I didn't renew?	
Our favorite event- the Easter egg hunt was cancelled.	
I didn't know my membership was not renewed????	
The event discounts weren't all that great,after all.	
We intend to continue our membership!	
I overlooked renewing back when our membership came due. There was no follow-up written invitation (ie in US Mail) from Bruce more to re-join.	
With the birth of my first child my budget and time changed.	
Rudeness of volunteers. Sense of exclusivity in membership...you need to also be a member of a country club or live near Bruce more to belong at some of the events.	
Not happy that the Family Rate increased.	
We just renewed our membership	

20 per page Update

There were multiple instances in the lapsed membership survey of people not knowing that their membership with Bruce more had, in fact, lapsed. Lapsed members were asked many of the same questions that members were asked, but with a lower average ranking for most questions, particularly when asked to rate membership benefits and communication concerning membership renewal.

The organization currently sends out a letter to members that informs them of the importance of their membership two weeks prior to membership expiration and gives a date that the membership will end. The letter also gives the option to renew at any member level. The organization then sends a promotional postcard after the membership has been expired for two months without renewal. One quote from a survey participant sums up the current situation well: “I forgot to renew our membership after receiving the membership notice, and I thought it odd [that] there was no follow up to the initial notice and there has been no follow up since.”

\* Please rate your agreement with the following statements on the designated scale:

1 = Strongly disagree , 2 = Somewhat disagree , 3 = Neutral , 4 = Somewhat agree , 5 = Strongly agree							
Answer	1	2	3	4	5	Number of Responses	Rating Score*
The membership benefits were satisfactory						23	4.1
My membership was appropriately recognized						23	4.2
Brucemore made it easy to donate						23	4.3
Brucemore solicited donations with appropriate frequency						23	4.1
Brucemore notified me of my expiring membership with enough time to renew						23	3.8
Brucemore clearly communicated the organization's goals						23	4.6
I believe in Brucemore's goals						23	4.7
I am confident Brucemore is being run efficiently						23	4.3
I believe the programs or events run by Brucemore are valuable						23	4.4
I trust Brucemore's leadership to behave with integrity						23	4.6

\*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.

[View comments \(2\)](#)

By the end of 2014, Brucemore leadership needs to take numerous actions to make sure they're doing all they can to reach out to lapsed members. It's apparent that the organization is aware of members lapsing — it's something that can never be completely remedied — but there is room for a stronger plan and bigger outreach to retain donors.

Brucemore should change its current methods of sending out renewal information. Postcards reminders are a good way to reach out to lapsed members, but using more online communication would be financially beneficial to Brucemore and could improve overall number of renewals per year. Multiple emails should be sent in addition to the postcards to ensure the members understand. For example, an individual may receive the email in the morning and find the postcard in the mail later that same day and be more inclined to renew the membership because of the reminder. By adding email communication, Brucemore would also be able to send more frequent reminders without spending money on sending additional postcards. The emails should include a link to a renewal form so that members are able to renew their membership as quickly as possible after receiving the reminder. It's also more socially acceptable for an

organization to send out emails more frequently than postcards, according to *Successful Marketing Strategies for Nonprofit Organizations*

Brucemore could send an email two weeks before the membership ends, and a second one two days before the end of the membership. Not only would costs be reduced by a primarily email driven campaign, but potential donors, especially younger donors are more likely to interact with an organization through a well-run website and electronic communication than through postal mail.

When people do let their memberships lapse, it would be smart of the organization to also have some sort of reward or special offer, should they renew their memberships. This, however, is a strategy that would have to be implemented over the course of the next two or three years. For example, after a membership has lapsed for over a month they could offer the member (or their family) to choose from a list of pre-approved events such as the *Tahitian Party*, *Balloon Glow*, or the *Garden and Art Show*, and one receive free admission. The renewed member could also receive additional benefits for part of the year, such as an increased discount for two events, or a special item from the gift shop that is only available to people who come back to membership after a certain period of time. This tactic would also have to involve some kind of benefit for continued members. A year-by-year reward system could be implemented for people who have retained memberships for a certain number of consecutive years. Brucemore could honor long-time members, for example, by giving them unique access to an event of their choice once a year, a special plaque, or by creating a “wall of fame” for donors of certain years or amounts. A ladder-based reward system for the members, potentially leading up to special access to the organization’s biggest events like the *Balloon Glow*, for the members who have been with the organization the longest, would incentivize members to not let their membership lapse.

Another tactic Bruce more could undertake to retain membership is by placing emphasis on showing its members just how valuable they are to fulfilling the organization's mission. When someone decides not to renew his or her membership, the organization could send out another email thanking that person or family for its membership. The email should describe what is lost by not renewing, such as the discounts, the exclusive events, and most importantly, that the family or individual is no longer making an impact on a large part of the Cedar Rapids community and culture. The goal of the email would be to reiterate that the person's membership and time with the organization was valued and that they are always welcome to re-join the organization at any time. It would be beneficial for the email to include a list of the benefits of the membership level and the next membership level above and below the member, as both a final call to action and an opportunity to join a different membership level if they so choose at any time. The key principle for Bruce more in its future actions concerning membership renewal is making the process as easy as possible. Online options for renewal in particular would be the easiest and most cost-effective method for the organization, and would allow for an easy access for people looking to renew. Bruce more needs to commit to consistently including its message in renewal and membership communication. Bruce more should communicate that it is more than a mansion – the cultural programs that occur with the backdrop of the mansion are the main focus – Bruce more has been an iconic aspect of the Cedar Rapids community for years, and Bruce more will continue only through the support of its members.



## Household Members Communication Strategy

Brucemore would like to better engage household members in its organization through participation in current programming, increase the number of household members it has as well as increase the renewal rate of household members. Survey findings for the household membership team revealed that most household members did not have young children; however, responses to the survey showed that members would like to see more children's programming.

*Strategy: Better engagement*

*Tactic 1: Create family-friendly events that mirror current programming.*

- “Tadpole” Tahitian Event – a family-friendly fundraiser (\$50 per family) that accomplishes the same goal as the Tahitian Party, which is not a designated member event but a fundraiser dinner that takes place by the pool of the mansion. This event would take at least a year to plan, and could take place at the beginning of June. Capitalizing on the end of the school year can be used as a way to connect the tadpole event to the Tahitian Event.
- Nannies Crannies Tour – a paid (\$10, free with membership) specialty tour for younger children with their parents or caregivers, daycares, and schools in which more attention is paid to creating a family-friendly environment in a tour setting. This would take at least three months to implement and would pair nicely with the nooks and crannies tour.
- “Puppy and Cat Club” – (Free with membership) a newsletter mailed out to the children of household members with coloring pages, mazes, and other kids' activities, that also has pertinent information about upcoming events for parents to read. This would be included with the *Lion's Roar* newsletter.

- Children’s Garden – (Free--included with normal admission) a garden that children can help plant, weed, and cultivate throughout the spring and summer months, combined with gardening workshops (Discounted with membership, ex. If \$20-\$30 then members pay \$20-15). The garden creates possible partnership with YMCA, Cedar Rapids Rec Center, Neighborhood club, and the school district. Implement in conjunction with existing seasonal gardening events.

Multiple committees could be created to develop these additional programs. Committees could consist of employees and volunteers that focus on programming and events, incorporating those employees who work on those specific tasks (i.e.: newsletter goes to administrative staff, tour details go to tour coordinator and so on). Committees should meet bimonthly to develop these programs.

*Tactic 2: Add more value to Household Membership.*

The current Household Membership is \$65. This includes slightly discounted tickets for tours and shows. By offering a more expensive membership (\$100), but offering more programming, Brucemore may be able to engage and bring in more household members. Increasing the membership price but offering opportunities for families to purchase a household membership at a discount at certain events (i.e. children’s theater or one of the children’s new programs), would offer more exposure to this segment. Increased membership prices could include free entry into all children’s theater, free specialty tours, and one discounted special event (*Cabaret, Opera, Classics*). By providing more value with an increased membership price, families would engage on a more regular basis at Brucemore. Families are looking for value, so raising the price and offering more activities for families at Brucemore would better target

families, a key membership group. Implementing the price increase at the end of the calendar year would align with the renewal of membership.

*Tactic 3: Take advantage of Bruce more events.*

The primary goal is to capitalize on families attending Bruce more events. Bruce more could offer discounted memberships to those that choose to join at the specific event. For example, if the membership price is \$100, if purchased at a specific event, Bruce more could offer the membership that night only, for \$75. Staff would need to be trained regarding how discounts are given out and event-specific membership cards could be used for ease in processing.

## Corporate Membership Strategy

Brucemore's current list of corporate membership is strong and diverse. The current list of 24 corporate donors and sponsors includes some of the community's largest and most prominent organizations including community banks, realtors, and local government agencies created to promote tourism and commerce. Brucemore has expressed an interest in growing this membership and has expressed a willingness to work with businesses in the community in order to do so. There are no corporate members at the top two donor levels. This suggests that the benefits for donors are not enticing enough to donate at or increase their current level of donation. If Brucemore plans to alter its plans for procuring and maintaining corporate membership, it is recommended that it alters its membership benefits, narrow its scope when approaching prospective partnerships, and make more public and accessible use of its status as a 501(c)(3) non-profit when interacting with the Cedar Rapids business community. These alterations can be adopted at the current time or at the start of the next fiscal year.

### **Corporate Member Levels and Benefits:**

- **Corporate Donor (\$250)** — Level includes rental privileges for business-related meetings in designated conference spaces of the estate.
- **Corporate Benefactor (\$500)** — Level includes privileges of Corporate Donors, plus corporate event rental privileges of the Mansion, Garden House, Visitor Center, grounds, and other designated spaces, as well as tour and event passes at the rate of 1:50 of giving. Passes may be shared with employees, clients, and associates.
- **Corporate Trustees Club (\$1,000)** — Level includes all of the privileges of previous levels, special recognition on the Trustees Club plaque, plus a behind-the-scenes tour and luncheon for up to 15 people with the Executive Director (subject to availability).
- **The George and Irene Douglas Circle (\$2,500)** — Level includes all of the privileges of the previous levels, plus one complimentary business-related meeting in designated conference spaces for up to four hours (\$400 value, subject to capacity and availability).
- **The Howard and Margaret Hall Heritage Club (\$5,000)** — Level includes all of the privileges of previous levels, plus one complimentary corporate event in the Mansion, Visitor Center, grounds, or other designated spaces for up to four hours (\$1,000 value, subject to capacity and availability).

*Tactic 1: Concentrate on special event and tour access rather than room rental.*

When asked about their membership, most of the corporate members said that they make little to no use of the benefits offered to them in their tier of membership. In addition, several explained that their membership was about supporting Bruce more and attracting community attention to it. Kevin Platz of the Cedar Rapids Area Association of Realtors explained, “We believe that we should be members of Bruce more because we are stewards of the community and we feel that a membership is part of being a good corporate citizen.” It should be noted that Mr. Platz was one of few respondents that claimed to make use of Bruce more’s space. The current benefits package offered at each tier of membership does not match the interests and needs of its most loyal and consistent donors and it may be a barrier to attracting new businesses. Bruce more should therefore focus less on offering rooms for meetings and focus more on offering event passes and special access tours at every level of membership. These privileges should be extended to executives, employees and other V.I.P’s of the company’s choosing. This allows Bruce more to properly reward members while also helping them achieve their stated goals of promoting Bruce more as a community centerpiece. Allowing corporate members to offer these passes to other businesses or persons that they collaborate with could also be a powerful marketing tool. When executives of other businesses tour the grounds and attend events, staff members can speak to them about becoming a corporate donor.

*Tactic 2: Narrow Bruce more’s corporate scope. Make pitches to local groups that promote community involvement.*

The vast majority of Bruce more’s current corporate members is very interested in community enrichment and has stated this as one of the key benefits of their current membership status. Bruce more has stated in the past that it targets the business community as a whole for

membership. But it might be more efficient to narrow its scope to businesses that see the improvement of Cedar Rapids and its image as a major goal. This scope would include businesses that have a stake in the community such as realtors, homeowners associations, and local commerce groups. Approaching groups such as the Cedar Rapids Metro Alliance—the Metro area’s equivalent to a chamber of commerce—would help Bruce more cement its reputation as a community hub and create collaborative opportunities with groups that are interested in broadcasting the historical significance of Cedar Rapids to the surrounding community. The New Bohemia movement, that began in 2009 and is still an ongoing process in Cedar Rapids, is an attempt to foster an urban revival in the city by restoring its deepest and most time honored traditions while mixing in new businesses and restaurants to revitalize the downtown area. The process is in its intermediary stages, but an example of a historical revival in an Iowa town is the America’s River initiative in Dubuque, Iowa. This initiative was very beneficial for Dubuque as a community, and it provided major benefits to museums, non-profits and historical societies in the downtown areas. The New Bohemia movement could pay similar dividends for Bruce more. As such, Bruce more should make itself known as a partner and supporter of this initiative. This initiative demonstrates that city government is interested in establishing an old-fashioned and culturally significant feel in historic areas such as the Czech Village, and Bruce more could be a key component of that initiative. Bruce more is already a premium partner of the Cedar Rapids Area Convention and visitors bureau.

*Relevant resources:*

- Cedar Rapids New Bohemia/Czech Village: <http://crmainstreet.org/>
- America’s River/Port of Dubuque Project: <http://www.americasriver.com/overview.htm>

Tactic 3: Display and explain the benefits of non-profit status.

Brucemore’s non-profit 501(c)(3) designation is a glaring omission from its corporate membership page. Brucemore should take full advantage of its status when courting new members of the Eastern Iowa corporate community and spend time explaining the tax incentives that corporate groups receive when they choose to sponsor the organization. Brucemore should also assess the benefits at each level of membership and whether any of these gifts could disqualify a corporate group from the associated tax incentives of donating.



Brucemore should begin its corporate membership page with a simple explanation of its status and the importance of corporate donations. A sample of such a change follows:

“Brucemore’s history is inescapably linked to the corporate leadership of Eastern Iowa. The families of Brucemore helped build the city through industry, philanthropy, and support of the arts. Their home reflects a business community that invests in a vibrant and resilient region.

Brucemore is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization owned by the National Trust and operated by a local board. Brucemore is largely self-sufficient and relies on key partnerships within the community in order to host events, offer tours, and preserve the estate as a historical landmark.

Cooperation between our organization and the Eastern Iowa business community is mutually beneficial; an investment in Bruce more preserves our heritage and promotes pride in our community.”



## **Social Media Plan**

### *Engagement*

Currently, Brucemore has a Facebook page, Twitter account, Pinterest account, YouTube account, and a recently created Instagram account. It also maintains a website and sends out monthly e-newsletters. Brucemore's website appears to be the most effective online tool for the organization. On July 7, 2011 Brucemore joined Facebook, which has been an essential social media tool for Brucemore. Pinterest and Instagram are the newest social media tools being utilized, which if used correctly, have the potential to make a lasting impact on Brucemore's social media presence and organizational awareness. A recommendation for managing the social media accounts would be to split up the work between multiple individuals in order to better keep up to date with the various accounts. By delegating the tasks to multiple people, there can be a large variety of content and material coming from various perspectives. Each week there can be a different theme or idea that Brucemore would like to promote and market across its social media platforms. By creating a weekly theme, it will create consistency across the various sites.

### *Recruitment*

For Brucemore to recruit people there needs to be a change in its social media and marketing strategies. It needs to target the people it wants involved, such as younger constituents and docents. A recommendation is to focus on reaching a wider range of constituents, whether families or more young adults. For example, a tactic is to reach out to Coe College students. Many college students are required to have service hours and conveniently, the estate is located just a few blocks away from campus. By reaching out to college students for volunteer hours, this could be a good way to get in contact with a younger crowd and encourage them to get involved with Brucemore. Another way to get younger adults is to promote that the gardens are

free and open to anyone as a strategic way to get people on the grounds and make them more aware of the opportunities Brucemore offers. Brucemore should advertise to college students that the grounds are a great place to study, read on the lawn, or enjoy an afternoon picnic with friends. Brucemore could post on its social media accounts: “The grounds are open, come read on the lawn!” By promoting the use of the estates grounds, it is a good way to get people to experience Brucemore as more than just a place to tour. This approach would be a good way to target youth and reach a wider range of people.

Another example is to reach out to families with children. Many events at Brucemore in the summer are fun activities for families to enjoy. The *Balloon Glow* is a unique way for families to spend a summer night listening to music on the Brucemore lawn. An idea to incorporate social media could be to have ticket giveaways or special discounts that are only available to followers on the specific social media site. In the summertime, many kids and their babysitters and nannies are seeking new places to go and activities to do. The household membership team suggests a *Nannies Crannies Tour* where kids and their caretakers could attend Brucemore for a special tour of the mansion and grounds. Brucemore could encourage participants to post pictures of the event on Instagram with a special hashtag such as #NanniesCranniesTour and check in to Brucemore using the geo-tagging capabilities of many social media, including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. This would raise visibility of the event on social media and encourage people to attend the next event.

#### Web 1.0: Website and E-newsletter

##### Website:

Brucemore’s current website strategically utilizes information and provides visitors with a user-friendly layout and clear navigation, but there is always room to improve. The website is

Brucemore's strongest online tools and looks professional with a cohesive layout and plethora of information about the organization. Some recommendations would be to make finding the events easier by including an "Events" tab at the top. There also should be logos with links for all social media sites on the website. Currently, Instagram and Pinterest links are missing. People may not know these particular social media platforms exist for Brucemore if there is no mention of the accounts on the website. There is also no "donate now" button on the website, and this could be very detrimental to the organization receiving donations. The donation process needs to be as simple and easy as possible for a potential donor. A donate now option should be accessible on every page, therefore making it easier for potential donors to give. This does not need to be a flashing logo that covers half the page, but it should be easily accessible. For example, having it a different color than the rest of the text so it stands out and catches a person's eye. One of the goals after getting people to the website is to keep them there so constituents can see what the nonprofit is all about.

E-newsletter:

Brucemore has an e-newsletter that is sent out monthly. This newsletter needs a larger, more visually appealing "call to action." When people open the newsletter, there needs to be a purpose and another step forward. An example below is an e-newsletter from the Des Moines Art Center. An artist's visit was the initial highlighted event discussed at the beginning of the letter offering viewers a timely and relevant story. It is important to have this information at the top – "above the fold" – so that viewers do not need to scroll to see the most important information. For example, Brucemore could utilize this "above the fold" method to allow visitors to buy tickets to upcoming events and exciting activities.

The screenshot shows the website for the Des Moines Art Center. At the top left is the logo "DES MOINES ART CENTER". To the right are navigation links: "EXHIBITIONS", "CLASSES", "ONLINE CALENDAR", "VISIT", and "JOIN". The main header image is a large, curved glass pavilion at night, illuminated from within. Below this is a teal banner with the text "entirely unexpected FREE ADMISSION" and a black banner below that with "APRIL 22, 2014". The main content area is titled "ARTIST VISIT" and features the name "OLAFUR ELIASSON" in bold. Below the name is the text "panoramic awareness pavilion", "Thursday, May 1", and "4:45 pm / Opening celebration with brief remarks by the artist at 5 pm". A "learn more" link is at the bottom left. On the right side of the content area is a smaller version of the pavilion image.

The next step is to have a larger group of constituents receive the newsletter. The key is to raise awareness about the e-newsletter, which is why it would be beneficial for Brucemore to utilize its social media platforms to increase e-newsletter awareness and allow visitors to sign up for it via Facebook or Twitter. Another idea is to ask all volunteers to subscribe to the e-newsletter. Informing and engaging past and present volunteers may make them inclined to continue coming back to Brucemore and devoting their time or money to the organization.

### *Web 2.0: Social Media Tactics*

#### Facebook:

Brucemore's Facebook page is its most utilized social media site and updated with semi-frequent posts. Facebook is the first place Brucemore should focus on to engage more constituents. The page should be updated more frequently, approximately once daily, and posts should include engaging and enticing information about upcoming events or local occurrences.

Some information that currently is posted is related to Cedar Rapids however, not necessarily the mansion or its organizational goals. The posts need to have a purpose and be clear and concise. For example, there is one post that says “Viewing the Script on paper or a Smartphone?” featuring a picture of people reading a script off a Smartphone but it doesn’t say what the script is for.



Rather than utilizing Facebook for posts, such as the one shown above, Brucemore could expose page visitors to the exciting and engaging events that Brucemore offers. Examples of these events could be upcoming concerts, shows, or open houses. The goal of Brucemore’s social media presence is to raise awareness of the organization as well as the various opportunities accessible at Brucemore, while also encouraging users and visitors to continue to come back. Brucemore’s Facebook account has the largest amount of connections, which is why it should be utilized the most frequently. A suggestion would be to link to Brucemore’s other social media

accounts through Facebook. For example, including a “Sign up for our e-newsletter here [link]” option will perhaps encourage Facebook users to subscribe to the newsletter.

Twitter:

This account is lacking tweets and attention in general. Bruce more tweets sparingly every month, with the majority of its content being re-tweets of others, not its own, original content. Since Bruce more is a visual organization, it should put more effort into Instagram and Pinterest; however, Twitter is a good tool for reaching a younger audience and getting them involved with Bruce more. An example of how Bruce more could properly utilize Twitter could be to tweet about an upcoming summer event engaging its audience with a competition of creative tweets or re-tweets to receive free tickets to the event.

The example of Living History Farm’s Twitter account offers examples of strong tweets that Bruce more could use as inspiration. Living History Farm tweets about coming out to events and about volunteer opportunities to encourage others to come out to its outdoor museum and become involved. As the picture shows, the account retweets other accounts that promote its own events.



The amount of followers Living History Farms has as well as the frequency of the tweets are a great example for Brucemore to follow in order to increase its social media presence.

Instagram:

Brucemore's grounds are filled with exceptional gardens, and an Instagram account would be a creative social media tool to advertise the estate grounds and various activities and events. Instagram is an excellent tool because it is used for pictures and videos, thus, this would be a good way to have people see images of the grounds and flowers. Brucemore's Instagram account was created in April 2014 and still has zero pictures and almost no followers.



A better way utilize its social media sites would be to connect all of them through sharing Instagram pictures on Facebook, which can increase page activity as well as the number of followers. Instagram can be used to promote visiting Bruce more through giveaways such as posting favorite pictures of Bruce more with creative captions. Instagram users are generally younger and this would help Bruce more target a younger audience. Throwback Thursday (#tbt) is a common trend among Instagram users and Bruce more could follow this trend by posting unique, old photos of the Bruce more estate and owners on a weekly basis connecting Bruce more's past to the present.

#### YouTube:

The YouTube account needs to be updated with new videos. The current videos are not engaging and are outdated. If Bruce more created new videos on a seasonal basis, it could allow users to keep up with what is going on at the organization. Bruce more should utilize the videos



created by this class (see Digital Media section), to showcase the organization. The YouTube account is excellent to promote on other media sites, such as a tweet stating, “Check out the Bruce more gardens on this video.” YouTube accounts work effectively when there are multiple videos for people to watch to keep them hooked and learning more.

*Pinterest:*

Another important social media platform Bruce more currently uses is Pinterest. It is important for Bruce more to link its Pinterest page to its Facebook page so its Pinterest activity can be better exposed. Bruce more has a Pinterest account but only has three boards: historic, philanthropy, and old family photos, which have not been updated recently. One flaw is not having any link or mention of the Pinterest account on Bruce more’s website. The account is hard to find and follow when it is not being marketed in any way. The Bruce more Pinterest account only has seven followers. If utilized properly, it could be used to expose individuals to different events at Bruce more through various boards. One suggestion could be to have a garden board, which would be an excellent way for Bruce more to show off its beautiful flowers. The organization’s current boards are lacking variety and personalization.

### *Step-by-Step Plan to Enhance Social Media*

1. It is essential to identify which social media platforms current constituents use in order to receive updates and information. After obtaining this information, Bruce more should aim to build upon these specific platforms in order to increase brand awareness and social media presence.
2. Work on social media weekly, at least 5-10 hours per week. Facebook and Twitter posts should be approximately once daily, Pinterest and Instagram updated weekly, YouTube and e-newsletters monthly. Following this procedure will create awareness and knowledge to constituents what is going on in the organization.
3. Focus on organizational awareness and driving people to the Facebook page and other social media accounts. It is important to keep all pages current with new content.
4. Set goals for social media (e.g. certain number of people to see, like, and/or share a post).
5. Post on Facebook page to drive users to other the website, e-newsletter, and other social media accounts (e.g. post a link to sign up for e-newsletter on Facebook; share an Instagram photo on Facebook).
6. Be creative. Think outside of the box with new ways to entice people to become active in Bruce more (e.g. giveaways, promotions, engage audience).
7. Measure results and analyze the data to find out what works. Invest in what works.
8. Continue cycle with frequent improvements through measuring and analyzing social media data.

## **Area Organization**

### **Introduction**

The following sections describe our research and analysis of how Bruce more can better market itself to attract more members. We analyzed similar not-for-profit institutions to Bruce more in the area and how they draw visitors. We compared the missions of four main competitors to Bruce more and the features they offer that Bruce more does not.

We looked at two other historical houses in the sector similar to Bruce more and compared memberships numbers, fees, and revenue among the sites to understand how Bruce more matches up against this competition. While Bruce more cannot offer the artwork of the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, outdoor amenities of the Indian Creek Nature Center, all the productions of the Theatre of Cedar Rapids, and the cultural history of the Czech and Slovak Museum, it still operates as a relevant and important local institution by providing a range of services and events the above cannot offer in one location.

Last, we took the results from the analyses of the sector and Bruce more's competitors and drew on the results of a survey taken by current and lapsed members of Bruce more to outline specific ways to improve attendance and membership numbers at Bruce more. By looking at the other organizations outlined above, and analyzing how they advertise and drive new members, Bruce more can get a better idea of how to better its product and increase its membership and commitment from constituents.

We believe that taking the steps outlined in the membership drive strategy will result in a positive outcome in terms of greater membership numbers for Bruce more. By expanding its advertising efforts and improving current partnerships, Bruce more will increase its reach in the area, and gain notoriety to those who frequent its services.

## **Competitor Analysis**

Through both analysis of research and review of the membership survey results, the area organization team identified the four main competitors of Brucemore in terms of membership and visitors to the attraction. The four competitors are *Theatre Cedar Rapids*, *National Czech & Slovak Museum and Library*, *Cedar Rapids Museum of Art*, and *the Indian Creak Nature Center*. While none of these competitors are considered to be historical homes like Brucemore, all four identified organizations also offer cultural and historical community attractions to the Cedar Rapids metropolitan area.

<b>BRUCEMORE</b>	<b>THEATRE CEDAR RAPIDS</b>	<b>NATIONAL CZECH &amp; SLOVAK MUSEUM &amp; LIBRARY</b>	<b>CEDAR RAPIDS MUSEUM OF ART</b>	<b>INDIAN CREEK NATURE CENTER</b>
<b>Mission:</b> "To engage the public in the history, traditions, resources, and on-going preservation of Bruce more for the enrichment of the community."	<b>Mission:</b> "To provide quality theatre, maximizing community participation and education in theatre arts, to Cedar Rapids and surrounding region."	<b>Mission:</b> "We inspire people from every background to connect to Czech and Slovak history and culture."	<b>Mission:</b> "To excite, engage, and educate through the arts."	<b>Mission:</b> To promote a sustainable future by nurturing individuals through environmental education, providing leadership in land protection and restoration, and encouraging responsible interactions with nature.
<b>Overview:</b> Bruce more is a historical house site and a community cultural center. Programs include: guided mansion tours, garden and ground exploration, outdoor theater, concerts, specialty tours, festivals, holiday celebrations, Children's theatre, and art/garden shows. It always is well known for its flower shop.	<b>Overview:</b> Theatre Cedar Rapids is a nonprofit corporation that provides theatre/dramatic art activities for participants. Programs include main stage, studio, summer programs, and children's theatre productions and camps. Programs are designed to provide both education and entertainment services to Cedar Rapids area.	<b>Overview:</b> NCSML provides exhibit galleries, a museum store, and the Skala Bartixal Library, There is now an expanded museum and library. Three exhibits are hosted at a time in the galleries. There is also a large program area, classroom, theatre, renovated immigrant home, and a library.	<b>Overview:</b> The Cedar Rapids Museum of Art maintains a collection of 7,000+ works of art, 16 galleries with over 12 annual exhibits. Educational programs are held on and off-site by CRMA. It also owns the original Grant Wood Studio, a historical house property where Grant Wood lived. CMA programs include book clubs, art camps, festivals, exhibition discussions, art classes, etc.	<b>Overview:</b> The Indian Creek Nature Center provides educational programs through local schools and organizations. It also sells books, materials, and gifts through its shop. It holds special events and workshops. Programs include festivals, plant sales, Earth Stewardship Day, beekeeping classes, gardening workshops, school liaison programming, youth programs, and preschool programs.
<b>Membership information and cost:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Student (\$35)</li> <li>-Individual (\$50)</li> <li>-Grandparent (\$60)</li> <li>-Household (\$75)</li> <li>-Patron (\$100)</li> <li>-Donor (\$250)</li> <li>-Benefactor (\$500)</li> <li>-Trustees Club (\$1,000)</li> <li>-The George and Irene Douglas Circle (\$2,500)</li> <li>-Corporate memberships also available</li> </ul>	<b>Membership information and cost:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Members (\$50)</li> <li>-Partners (\$100)</li> <li>-Advocates (\$300)</li> <li>-Artists' Circle (\$500)</li> <li>-Directors's Circle (\$1000)</li> <li>-Producer's Circle (\$3000)</li> <li>-Angel's Circle (\$5000)</li> <li>-Companies may match a member gift through a corporate matching gifts option</li> </ul>	<b>Membership information and cost:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Individual (\$35)</li> <li>-Family (\$45)</li> <li>-Contributing (\$100)</li> <li>-Sustaining (\$250 )</li> <li>-Patron (\$500)</li> <li>-Benefactor (\$1000)</li> <li><b>Corporate memberships:</b></li> <li>Contributor: \$300 to \$999</li> <li>Sustainer: \$1,000 to \$2,499</li> <li>Patron: \$2,500 to \$4,999</li> <li>Benefactor: \$5,000 to \$9,999</li> <li>Ambassador: \$10,000 and above</li> </ul>	<b>Membership information and cost:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Senior/Student/Educator (\$30)</li> <li>-Individual (\$40)</li> <li>-Senior Couple (\$40)</li> <li>-Family (\$60)</li> <li>-Patron (\$125)</li> <li>-Benefactor (\$250)</li> <li>-Cone Wood Society (\$500)</li> <li>-Turner Society (\$1000)</li> </ul>	<b>Membership information and cost:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Individual (\$40)</li> <li>-Family (\$50)</li> <li>-Student (\$25)</li> <li>-Associate (\$75)</li> <li>-Lifetime Member - added to the endowment fund (\$800 one-time fee)</li> </ul>

<b><i>BRUCEMORE (cont.)</i></b>	<b><i>THEATRE CEDAR RAPIDS (cont.)</i></b>	<b><i>NATIONAL CZECH &amp; SLOVAK MUSEUM &amp; LIBRARY (cont.)</i></b>	<b><i>CEDAR RAPIDS MUSEUM OF ART (cont.)</i></b>	<b><i>INDIAN CREEK NATURE CENTER (cont.)</i></b>
<p><b>Admission costs:</b></p> <p>\$7 per adult, \$3 per child (age 6-18), and free to Brucemore/National Trust members.</p> <p>Discount rates are available for groups of ten or more.</p>	<p><b>Admission costs:</b></p> <p>Performance pricing varies by show/section of seating. -there are student rates</p>	<p><b>Admission costs:</b></p> <p>Members= Free, Adults \$10, Seniors \$9, Active Military (with ID) \$5, Students (with ID) 14+ \$5, Youth 6-13 \$3, Children 5 and under are free.</p> <p>Group tour packages are available.</p>	<p><b>Admission costs:</b></p> <p>Members are free, Adults \$5, Seniors (62+) \$4, College students with ID \$4, Children 18 and under are free (provided by Quaker Oats and Beverages)</p> <p>Museum offers free general admission to all from 4-8 on Thursday nights.</p> <p>Offers group discounts</p>	<p><b>Admission costs:</b></p> <p>There are no admission costs, Exploration of grounds and trails are free. Camps and classes vary by price according to class and member/non-member status.</p>
<p><b>Ways to be involved without membership:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Volunteer</li> <li>-Planned giving</li> <li>- One time/annual gift to support preservation projects</li> <li>-Event/program sponsorship</li> <li>-Academic internships</li> <li>-Facility rental for corporate and other nonprofit events only</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ways to be involved without membership:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Auditions</li> <li>-Ushering at performances</li> <li>-Tech volunteering</li> <li>-Internships</li> <li>-Adult classes/workshops</li> <li>-Acting/musical camps for kids and teens</li> <li>-Youth theatre classes</li> <li>-Teen improv program</li> <li>-Summer education programs</li> <li>-Scholarships</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ways to be involved without membership:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-One-time or annual gifts</li> <li>-Fundraisers</li> <li>-Legacy Society</li> <li>-Memorials/tributes</li> <li>-Sponsorship</li> <li>-CR2CR fundraiser (Cedar Rapids take large donations over to help citizens in need and causes to Czech Republic)</li> <li>-Donor campaigns</li> <li>-Volunteer</li> <li>-Capital Campaign</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ways to be involved without membership:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Donate</li> <li>-Capital Campaign</li> <li>-Corporate giving</li> <li>-Volunteer</li> <li>-Docent tour guides</li> <li>-Internships</li> <li>-Enrollment in clubs/classes</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ways to be involved without membership:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Volunteers</li> <li>-Habitat Restoration projects</li> <li>-Board of Committee/Board of Directors</li> <li>-festival planning</li> <li>-Teacher naturalists</li> <li>-Nature Center Guild Fundraisers</li> <li>-Summer camps</li> <li>-Girl &amp; Boy Scout badge workshops</li> </ul>
<p><b>Amount of revenue from membership dues:</b></p> <p>\$83,990 (2012)</p>	<p><b>Amount of revenue from membership dues:</b></p> <p>Not listed on 990 Form</p>	<p><b>Amount of revenue from membership dues:</b></p> <p>\$131,724 (2013)</p>	<p><b>Amount of revenue from membership dues:</b></p> <p>\$268,488 (2013)</p>	<p><b>Amount of revenue from membership dues:</b></p> <p>\$30,870 (2012)</p>

There are no other historic house sites in the Cedar Rapids area and none of the organizations identified as Brucecore's most direct competitors offer the exact type of atmosphere or experience that is available at Brucecore. Instead, there are certain aspects in which Brucecore and its competitors share common themes, whether those are similar events or similar types of volunteer opportunities. Through analysis of the research completed on competitors and as well as review of revenue information, Brucecore appears to be perhaps a less sought-out organization in terms of membership compared to other area organizations. This leaves a huge window of opportunity for future strategies and endeavors for Brucecore to attract more members and visitors. One advantage of Brucecore is that it offers dynamic experiences during different visits. Brucecore is made up of very different aspects, allowing visitors and members the ability to choose why they want to come to Brucecore and what their experience will be like. Since the "Brucecore Experience" can be self-defined and personalized by each individual, this creates a marketing benefit but also a challenge to marketing the experience of Brucecore as unique to each individual as well as marketing Brucecore in an understandable manner. Other strengths of Brucecore include its variety of events held on the grounds that appeal to different populations within the community, its variety of membership levels, and its ability to be used for corporate events within the community.

Compared to other area organizations, there are also a few weaknesses of Brucecore. One disadvantage to Brucecore is the fact that it cannot be privately rented or used for private events, such as photos, weddings, or receptions. If there is some way to receive permission or to adjust the definition of "private event," Brucecore could become a more attractive asset in the community other than being just a community attraction. Another weakness of Brucecore is that it is somewhat difficult to define when trying to describe the organization. In order to get more

members, there must be a strong, passionate voice from the organization in the community about its mission, which again leaves an opportunity for Brucemore to create a stronger and more passionate voice to engage the community. Future strategies could include increasing more volunteer opportunities or ways to get involved, different types of rotating exhibits, and holding more school events on-grounds in which parents may also attend (e.g. a graduation event). After analyzing area organizations and competitors, another important suggestion for Brucemore is to hold “capital campaigns,” which are more intensive fundraising efforts to raise a specific amount of money within a specific amount of time for a certain project. This type of campaign would help both donors and members understand where their contributions are going.



## **Sector Analysis**

There are other historical mansions like Bruce more in the region, but there is not a similar attraction in the Iowa Cultural Corridor. The Living History Farms in Urbandale, Iowa, and the Butterworth Center and Deere-Wilman House in Moline, Illinois are just a few examples within Bruce more's sector. Bruce more is part of the arts and culture sector. According to the National Center for Charitable Statistics, "Arts & Culture" organizations designated by the A20 classification, "promote, produce or provide access to a variety of arts experiences encompassing the visual, media, or performing arts"<sup>1</sup> All three of these facilities bring in more than just a fun filled day of historical activities. They enrich the minds of young and older visitors.

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<sup>1</sup> NCCS Classification can be found online:

<http://nccsweb.urban.org/PubApps/nteeSearch.php?returnElement=&popup=0&gQry=A20&codeType=NTEE>

<b><i>BRUCEMORE</i></b>	<b><i>Living History Farms</i></b>	<b><i>Butterworth Center and Deere-Wilman House</i></b>
<b>Mission:</b> "To engage the public in the history, traditions, resources, and on-going preservation of Bruce more for the enrichment of the community."	<b>Mission:</b> "Living History Farms is an interactive outdoor history museum, which educates, entertains and connects people of all ages to Midwestern rural life experiences."	<b>Mission:</b> NA
<b>Overview:</b> Bruce more is a historical house site and a community cultural center. Programs include: guided mansion tours, garden and ground exploration, outdoor theater, concerts, specialty tours, festivals, holiday celebrations, Children's theatre, and art/garden shows. It always is well known for its flower shop.	<b>Overview:</b> Living Farms goal is provide an education to the public about the significance of "past and present issues in the agriculture and rural life." They do this through telling stories of how Iowa became to be one of the most productive farmlands in the world. There are many activities for all ages!	<b>Overview:</b> Both of these facilities that are now open to the public all year round were once the homes of John Deere's decedents. The Deere Wilman house was the first built of the two in 1872 by John Deere's son Charles. 1892 Charles Deere built the second house for his daughter Katharine and her husband William Butterworth as a wedding gift. Visitors are able to see the two houses and take a journey back and explore the lives of the Butterworths.
<b>Membership levels and cost:</b> <i>-Student (\$35)</i> <i>-Individual (\$50)</i> <i>-Grandparent (\$60)</i> <i>-Household (\$75)</i> <i>-Patron (\$100)</i> <i>-Donor (\$250)</i> <i>-Benefactor (\$500)</i> <i>-Trustees Club (\$1,000)</i> <i>-The George and Irene Douglas Circle (\$2,500)</i> <b>-Corporate memberships also available</b>	<b>Membership information and cost:</b> -Family Plus: \$115 -Family: \$75 -Grandparent: \$75 -One Plus One: \$60  -Members are able to visit the farm all year round and have free or discounted prices for other outside related activities. -Member can also purchase membership packages to visit other area sites and attractions	<b>Membership information and cost:</b> <i>-No fees</i>
<b>Admission costs:</b> \$7 per adult, \$3 per child (age 6-18), and free to Bruce more/National Trust members.  Discount rates are available for groups of ten or more	<b>Admission costs:</b> -\$14.00 for Adults -\$8.50 for Children -Children 1 and under FREE -Living History Farms Members FREE -Senior Citizen Discount (60+): \$1.00 off - Admission -Military Discount: \$1.00 off Admission -AAA Discount: \$1.00 off Admission	<b>Admission costs:</b> -No fees

<b><i>BRUCEMORE (cont.)</i></b>	<b><i>Living History Farms (cont.)</i></b>	<b><i>Butterworth Center and Deere-Wilman House (cont.)</i></b>
<b>Ways to be involved without membership:</b> -Volunteer -planned giving - one time/annual gift to support preservation projects -event/program sponsorship -academic internships -facility rental for corporate and other nonprofit events only	<b>Ways to be involved and Guest Services</b> -Volunteer -Planned giving -One time/Annual giving -Visits -Events -Retail -Business Meeting -Weddings -Wedding Receptions	<b>Ways to get involved</b> -Free visits -Daytime events -Night time events -Events for children -Events for adults -School visits -Tours -Scholarships for seniors in high school going on to college
<b>Revenue sources:</b> -Membership: \$83,990 (2012)	<b>Revenue sources:</b> -Contributions: \$1,110,446 -Government Grants: \$0 -Program Services: \$1,149,427 -Investments: \$378,044 -Special Events: \$56,916 -Sales: \$0 -Other: \$0 -Total Revenue: \$2,694,833	<b>Revenue sources:</b> -Not available

Living History Farms and the Butterworth Center and Deere Wilman House are not in close enough vicinity to be considered competitors of Bruce more. However, these organizations have similar missions and goals related to the history of the region. Living History Farms takes an agricultural approach and educates visitors on the history of Iowa. The Butterworth Center and Deere Wilman House are similar to Bruce more because the focus is on the family's mansion and legacy. But one major difference from Bruce more is they are completely free to the public. While these two other organizations offer interesting alternatives to Bruce more, their location makes them less threatening to Bruce more's constituency and membership.

## **Membership Drive Strategy**

Brucemore relies on the community to help preserve its legacy through membership. In order to implement a successful membership drive, Brucemore first needs to establish goals for its membership drive. This will include the staff and board of the organization determining the number of new members they are striving to recruit in the following year. By setting a specific and measurable goal for the number of new members it is trying to recruit, Brucemore will be able to measure its success and figure out what is working and what needs to change.

### *Tactic 1: Incentivize members.*

One idea for Brucemore is to give community members a reason to join. Every organization needs to offer an incentive for joining, especially if the organization charges fees or asks members to donate their time, which Brucemore does. It is important for the organization to promote and advertise what it does for its members because it will drive people seeking those services to more likely join. The benefits of becoming a member at Brucemore are discussed on its website under “Support,” but it is not clear what is offered for the members. In order to get more people to join the organization or visit the estate, it needs to provide more detailed benefits and incentives to drive new members.

### *Tactic 2: Spread the word.*

One of the best methods of advertising and recruitment is word of mouth. Currently, Brucemore relies heavily on word-of-mouth marketing to raise awareness about the organization. To recruit even more members, Brucemore should have constituents of the organization try to enlist new members from family or friends by providing incentives for current members who recruit new members. For example, Brucemore could promote a “Bring Your Friends” offer where current members receive a special gift or invitation to an exclusive event if they refer

someone to join Bruce more. It could also set up a dinner or social event at the estate where members can bring their family and friends to see what Bruce more is all about. These events will correspond to Bruce more's current membership levels and the costs that are associated with that level. The social events could be held for the lowest membership levels, while dinner events could be targeted at the highest levels, including corporate members. Throughout the next couple months, Bruce more should present a series of special events, ranging from dinners on the property to gatherings on the garden grounds, especially since people will want to enjoy the outdoors during this time.

*Tactic 3: Expand advertising strategies.*

Based on the survey results, it is evident that Bruce more's constituents have had mostly positive experiences with the organization. Thus, advertising Bruce more and getting the word out about its services is important in order to gain patrons and secure the community support the historic landmark needs. Bruce more has an advertising budget of less than \$20,000, and even though money is tight, Bruce more should put more funding into advertising in the area, whether it be print, television, or otherwise. This would be a worthwhile endeavor for Bruce more to gain more constituents.

According to an audited financial state of Theater of Cedar Rapids in 2012, the theater operates with an advertising budget of over \$120,000, which is significantly greater than the resources available to Bruce more for advertising. Because of this, Bruce more should adopt more free online social tools in its marketing efforts. Currently, Bruce more uses its Facebook page to publish the organization's advertisements and planned events. Bruce more's Facebook page can be used as a free advertising service in which Bruce more can target specific demographics and measure its reach for the different groups. Bruce more also uses its Twitter account as a resource

for marketing. The account can be used to attract members that will be seen by a large group of people and to build a group of followers who can be prospects for new membership possibilities. Developing a strong web presence is an opportunity for Brucemore to extend its market reach and ultimately drive more members to the organization. Currently, the organizations direct marketing efforts seem to be locally focused, using word-of-mouth advertising to reach its target neighborhood. Brucemore does some paid advertising that is focused more on specific events rather than for general marketing campaigns. While Brucemore's Facebook page provides free and visible advertising, more could be done in utilizing this tool to increase Brucemore's visibility in the community. Currently, the website is not very easy to navigate in terms of the membership page, and that should be something that is most visible on the site. Brucemore should also be directing visitors to its site through consistent postings in all of its marketing materials and strategic placement of links to its site on its Twitter and Facebook accounts.

It costs approximately \$7 per word to run an ad in the Sunday edition of *The Gazette*, and costs more to run a color photo, depending on the size. The Sunday edition of *The Gazette* reaches just over 215,000 readers, and it would be a good use of resources to perhaps place an ad in the arts and entertainment section to attract potential members interested in what Brucemore provides. From the survey responses, most people are drawn to Brucemore's cultural and family programming such as theatrical events and orchestral performances. Therefore, these offerings and events should be targeted in advertisements for Brucemore. Theater Cedar Rapids and the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art advertise in *The Gazette*, and so does Brucemore, but it would be prudent for Brucemore to follow suit and advertise to the same degree as these similar organizations.

*Tactic 4: Strengthen partnerships.*

Brucemore currently lacks sufficient children's programs, an offering that many members desire. To appeal to those who also enjoy the theater and the events at Brucemore, it would be interesting to host multiple or annual productions by the Children's Theater of Cedar Rapids on the Brucemore grounds. While the two already have a relationship, it would be judicious to host more shows and create a following for the events in Cedar Rapids. This would allow those who enjoy theater to take their kids to a production meant for children at Brucemore, improving the estate's visibility, while utilizing the versatility of Brucemore. A stronger partnership between the Children's Theater of Cedar Rapids and Brucemore could result in benefits for both parties, allowing constituents of both to enjoy discounted family memberships and special access to certain events. Each of these events could be seen as special drives, where if a family member were to sign up at a function held by Brucemore, they could receive single or family memberships at a reduced price.



## **Internal Communications**

### **Introduction**

The overarching goal of the Internal Communications Team has been to assist the staff, volunteers, and Docents of Brucemore in becoming more comfortable with making donation “asks” and pitching Brucemore’s membership program to the estate’s visitors. The Internal Communications Team broke up into three subgroups to create materials to help increase Brucemore’s membership and donor bases, and to enhance Brucemore’s involvement with and service to the surrounding community.

The first group created membership pitches and training materials to better equip staff, volunteers, and docents in asking Brucemore visitors to consider purchasing a membership or making a donation. Individual pitches were created for docents, gift shop staff, and event and program volunteers. This group also provided suggestions for new membership levels.

Another group developed a docent incentive program as a means of motivating docents to make donation asks and membership pitches. The incentive program includes methods for assessing the number of asks made by docents each year in addition to reward suggestions for the docents who make the most asks (e.g. complementary membership or event passes). In addition to the incentive program, this group made suggestions regarding distribution of membership brochures by docents and yearly recognition of volunteers and docents via a “Donor of the Month” program.

Finally, a third group focused on revising the washroom space at Brucemore into a place that will encourage docents to ask for donations and pitch memberships. This group designed print materials, digital media, and donation canisters to encourage membership registration and donations at the conclusion of each tour. The overall goal of the space revision is to provide a space that simplifies the membership pitching and ask-making process for docents.

## **Membership Pitch**

### *Tour Coordinators*

Tour coordinators are the first individuals that guests interact with upon entering the mansion. They explain house rules, such as no pictures or cell phones, prior to the tour. Currently, tour coordinators do not inform guests of memberships or giving, and this practice should be continued. The beginning of a tour is most guests' first experience at Bruce more, so this is too early to start promoting memberships or giving. It is necessary for guests to experience all that Bruce more has to offer before trying to further engage them.

### *Docents*

Docents provide guests of Bruce more a guided tour of the Mansion and a general history of the estate. Docents should inform guests that Bruce more has a membership program and the necessity for donations; these options should not be pushed upon guests, rather, presented as an option at the conclusion of the tour. This pitch provides guests with the vitality of donations and memberships to Bruce more, while also explaining that benefits are given to donors. This is a sample pitch that gently encourages guests to receive information regarding memberships and giving:

“Bruce more is owned by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, but the trust doesn't fund our daily operations, our events and programs, or our efforts to preserve Bruce more for future generations. We rely on our membership program to keep Bruce more alive as a community hub and as an integral part of Eastern Iowa history. If you enjoyed your tour and are interested in supporting Bruce more and our programs, please feel free to take a membership brochure, which explains the various levels of membership available and the benefits you can receive for donating.”

Docents should know membership levels, the incentives, and where the money goes. However, someone with additional questions should see a full-time staff member. Below are additional sample dialogues to additional questions presented by guests.

*Question:* What do I receive for becoming a member?

*Answer:* By becoming a member, in addition to complimentary mansion tours year-round, you receive: special discounts on Brucemore events (such as *Balloon Glow* or other upcoming event), specialty tours (to otherwise un-seen parts of the house), discounts in the store, and recognition in our annual report.

*Question:* I really enjoyed learning about the gardens here at Brucemore, is there anyway I can see more of the gardens?

*Answer:* I'm glad you enjoyed seeing the expansive gardens here at Brucemore, are you aware that we offer special guided hiking tours in the gardens? Lead directly by the Brucemore gardeners, you learn about the local species and can ask them questions about your own garden.

### *Gift Shop Staff*

In the gift shop, brochures and materials regarding memberships and giving should be placed where guests can easily retrieve and see them. Having materials by both the exits and the cash register will allow guests to easily find materials, whether or not they are making a purchase at the gift shop. A small sign should be placed by the materials saying, "Enjoyed your visit? Learn how to become a member."

Cashiers should mention the materials during their usual checkout procedures, after asking if they enjoyed their visit or found everything alright today. Here is an example dialogue:

“Thank you for shopping at The Brucemore Store and Brucemore Cutting Gardens Flower Shop. If you have enjoyed your visit, please take a brochure regarding our membership programs and how your generous support can help programs grow here at Brucemore.”

Similar to docents, if someone asks for additional information, gift shop volunteers should know membership levels and the incentives. However, someone with additional questions should be directed towards a full-time staff member. Below are additional sample dialogues to additional questions presented by guests.

*Question:* What do I receive for becoming a member?

*Answer:* By becoming a member, in addition to complimentary mansion tours year-round, you receive: special discounts on Brucemore events (such as *Balloon Glow* or other upcoming event), specialty tours (to otherwise un-seen parts of the house), discounts in the store, and recognition in our annual report.

*Question:* I really enjoyed learning about the gardens here at Brucemore, is there anyway I can see more of the gardens?

*Answer:* I’m glad you enjoyed seeing the expansive gardens here at Brucemore, are you aware that we offer special guided hiking tours in the gardens? Lead directly by the Brucemore gardeners, you learn about the local species and can ask them questions about your own garden.

#### *Event and Program Volunteers*

Ultimately, volunteers should not be asking for donations or memberships during events and programs; however, the materials should be available to distribute and volunteers should have a basic understanding of the membership levels if a guest has questions. Events and

programs cater to a larger crowd than Mansion tours and many guests who are attending are first time visitors. The same information that is distributed to gift shop volunteers should be distributed to event and program volunteers. A sample dialogue, for volunteers at events and programs to encourage guests to take materials for the membership program, should be similar to the following:

“Thank you for visiting (insert event or program here). If you have enjoyed your visit, please take a brochure regarding our membership programs and how your generous support can help programs grow here at Bruce more.”

Similarly, a sign should be included at information or registration advertising the membership program; pictures and basic information should be on the poster. If guests can receive a discounted membership by joining during the event, this should be promoted at the desk and during the event.

*Administrative Staff*

The administrative staff at Bruce more should have a thorough understanding of the membership levels and incentives. Similarly, the administrative staff should also have a thorough understand of how to steward a donor – how to further involve existing donors that have a high interest in Bruce more. The charts below display the interest-capacity for giving and membership for nonprofits. One chart clearly displays interest and capacity while the other places individuals that fall into each particular area.

	<b><u>Low Interest</u></b>	<b><u>High Interest</u></b>
<b><u>High Capacity</u></b>	High Capacity & Low Interest	High Capacity & High Interest

<b><u>Low Capacity</u></b>	Low Capacity & Low Interest	Low Capacity & High Interest
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	<b><u>Low Interest</u></b>	<b><u>High Interest</u></b>
<b><u>High Capacity</u></b>	Known family names around city interested in athletics	Board Members & Sponsorships
<b><u>Low Capacity</u></b>	College Student Studying Medicine	Volunteers & Cultural Enthusiasts

Individuals with high interest and high capacity in Brucemore should be catered to early on in the process. Additional attention should be spent on these members while they are attending events and tours. Through the continuation of stewardship, a smaller donation can blossom into one or more large gifts. These members will likely recommend Brucemore to their family and friends.

Individuals with low capacity and high interest are also individuals who will benefit through tailored interactions. These members are looking for a way to become more involved, membership and volunteer information will help show them how. Helping these members find a way to be involved fitting within their monetary means will help them become more dedicated to the organization.

Individuals with a high capacity and low interest are not necessarily interested in Brucemore but have monetary means to support the organization. These individuals may still be

interested in the special and cultural events that occur and personalizing these visits will be the most beneficial.

### *New Membership Levels*

The current membership levels present guests with many options and are similar to that of giving levels. The proposed new membership levels were derived from the top three reported membership levels from the membership survey. The incentives for the higher membership levels should be presented to individuals that give donations in addition to being a member, such as an invitation to the annual Trustees reception and personalized tours from the executive director. The top three membership levels were individuals, couple, and household, which are recommended to be the only membership levels at the rates of \$30, \$55, and \$100 respectively. The incentives for the levels should remain the same: special rates for Brucemore events and specialty tours, special discounts in the Brucemore store, invitations to members-only events, complimentary standard Mansion tours, complimentary passes for guests (certain number of passes per level), *Lion's Roar* newsletter, and recognition in the annual report and summer events playbill. However, additional complimentary passes for guests are included depending upon the membership level. An individual will receive one complimentary guest pass, a couple will receive two complimentary guest passes, and a household will receive four complimentary guest passes. The current higher membership levels (Patron and above) should become “giving levels” to provide greater clarity for potential donors. Individuals who give at the Patron or above would also receive a membership.

## Docents

Welcome to Bruce more! Thank you for your time today. Here's information regarding memberships and giving, as well as sample dialogues. If you or a guest has additional questions that are not addressed on this sheet, direct see a full-time staff member.

"Bruce more is owned by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, however the trust doesn't fund our daily operations, our events and programs, or our efforts to preserve Bruce more for future generations. We rely on our memberships to keep Bruce more alive as a community hub and an integral part of Eastern Iowa history. If you enjoyed your visit and are interested in supporting Bruce more and our events, please stop by the gift shop and ask for our membership brochure, which explains the various levels of membership available and some of the benefits you can receive for donating."

Memberships are as follows:

- Individual (\$30) - one pass for a guest
- Couple (\$55) - two passes for guests
- Household (\$100) - four passes for guests

Members receive:

- Special rates for Bruce more events and specialty tours
- Special discounts in the Bruce more Store
- Invitations to members-only events
- Complimentary standard Mansion tours
- Complimentary passes for guests (labeled above)
- *Lion's Roar* newsletter
- Recognition in the annual report and summer events playbill

"By becoming a member, in addition to complimentary mansion tours year-round, you receive: special discounts on Bruce more events (such as Balloon Glow or other upcoming event), specialty tours (to otherwise un-seen parts of the house), discounts in the store, and recognition in our annual report."

- If a guest enjoyed a particular part of their visit, focus on programs and events surrounding their interests:
  - E.g. "I'm glad you enjoyed seeing the expansive gardens here at Bruce more, are you aware that we offer special guided hiking tours in the gardens? Lead directly by the Bruce more gardeners, you learn about the local species and can ask them questions about your own garden."

Giving Opportunities:

- General Programs
- Skinner Organ Restoration

If someone is interested in sponsoring an event or program, please direct him or her to a full-time staff member. They will work with the individual or organization to discuss the sponsorship. Similarly, if someone is interested in a big gift, see a full-time staff member to arrange proper recognition.



## Gift Shop Volunteers

Welcome to Bruce more! Thank you for your time today. Here's information regarding memberships and giving. If you or a guest has additional questions that are not addressed on this sheet, direct see a full-time staff member.

Memberships are as follows:

- Individual (\$30) - one pass for a guest
- Couple (\$55) - two passes for guests
- Household (\$100) - four passes for guests

Members receive:

- Special rates for Bruce more events and specialty tours
- Special discounts in the Bruce more Store
- Invitations to members-only events
- Complimentary standard Mansion tours
- Complimentary passes for guests (labeled above)
- *Lion's Roar* newsletter
- Recognition in the annual report and summer events playbill

**\*Be sure to discuss upcoming events and your favorite programs at Bruce more!**

Giving Opportunities:

- General Programs
- Skinner Organ Restoration

If someone is interested in sponsoring an event or program, please direct him or her to a full-time staff member. They will work with the individual or organization to discuss the sponsorship. Similarly, if someone is interested in a big gift, see a full-time staff member to arrange proper recognition.

## Volunteers

Welcome to Bruce more! Thank you for your time today. Here's information regarding memberships and giving, as well as sample dialogues. If you or a guest has additional questions that are not addressed on this sheet, direct see a full-time staff member.

"Bruce more is owned by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, however the trust doesn't fund our daily operations, our events and programs, or our efforts to preserve Bruce more for future generations. We rely on our memberships to keep Bruce more alive as a community hub and an integral part of Eastern Iowa history. If you enjoyed your visit and are interested in supporting Bruce more and our events, please stop by the gift shop and ask for our membership brochure, which explains the various levels of membership available and some of the benefits you can receive for donating."

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Members receive:

- Special rates for Bruce more events and specialty tours
- Special discounts in the Bruce more Store
- Invitations to members-only events
- Complimentary standard Mansion tours
- Complimentary passes for guests (labeled above)
- *Lion's Roar* newsletter
- Recognition in the annual report and summer events playbill

"By becoming a member, in addition to complimentary mansion tours year-round, you receive: special discounts on Bruce more events (such as Balloon Glow or other upcoming event), specialty tours (to otherwise un-seen parts of the house), discounts in the store, and recognition in our annual report."

- If a guest enjoyed a particular part of their visit, focus on programs and events surrounding their interests:
  - E.g. "I'm glad you enjoyed seeing the expansive gardens here at Bruce more, are you aware that we offer special guided hiking tours in the gardens? Lead directly by the Bruce more gardeners, you learn about the local species and can ask them questions about your own garden."

Giving Opportunities:

- General Programs
- Skinner Organ Restoration

If someone is interested in sponsoring an event or program, please direct him or her to a full-time staff member. They will work with the individual or organization to discuss the sponsorship. Similarly, if someone is interested in a big gift, see a full-time staff member to arrange proper recognition.

## Administrative Staff

Here's information regarding how to pinpoint an individual's interest and capacity to give for your organization. This information can be found through collecting constituent data through various websites and databases. Information regarding income and also their personal interests would be the primary focus. The best individuals to pinpoint are ones with both high capacity and high interest. Determining their interest and capacity to give allows you to tailor interactions with individuals to best suit how they are interested in being involved.

Individuals with high interest and high capacity in BruceMore should be catered to early on. Additional attention should be spent on these members while they are attending events and tours. Through the continuation of stewardship a smaller donation can blossom into large gifts. These members will likely recommend BruceMore to their family and friends

Individuals with low capacity and high interest are also individuals who will benefit through tailored interactions. These members are looking for a way to become more involved, membership and volunteer information will help show them how. Helping these members find a way to be involved fitting within their monetary means will help them become more dedicated to your organization.

Individuals with a high capacity and low interest are not necessarily interested in BruceMore, but have monetary means to support your organization. These individuals may still be interested in the special and cultural events that occur, personalizing these visits will be the most beneficial.

The tables below provide the relation between capacity and interest. Examples are presented in the second table aid in identifying individuals that fall in each category. Tailoring interactions specific to individual's interests and capacity to give will allow for more efficient sponsorship and ultimately higher membership and donor rates.

	<b><u>Low Interest</u></b>	<b><u>High Interest</u></b>		<b><u>Low Interest</u></b>	<b><u>High Interest</u></b>
<b><u>High Capacity</u></b>	High Capacity & Low Interest	High Capacity & High Interest	<b><u>High Capacity</u></b>	Known family names around city interested in athletics	Board Members & Sponsorships
<b><u>Low Capacity</u></b>	Low Capacity & Low Interest	Low Capacity & High Interest	<b><u>Low Capacity</u></b>	College Student Studying Medicine	Volunteers & Cultural Enthusiasts

\*If a guest has more information regarding memberships or giving, docents and volunteers will send them to see you.

### **Stewardship:**

*The conducting, supervising, or managing of something; especially: the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care [from Merriam-Webster]*

## **Docent Incentive Program**

Volunteers are an incredibly valuable resource for nonprofits. Like many other nonprofit agencies, Brucemore relies on the assistance of volunteers. Volunteer docents play an essential role at Brucemore through their interactions with guests. Docents are people who are trained and serve as guides and educators to further the understanding of the cultural and historical institutions they serve, usually on a voluntary basis. They offer guided tours of the mansion and 26-acre estate that provide visitors with a unique and enjoyable experience as well as assist in recruiting efforts. In developing a docent incentive program, it should focus primarily on the tour guides that present Brucemore to visitors. Brucemore depends on tour guides to possess interest, passion, and enthusiasm, as well as knowledge of the history of the estate to inspire others in their appreciation of the site. Most importantly, docents' ultimate goal is to build long-term positive relationships for Brucemore through recruiting new members and encouraging visitors to return and sample the variety of unique services and events it has to offer. The docent's primary responsibility is to promote the variety and versatility that is Brucemore. While exploring the history, gardens, grounds, and 21-room mansion, it is important for docents to encourage visitors to take advantage of the estate's many special events throughout the calendar year. They should also promote Brucemore as an event center in addition to its role as a historical estate.

In order to make docents feel more comfortable in making asks, Brucemore's membership pitch should focus primarily on how their membership will support the mission of the organization. Based on the results of the member survey a vast majority of respondents – nearly 90% of all polled – became members of Brucemore in order to support the organization and its mission. In discussions with the volunteers at Brucemore, it became clear that they are very willing to make asks during tours but were concerned with appearing greedy and profit-

oriented. Below are some suggestions regarding how to best provide an incentive to ask for memberships while keeping the focus on Brucemore and its continued operation and success.

First, volunteers should be assessed yearly on their number of successful asks and referrals ending in membership. Brucemore should reward volunteers for securing members by receiving a complimentary membership in equivalence to the highest level of membership that a community member has signed up for based on their referral. In addition, whichever volunteer has secured the most memberships via referral at the end of the year will receive 10 event passes for any event (with the exception of volunteer and trustee dinners) that they can use throughout the year or give away to friends and relatives. Similarly, it is important for Brucemore to recognize and celebrate volunteers who successfully make asks throughout the year on a personal and company level.

Another important element that should be included in Brucemore's docent incentive plan to help streamline asks is the inclusion of a membership form in each of the brochures available before, during and after tours. Ideally, volunteers should pass out a brochure with a membership form attached at the end of each tour. Lastly, Brucemore should thank and recognize docents monthly and yearly. Since volunteers are such a valuable resource for nonprofits, it is extremely important for organizations to make sure their volunteers never feel like their hard work is going unappreciated. When volunteers feel appreciated, it increases morale and could drive them to feel more confident in making asks. Brucemore should show its appreciation for the great services their volunteers provide by featuring a "Docent of the Month" in the e-newsletter and post his or her personal story across multiple channels including the website and social media.

## Docent-In-Focus

The FCCA appreciates the great services our volunteers provide, and we are happy to begin featuring a new Docent-In-Focus as a small expression of our gratitude for the generous sacrifice of time and energy by our docents on behalf of the Frederick Gallery, the Members' Gallery, and the Historic Silversmith House.

December-January Docent-In-Focus:  
**Robert Hunter.**



Docent-In-Focus

Since retiring from teaching art at Colonial Beach High School in 2012, I've become a docent at the FCCA and I'm thoroughly enjoying the experience. I've gotten to meet several area artists who show their work at the FCCA and it has been nice to speak with artists whose work I've admired over the years.

I'm very impressed with the quality of work being exhibited at the FCCA and Carrol Morgan and Bob Worthy do an excellent job curating each show at the FCCA.

Over the last five years I've been to at least a dozen regional art centers on the east coast and the FCCA compares very favorably.

Now that I work as a full time artist I have had the luxury of spending concentrated periods of time exploring image making through digital printmaking and book art. Both have their own allure but the craft necessary in book making has provided an opportunity to explore a totally new skill set. In addition an Artist Book creates an opportunity to extend digital ideas through a multiple image collection which is created to sustain the visual narrative of the book. One of my books will be in the "It's Small" exhibition at the FCCA during this month. Also, as an artist, I've had more time to exhibit my work in additional venues outside the Fredericksburg area. In August I had a Mini Solo show at the Touchstone Gallery in Washington D.C. and in 2014 I will be exhibiting work at the 3rd Street Gallery in Philadelphia, Pa. Currently one of my prints is being displayed in the Boston Printmakers North American Biennial held at Boston University's 808 Gallery.

I'm honored to have been asked to share something about myself as a docent at the FCCA and I'm looking forward to continuing to contribute to the many excellent opportunities that the FCCA provides the residents of Fredericksburg and surrounding areas.

*Image Source: Frederick Center for the Creative Arts (FCCA) Website*

In the image to the left, Fredericksburg Center for the Creative Arts shows its appreciation for docents by featuring a new "Docent-In-Focus." Under its volunteer docent program section on its website, the Center has a small section on the side that celebrates the docent with a picture along with a few paragraphs about the volunteer, sharing his story and passion he shares with the organization.

### Docent Ask Pitch:

Brucemore is a property of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, but the trust doesn't fund daily operations, events and programs, or efforts to preserve Brucemore for future generations. Brucemore relies on membership to keep Brucemore alive as a community hub and an integral part of Eastern Iowa History. If you enjoyed your tour and are interested in supporting Brucemore and everything our organization does, please feel free to take a membership brochure, which explains the various levels of membership available and some of the benefits you can receive

for donating.

## Space Revision

The goal of the space revision team was to provide a space that allows docents the time, place, and materials to pitch becoming a member to Bruce more visitors, as well as inform the audience on the connection between Bruce more's past and present.

### *Materials:*

Membership handout: The membership handout is used as an easy take-a-way for the audience. It provides information on the benefits of becoming a member. In addition to the information on membership, the handout can be filled out as an application to start a membership.

Posters: The visuals used in the space help connect all that the audience has learned about the past of Bruce more during the tour to the current events at the property. The posters juxtapose two photos, one historical and one current. To make the posters dynamic, a diamond shape is use to create the juxtaposition.

Slideshow: The slideshow will play continuously while the docents pitch membership to Bruce more. They will be able to use the slideshow pictures as reference to the events that take place at Bruce more. The slideshow will be displayed on a flat screen TV.



Proposed Technology: The slideshow should be played on a flat screen television. To encourage membership, we propose that there be iPads in the space so they can sign up online right there.

Canister: If people aren't sure about membership, they can still donate to Brucemore. They don't necessarily need to make large donations. The canister will allow people to feel comfortable making small donations (dollar bills and change) without committing to a membership. This allows Brucemore to take advantage of the number of people who take a tour at the mansion and possibly gain more donations.

When the residents lived in the mansion, the room was used for laundry. The space is small but has big potential. Brucemore currently uses the space as a place to showcase the events that take place throughout the year. The events are presented by placing photos that are printed out on copy paper onto construction paper. This room needs to be revamped to help guests feel connected to Brucemore's mission.

This should be a space that utilizes technology and visual materials to juxtapose Brucemore's past with the present. The docents will end the tour in the laundry room and can pitch becoming a member to Brucemore guests. They will use the visual materials (slideshow and posters) to point out the benefits of becoming a member. With these materials Brucemore can reach potential new members and donors in ways that it was not able to before.





## Join Brucemore!

**Individual (\$30) - one pass for a guest**

**Couple (\$55) - two passes for guests**

**Household (\$100) - four passes for guests**

Members receive:

- Special rates for Brucemore events and specialty tours
- Special discounts in the Brucemore Store
- Invitations to members-only events
- Complimentary standard Mansion tours
- Complimentary passes for guests (labeled above)
- Lion's Roar newsletter
- Recognition in the annual report and summer events playbill

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Type:

Individual

Couple

Household

Please make checks payable to:

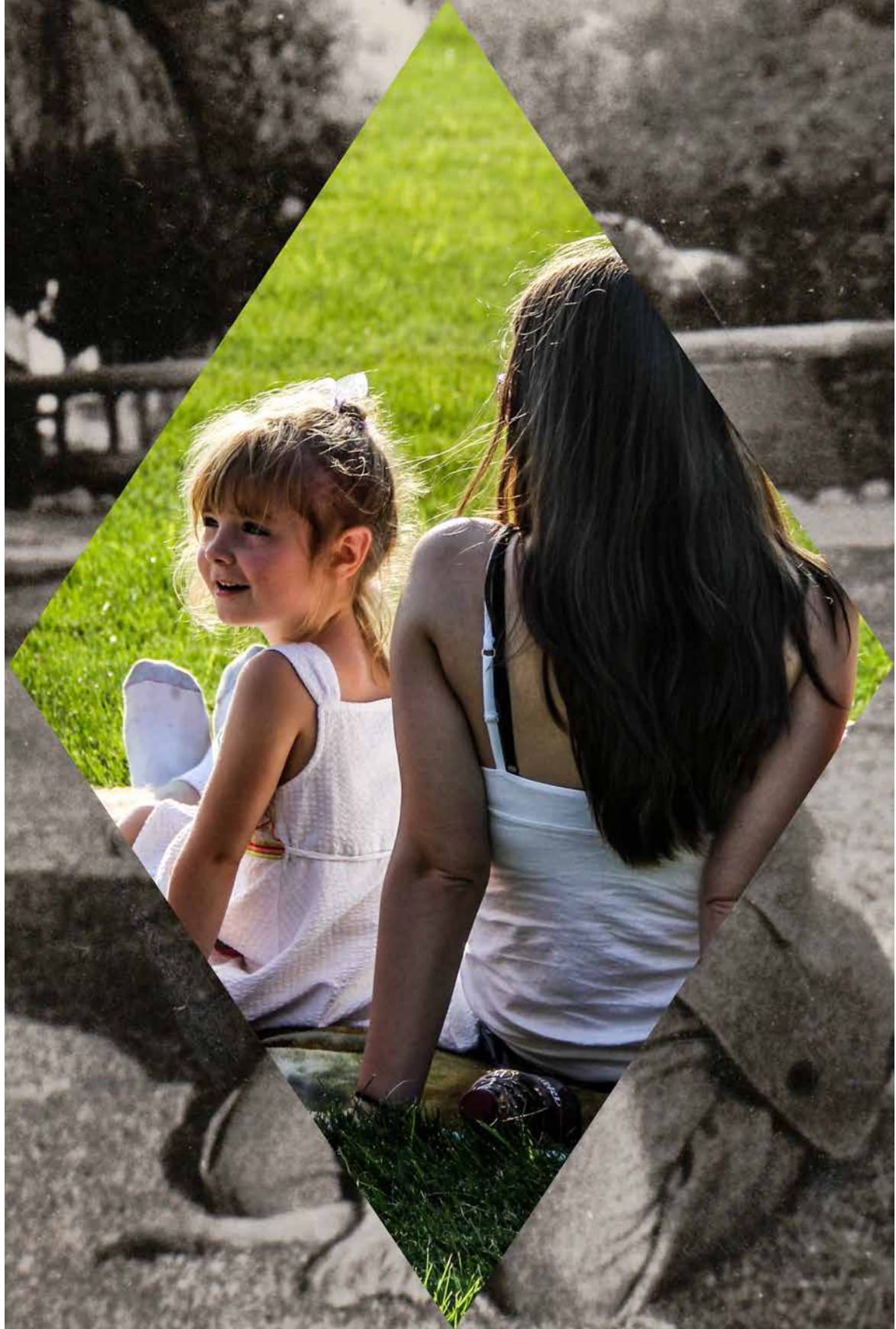
Brucemore, INC.

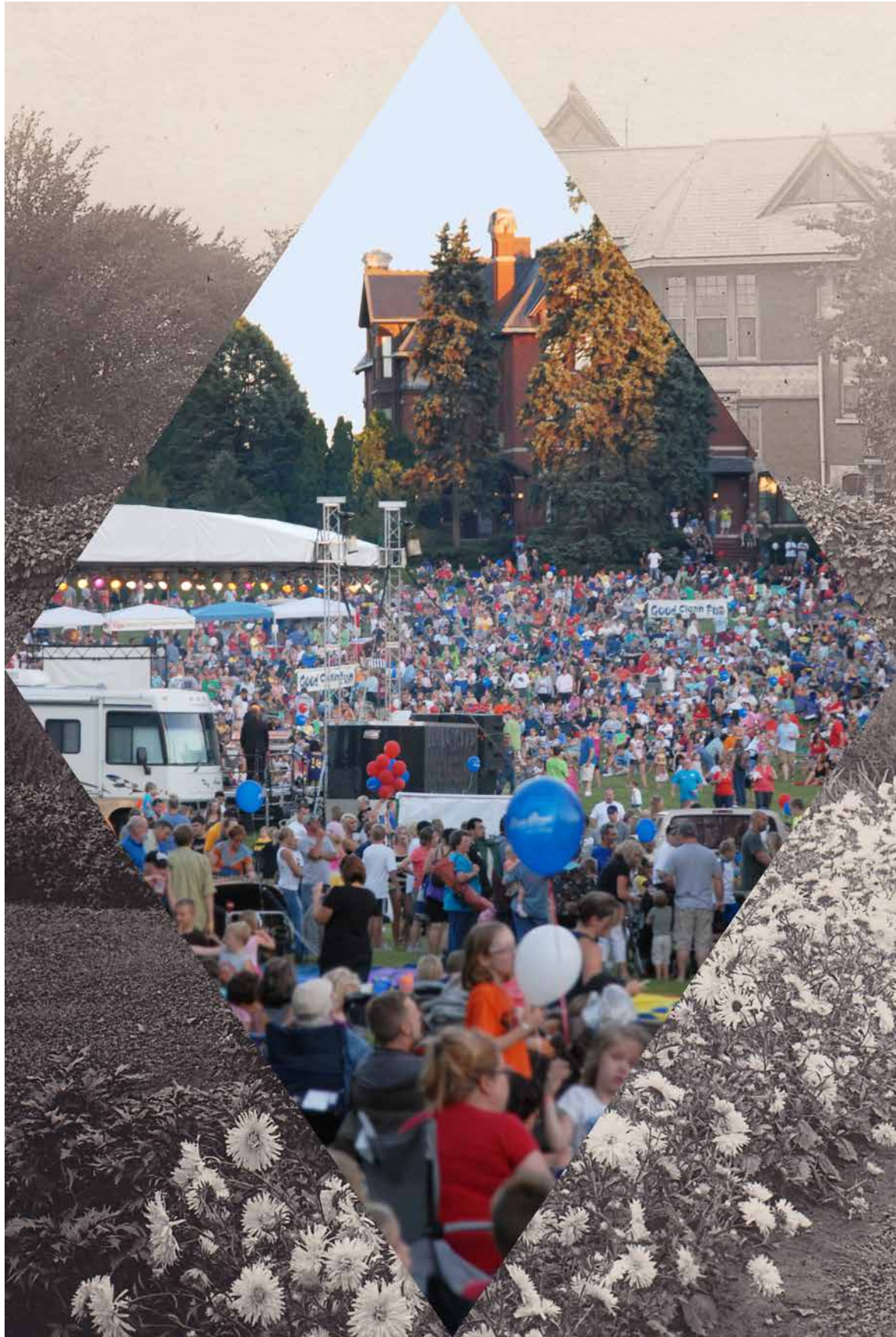
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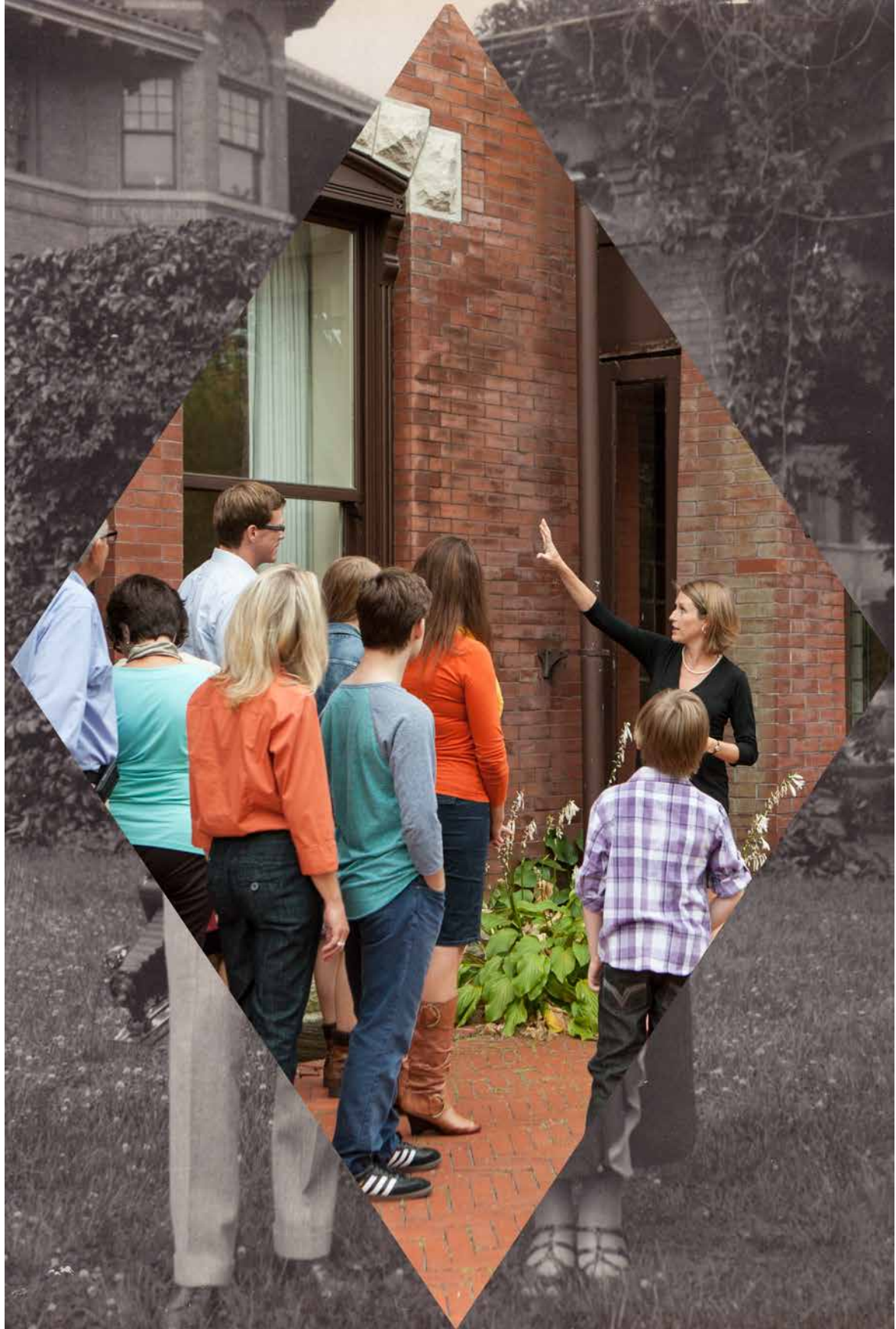
2160 Linden Dr. SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52403

Or join online at:

**[brucemore.org](http://brucemore.org)**

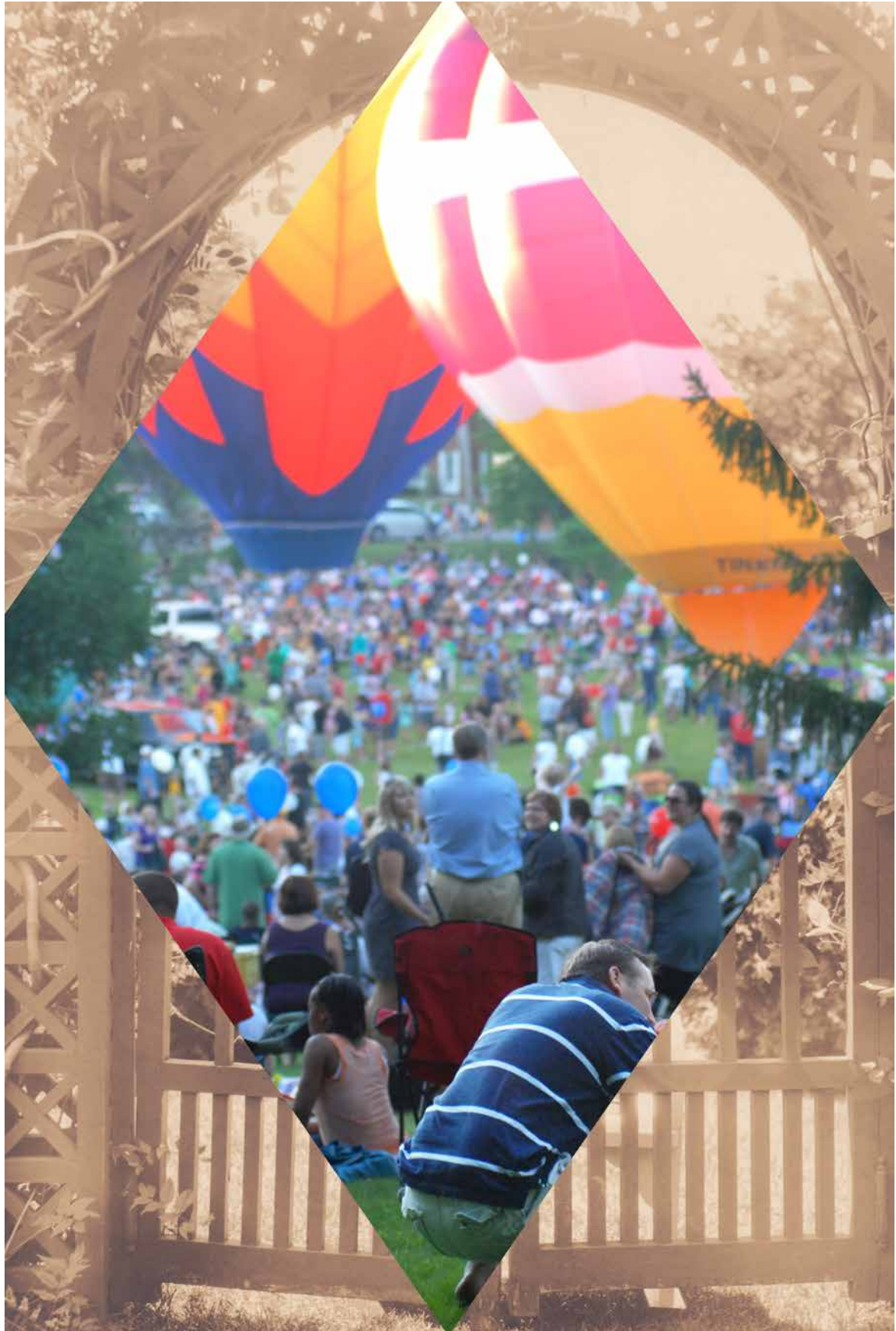














Be a part of Brucemore's future!

All donations welcomed.



## **Digital Media**

### **Introduction**

The Digital Media Team's goal was to visually represent Bruce more through storytelling. We worked to show the historical side of Bruce more but also to show how its past has influenced what it is become today: a community cultural center.

We worked closely with volunteers and members of the community to capture interviews and footage of the groups and members participating in the multiple elements of Bruce more. We produced three short videos to portray three specific elements of Bruce more, and we produced a longer minute promotional video tying the main portrayals of Bruce more together. While we went out and gathered original footage of the grounds and interviews, we also had the pleasure of using archived and historical photos to connect Bruce more's past and present.

## Promotional Video

The promotional video group worked to create a final product drawing on the themes in the short videos. Footage of volunteers, Executive Director David Janssen, individuals taking tours, the grounds, recent and historical pictures of Brucemore, and pictures from events were used to show many different aspects of Brucemore.

Brucemore can use this video at fundraising events and on its website to show what the organization is about and what becoming a member entails. By showing the different aspects of Brucemore, it gives an individual a reason to become a member of Brucemore and shows what their money is going towards. Brucemore is not just a historic site that only talks about their past, but they are a community entity that wants to engage with individuals.

This video brings in the historic photos of the family and of the house and then displays it next to the modern images to show the progression of Brucemore through the years.



## “What is Brucemore?”

The “What is Brucemore?” short video intends to provide viewers with an inside look into Brucemore as an organization and community attraction. This video includes an interview with David Janssen, Executive Director of Brucemore. Janssen provides knowledgeable insight and background information to viewers that may not have previously understood Brucemore’s mission and community purpose. Janssen elaborates on the idea of Brucemore representing a community cultural center with the wide variety of events and programming offered to visitors. The organization is an ongoing representation of the community’s past, present, and future.

This short video is designed to capture the interest of viewers who have little knowledge of Brucemore. It should be posted on the website and social media platforms. The images in this video are representative of Brucemore’s present, which is an ongoing celebration of the history of the estate with diverse selections of various cultural activities, events, and experiences. The video aims to instill in its viewers a desire to visit Brucemore and discover what it has to offer.



## “Volunteer at Brucemore!”

This video focuses on the volunteer opportunities Brucemore has to offer. The general concept of the video is to create a story with a friendly and youthful face to make a personal connection and evoke an emotional response. The video consists of an interview with Amanda Smith, who has volunteered at Brucemore for six years. Smith explains that volunteers can give time in many ways, such as at the *Brucemore Classic* and the *Balloon Glow*, and highlights other opportunities such as working in the gift shop. She explains that Brucemore is more than a historical mansion; it is a community center as well. The video includes footage of tour guides, gift shop workers, and images of events playing over her interview audio. The purpose of the video is to display the array of activities that Brucemore has and draw in more young volunteers. Smith was selected for the interview because she has been involved with Brucemore for a long time and demonstrates that this organization can appeal to a younger crowd. The images were picked to create a sense of community while displaying the activities and events in a positive light. This video will hopefully inspire others to see the opportunities Brucemore has as well as want to become a volunteer.



## “Spend a Day at Brucemore”

“Spend a Day at Brucemore” is a short video that highlights the many things for families to do at the estate. The grounds are open to the public to enjoy and can be used for picnics, exploring, school field trips, guided tours, and other activities. The video features children visiting the historical site on a class fieldtrip as their teacher explains why she brings her third graders every year. There will also be footage of a group of friends enjoying a guided tour of the mansion. It is important to highlight the various things to do at Brucemore in the video because some people think tours are the only thing offered. The goal of the video is to present Brucemore in an appealing way to get more families to come and spend the day there.

“Spend a Day at Brucemore” could be used for a variety of promotional purposes. It could be used on any form of social media, Brucemore’s website, and even a short clip to show on a tour. The images are friendly and bright and capture visitors of all ages having fun on the grounds. The b-roll and images we used for this video were carefully chosen because they show families and school groups having a great time at Brucemore. Pictures show different families and groups enjoying an educational day at Brucemore.



## Presentation

### Summary

Over the course of the past 6 weeks, the *Philanthropy Communication in a Digital World* class worked on the Brucemore project in collaboration with the Iowa Initiative for Sustainable Communities. Our presentation will cover research findings as well as strategies and tactics to implement the plans proposed by the groups. Our presentation highlights a sampling of our work on Brucemore's current membership position, its competition, and current policies and practices. Our hope is that Brucemore will find some feasible suggestions and takeaways to ultimately increase its membership and sustainability.

The area organization team set about researching direct competition in the immediate area, as well as researched other organization in the cultural corridor. Looking at these organizations gave this team a better idea of how Brucemore may be able to increase recruitment.

The membership team, our largest group, had a five-pronged approach to Brucemore's membership issues. One of Brucemore's concerns was effective engagement at different membership levels, from household to corporate. The survey team conducted a survey to reach out to current and lapsed members to get an idea of what the general feeling about membership, fundraising, and support from its client base was. The household, lapsed, and corporate membership teams also came up with tactics to better engage those members. A strategic membership drive plan was also created based on competitor analysis that includes the idea of incentivizing current members as well as expanding advertising strategies and strengthening partnerships.

Internal communications focused on the groups that make Brucemore work – the docents, volunteers and staff. This team created documents for training materials and scripts for these integral members of Brucemore to use as tools to help engage with asks related to donations and memberships. This team also created a space in the laundry room to provide a landing place for docents to make an effective “ask.”

Our digital media team created videos for Brucemore, utilizing archived and contemporary photos from Brucemore, as well as interviews from volunteers and staff to provide information about Brucemore as an organization and how individuals can get involved.

# WHAT IS BRUCEMORE?





BRUCEMORÉ



# COMPETITOR ANALYSIS

Four main competitors, locally:

- Theatre Cedar Rapids
- National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library
- Cedar Rapids Museum of Art
- Indian Creek Nature Center

# COMPETITOR ANALYSIS

- Amount of revenue from membership dues
- Ways to get involved without a membership
  - Classes
  - Clubs
  - Habitat Restoration
  - Summer Camps
  - Girl and Boy Scout Workshops

# SECTOR ANALYSIS

## Other Historic Mansions:

- The Living History Farm
  - Urbandale, Iowa
- Butterworth Center and Deere-Wilman House
  - Moline, Illinois

MEMBERSHIP

# MEMBERSHIP TEAM

## Mission:

- Conduct a survey for current and lapsed members
- Analyze current membership options
- Further engagement
- Social media platforms

# MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

- Conduct a survey of Bruce more members
- Analyze and present data

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\* What motivated you to become a Bruce more member? (Select all that apply):

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
To support the organization			<a href="#">103</a>	89.5%
To preserve the legacy of the estate and the families			<a href="#">76</a>	66.0%
Free tours			<a href="#">13</a>	11.3%
Discounts on event tickets			<a href="#">27</a>	23.4%
Discounts in the gift shop			<a href="#">10</a>	8.6%
Affiliation with the National Trust for Historic Preservation			<a href="#">38</a>	33.0%
Other <a href="#">(View all)</a>			<a href="#">18</a>	15.6%
<b>Totals</b>			<b>115</b>	<b>100%</b>



# MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

- Response rate of approximately 25%
- 34% of the sample consisted of members in their 60s
- 43% of respondents have been members for ten years or more
- Participants are very active with Brucemore and satisfied with current programming
- Cultural programs, such as *A Modern Salon* and *Cabaret in the Courtyard*, are the most popular

## QUOTE FROM SURVEY

“I think it is important to tell ‘The Bruce more Story’ in relationship to the historic development of the area and how it continues to impact our lives today, not only for our local friends but for the visitors who come from afar.”

# LAPSED MEMBERS

Mission:

- Why have members lapsed?
- How can we encourage renewal?

# LAPSED MEMBERS

- Notify member of renewal through multiple mediums
- Rewards for renewals

# HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

## Mission:

- To find ways to better engage household members
- Focus on reaching families

# HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

- Family-friendly events to piggyback off of current events
- Increase membership price, include more free events with membership
- Discount membership at events that target this group

# CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP

Mission:

- Attract and maintain corporate members and sponsors

# CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

- **Corporate Donor (\$250)** — Level includes rental privileges for business-related meetings in designated conference spaces of the estate.
- **Corporate Benefactor (\$500)** — Level includes privileges of Corporate Donors, plus corporate event rental privileges of the Mansion, Garden House, Visitor Center, grounds, and other designated spaces, as well as tour and event passes at the rate of 1:50 of giving. Passes may be shared with employees, clients, and associates.
- **Corporate Trustees Club (\$1,000)** — Level includes all of the privileges of previous levels, special recognition on the Trustees Club plaque, plus a behind-the-scenes tour and luncheon for up to 15 people with the Executive Director (subject to availability).
- **The George and Irene Douglas Circle (\$2,500)** — Level includes all of the privileges of the previous levels, plus one complimentary business-related meeting in designated conference spaces for up to four hours (\$400 value, subject to capacity and availability).
- **The Howard and Margaret Hall Heritage Club (\$5,000)** — Level includes all of the privileges of previous levels, plus one complimentary corporate event in the Mansion, Visitor Center, grounds, or other designated spaces for up to four hours (\$1,000 value, subject to capacity and availability).



# CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP

- Concentrate on special event and tour access rather than room rental
- Make pitches to local groups that promote community involvement
- Display and explain the benefits of non-profit status

# Become a Corporate Member

## *Be a Part of the Legacy*

Brucemore's history is inescapably linked to the corporate leadership of eastern Iowa. The families of Brucemore helped build the city through industry, philanthropy, and support of the arts. Their home reflects a business community that invests in a vibrant and resilient region. Brucemore corporate members demonstrate that same entrepreneurial and philanthropic spirit. An investment in Brucemore preserves our heritage and promotes pride in our community.

[Purchase a corporate membership online](#)

# INCORPORATING THE 501(C)(3)

- Bruce more's history directly linked to corporate leadership of Eastern Iowa
- Largely self-sufficient
  - Relies on partnerships
  - Mutually beneficial

# SOCIAL MEDIA

Mission:

- Develop a social media recruitment and engagement plan

# FACEBOOK, YOUTUBE, TWITTER, INSTAGRAM



## Brucemore

4.5 ★★★★★ (319 ratings)

2,767 likes · 77 talking about this · 4,156 were here

[Like](#) [Follow](#) [Message](#) [\\*](#)

- Museum · Historical Place
- 2160 Linden Drive SE, Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52403
- (319) 362-7375



 **2,767**



Events



Join My List

2

[About](#) - [Suggest an Edit](#)

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# WEBSITE

*Historic site and community  
cultural center*

# BRUCEMORE



**HOME** VISIT EVENTS SUPPORT EXPLORE SHOP HISTORY PRESERVATION ABOUT CONTACT



*Tour the Mansion*

*Become a Member*

*Volunteer*

*Hours*

*Experience Bruce more, an unparalleled blend of tradition and culture. At the heart of the historic 26-acre estate stands a 19th-century mansion, filled with the stories of three Cedar Rapids families. Concerts, theater, programs, and tours enliven the site and celebrate the heritage of a community.*



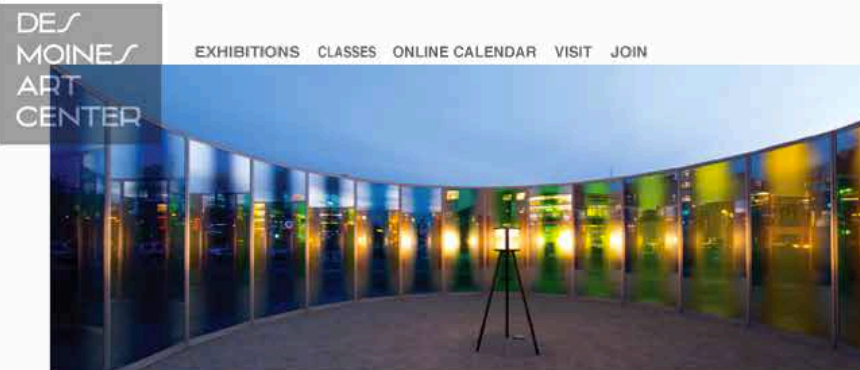
# E-NEWSLETTER

## Artist visit, Film Series, & Art Sampler

Des Moines Art Center [emoran@desmoinesartcenter.org]

To: [McKenzie, Kathryn E](#)

Tuesday, April 22, 2014 3:13 PM



entirely unexpected **FREE ADMISSION**

**APRIL 22, 2014**

### ARTIST VISIT

### OLAFUR ELIASSON

panoramic awareness pavilion

Thursday, May 1

4:45 pm / Opening celebration with brief remarks by the artist at 5 pm

[learn more](#)



# MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Mission:

- Develop a membership drive strategy through research



# MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

- Incentivize Members
- Spread the Word
- Expand Advertising Strategies
  - Social Media Advertising
  - Traditional Advertising
- Strengthen Partnerships

# INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

# MEMBERSHIP PITCH

## Mission:

- To develop a pitch and training materials for different Bruce more staff to encourage visitors to become members
  - Administrative Staff
  - Docents
  - Gift Shop Volunteers
  - General Volunteers

# MEMBERSHIP PITCH

“By becoming a member, in addition to complimentary mansion tours year-round, you receive: special discounts on Brucemore events (such as Balloon Glow or another upcoming event), specialty tours (to otherwise un-seen parts of the house), discounts in the store, and recognition in our annual report.”

## MEMBERSHIP PITCH

“I’m glad you enjoyed seeing the expansive gardens here at Brucemore, are you aware that we offer special guided hiking tours in the gardens? Lead directly by Brucemore gardeners, you learn about the local species and can ask them questions about your own garden.”

# DOCENT INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Mission:

- Develop an incentive program to encourage docents to recruit members

# DOCENT INCENTIVE PROGRAM

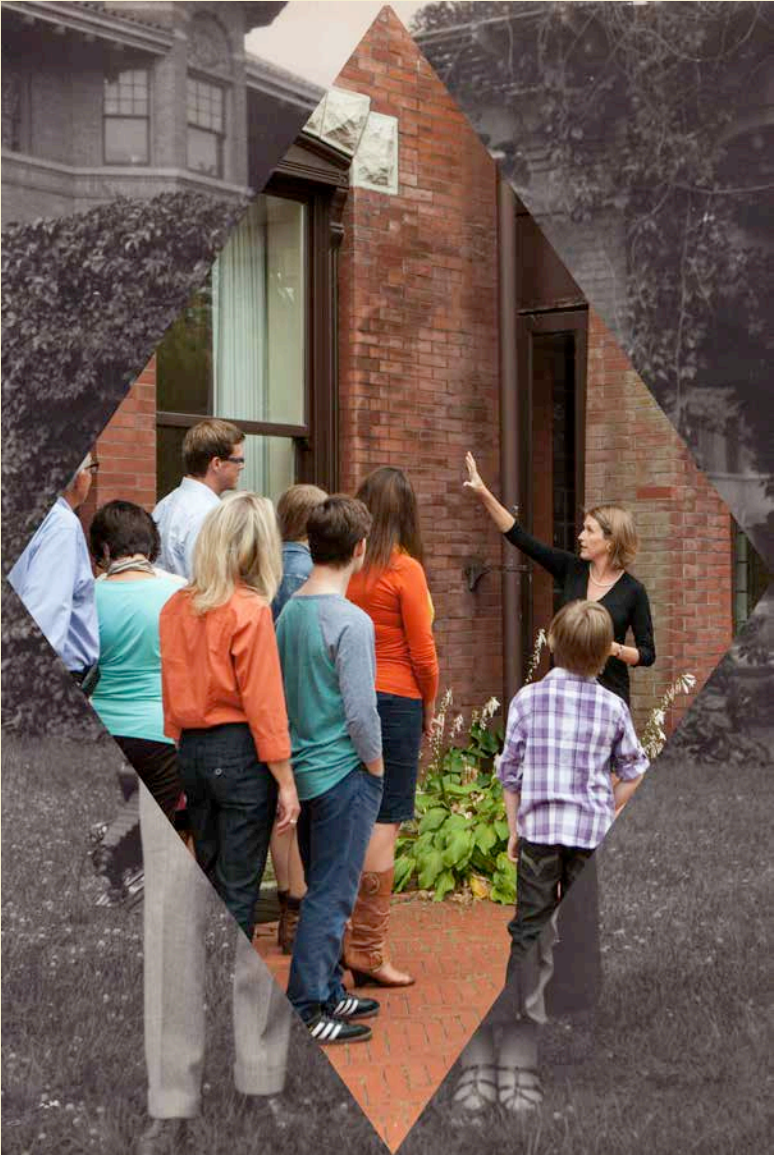
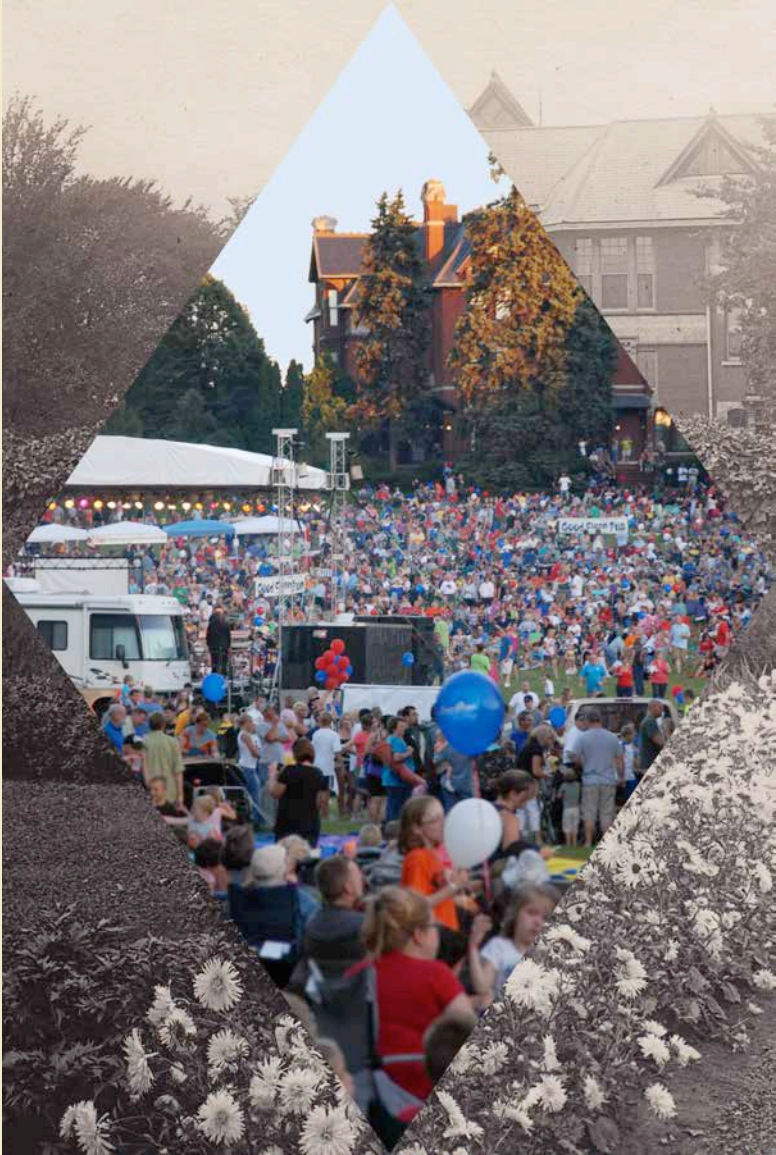
- Volunteers should be assessed yearly on number of successful asks and referrals
- Volunteers should be thanked *monthly* and *yearly*

# SPACE REVISION



*The Douglas era gardeners near the Lord and Burnham greenhouse*





Be a part of Brucemore's future!

All donations welcomed.





## Join Bruce more!

**Individual (\$30) - one pass for a guest**

**Couple (\$55) - two passes for guests**

**Household (\$100) - four passes for guests**

Members receive:

- Special rates for Bruce more events and specialty tours
- Special discounts in the Bruce more Store
- Invitations to members-only events
- Complimentary standard Mansion tours
- Complimentary passes for guests (labeled above)
- Lion's Roar newsletter
- Recognition in the annual report and summer events playbill

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Type:

Individual

Couple

Household

Please make checks payable to:

Bruce more, INC.

Mail to:

2160 Linden Dr. SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52403

Or join online at:

**[bruce more.org](http://bruce more.org)**

# DIGITAL MEDIA

# VOLUNTEER



# SPEND A DAY AT BRUCEMORE



# CONCLUSION

- Area: knowing about other cultural nonprofits and historical mansions, to offer innovative programming
- Membership: recognizing members and appealing to families
- Internal: educating the staff on how to make Brucemore the best it can be
- Digital: showing that Brucemore is *more* than just a historical mansion

# PROMOTIONAL VIDEO

