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March 22, 1995

RF 91015, # 45

Mr. Peter Helm
Program Associate
Arts and Humanities
The Rockefeller Foundation
420 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10018-2702

Dear Mr. Helm:

This letter forwards our narrative and financial report on community activities related to the opening of the **Africa** exhibit at the Field Museum, a project generously funded with a \$75,000 grant from The Rockefeller Foundation in 1991. The Field Museum is indebted to The Rockefeller Foundation for initiating the **Africa** Project -- years earlier. While we have a magnificent collection of African objects and art, it was The Rockefeller Foundation's vision that inspired this institution to mount a major permanent exhibit.

A \$150,000 Planning Grant from The Rockefeller Foundation launched the planning for the exhibit in 1989. Today, **Africa** exceeds our expectations as an exhibit complex, which was the subject of a PBS documentary, and as an on-going series of programs.

The Field Museum is deeply grateful to The Rockefeller Foundation for your support. Should you ever visit the city, I would like to extend an invitation to personally walk you through the exhibit.

Cordially,



Willard E. White
Vice President for
Institutional Advancement

Enclosures

P.S. The other materials that we are enclosing represent just some of the many activities that took place around the opening of this stellar exhibit.

The Field Museum Exploring The Earth And Its People

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REPORT TO
THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION
From The Field Museum

Africa Exhibit

More than any permanent exhibit mounted in the last six years, **Africa** opened to rare fanfare with numerous activities that included raffia-cutting ceremonies and drummers, outreach to schools and community groups, teacher involvement, workshops, seminars, and exposure on national television through a PBS documentary. One year after it opened, an African festival organizer worked with the Museum to stage a major festival that surrounded this nearly one million square foot building, and brought activities and displays inside which further helped to showcase our exhibit. Because of a generous planning grant from The Rockefeller Foundation, what started off as another major exhibit turned into a "happening" that involved many community leaders, teachers, volunteers, families, young adults and a national television network. Even the Illinois Humanities Council during its Humanities Festival presented excerpts from the *Sundiata Epic*, a program of singing and poetry, as part of the opening weekend. The Museum created programs and events around this exhibit that extended from 1989 through August 1994 - a full 10 months after the exhibit's official opening.

Our second grant from The Rockefeller Foundation to support community activities related to the exhibit enabled this institution to make great strides with a variety of local communities. Because so many individuals were familiar with this project through activities that grew out of the initial planning grant from The Rockefeller Foundation, we discovered that it was somewhat easy to attract 100 dedicated volunteers, of which the majority were black. Typically, the Museum's volunteer cadre is primarily white.

Following are our accomplishments that relate to The Rockefeller

Foundation's generous grant:

1. We staged walkthroughs of **Africa** for many different constituencies including a number of Museum donor groups with influential ties to others in the city. Having Museum friends pass along word of the exhibit to their peers and colleagues provided a personal reference for new and untapped audiences. One of these groups was the Outreach Council, a young professional group with broad ties to other Chicago institutions. Because of the diversity of this group, members were encouraged to invite their friends and colleagues.

We also brought together a gathering of significant decision-makers and leaders within Chicago's different ethnic communities, including Latino, Hispanic, Asian, Native American and African American, to provide them with exposure to the exhibit. Following an evening presentation by the exhibit developers, guests were invited to preview the exhibit before it officially opened.

2. The **Africable/Chicago Cable** television program ran for its planned 13-weeks, and the producers of the show were interested in renewing this relationship with the Museum. However, because of staffing changes on the exhibit team, we were unable to tape more programs. With a call-in format, this program encouraged viewers to ask questions about the planning and content of the exhibit.

3. The **Africa Project School Program** continued meeting up to and after the opening of **Africa**. Students learned more about careers in the Museum, helped with testing and evaluation questions for the exhibit and became more familiar with the various components of the exhibit. Additionally, they prepared a series of Experience Boxes titled, *What's Wrong with this Map?*; *Countries of Africa*; *Textiles of Africa*; and *Where's the Jungle?* This group also participated in the development of a video titled "*A Kid's Eye View of Africa*."

4. The Museum's outreach into various communities was successful

because it provided an unusual opportunity to work with other institutions and community groups to promote the opening of **Africa**.

a. Initially we had hoped to sponsor a theater festival with ETA Theatre. However, project staff learned that staging an event of this magnitude would take longer than they had planned. Instead we sponsored a lecture series which included **African American Jazz Poetry**, **The Black Presence in Russia**, **The Black Garifuna of Central America**, and **The Samanensas of the Dominican Republic**.

b. The Carter G. Woodson Regional Library served as an excellent collaborative partner. As a well-known lending institution in the city's black community, the library helped publicize the exhibit by distributing passes to students, and by displaying **Africa** posters and maps.

c. The Field Museum's staff developed a solid relationship with Gwen Robinson, at that time the new director of the DuSable Museum of African American History. Our **Africa** project team met there frequently and assisted their efforts to catalogue their collections, and to brainstorm about exhibit ideas. Since Ms. Robinson is no longer at the Museum, we will continue to work in the future to develop a relationship with the Museum's new head.

d. The Ruiz Belvis Center, the Ethiopian Community Association and the Chicago Commission on Human Relations were all instrumental in making the opening of **Africa** such an incredible success. The Chicago Commission on Human Relations co-sponsored with the Museum a two day festival, *Celebration of the African Presence in Chicago*. This festival included six performing groups, crafts and a marketplace with representatives from Nigeria, Ghana, Haiti, Belize, the Bahamas, Zimbabwe and Ethiopia. All three organizations also provided counsel and their expertise. Additionally, they gave the Museum names of individuals to invite to exhibit previews and opening ceremonies. The Field Museum is pleased that we were able to develop solid relationships with other institutions and

organizations unknown to us before the opening of **Africa**. If we open another exhibit that is themed around a culture, these relationships will be helpful.

5. WTTW, the local Chicago PBS television affiliate completed filming and aired its program documenting the development of the exhibit in the fall of 1993. **Africa: A View from The Field** traced the exhibit from the very early planning stages right up to its completion.

With projects as diverse as *A World of Difference: A Campaign to Combat Prejudice*, a one-day workshop for k-12 teachers, to "African Clothing: Style and Status/African Adornment: Beads and Beyond" to "The Politics of Ancient Egypt" to *African American Strip Quilting* to a lecture series exploring the natural history of Africa, the Field Museum worked diligently to promote this exhibit with external as well as internal audiences. Sleepovers for teachers in the Museum as well as field trips and small photography exhibits all combined to bring the story of this majestic continent to wider audiences.

The Rockefeller Foundation gave life to our dream of a major exhibit on **Africa**. We are deeply grateful for your staunch support.

ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION
GRANT #RF-91015

BEGINNING OF THE GRANT UNTIL AUGUST, 1993

63,946.59

AUGUST 1993 THROUGH DECEMBER 1993

7,644.27

TOTAL EXPENSES: 71,590.86
RECEIVED PAYMENTS OF: 51,703.00
BALANCE REMAINING: 19,887.86

	1992	1993
SALARY	34,412.42	7,180.38
OVERTIME	1,261.02	55.84
COMPENSATION TO INDIVIDUALS	4,552.50	160.00
FRINGE BENEFITS	7,527.50	1,628.16
STIPENDS	600.00	0.00
ENTERTAINMENT	2,109.42	1,461.97
TRAVEL	3,384.20	266.56
PUBLICATIONS & SUBSCRIPTIONS	396.29	1,142.76
ADVERTISING	0.00	652.00
SPECIMENS	0.00	19.16
SERVICES	1,280.02	0.00
DEPARTMENT EXPENSES	145.30	2,393.20
OFFICE EXPENSES	551.16	22.36
TELEPHONE	68.71	0.00
POSTAGE	205.88	109.30
FREIGHT	4.75	0.00
TOTALS:	56,499.17	15,091.69

	1992	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	TOTAL
SALARY				1,615.91	1,468.64	6,388.80	6,551.22	7,287.70	5,240.44	5,859.71				34,412.42
OVERTIME			246.57		365.35	354.45	231.16	63.49			492.50	50.00		1,261.02
COMPENSATION TO INDIVIDUALS			180.00	1,720.00	60.00		750.00	1,300.00						4,552.50
FRINGE BENEFITS			51.78	339.34	362.46	1,416.09	1,298.36	1,543.76	1,285.17	1,230.54				7,527.50
STIPENDS					200.00		400.00							600.00
ENTERTAINMENT			90.22	121.38	607.92	47.50	796.14	22.32		208.75		170.70	44.49	2,109.42
TRAVEL			221.00	387.28		121.00	196.60	121.00	805.32	742.00	790.00			3,384.20
PUBLICATIONS & SUBSCRIPTIONS					375.00						21.29			396.29
ADVERTISING														0.00
SPECIMENS														0.00
SERVICES			17.10	9.50	760.82		219.00		136.80				136.80	1,280.02
DEPARTMENT EXPENSES				3.60					59.88		49.90		31.92	1,453.30
OFFICE EXPENSES					546.17				154.00		(149.01)			551.16
TELEPHONE						52.50					16.21			68.71
POSTAGE				67.03	138.85									205.88
FREIGHT									4.75					4.75
TOTALS:		0.00	806.67	4,254.04	4,885.21	8,380.34	10,442.48	10,338.27	7,686.36	8,041.00	1,220.89	220.70	213.21	56,499.17

	1993	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	TOTAL
SALARY			199.86	55.84		444.65	551.28		192.95		1,309.16	4,482.48		7,180.38
OVERTIME														55.84
COMPENSATION TO INDIVIDUALS										160.00				160.00
FRINGE BENEFITS			44.97	12.56		100.05	124.04		43.41		294.57	1,008.56		1,628.16
STIPENDS														0.00
ENTERTAINMENT			872.75	231.31		323.75							34.16	1,461.97
TRAVEL														266.56
PUBLICATIONS & SUBSCRIPTIONS			1,002.50	63.50		38.30					38.46			1,142.76
ADVERTISING			400.00	252.00										652.00
SPECIMENS					19.16									19.16
SERVICES														0.00
DEPARTMENT EXPENSES		900.00	1,350.00				197.68	(135.00)			80.52			2,393.20
OFFICE EXPENSES							22.36							22.36
TELEPHONE														0.00
POSTAGE								109.30						109.30
FREIGHT								(25.70)						0.00
TOTALS:		900.00	3,870.08	615.21	266.56	925.91	895.36		236.36	160.00	1,722.71	5,491.04	34.16	15,091.69