

# Mission Possible:

One Museum's Journey to a Sustainable Membership Program

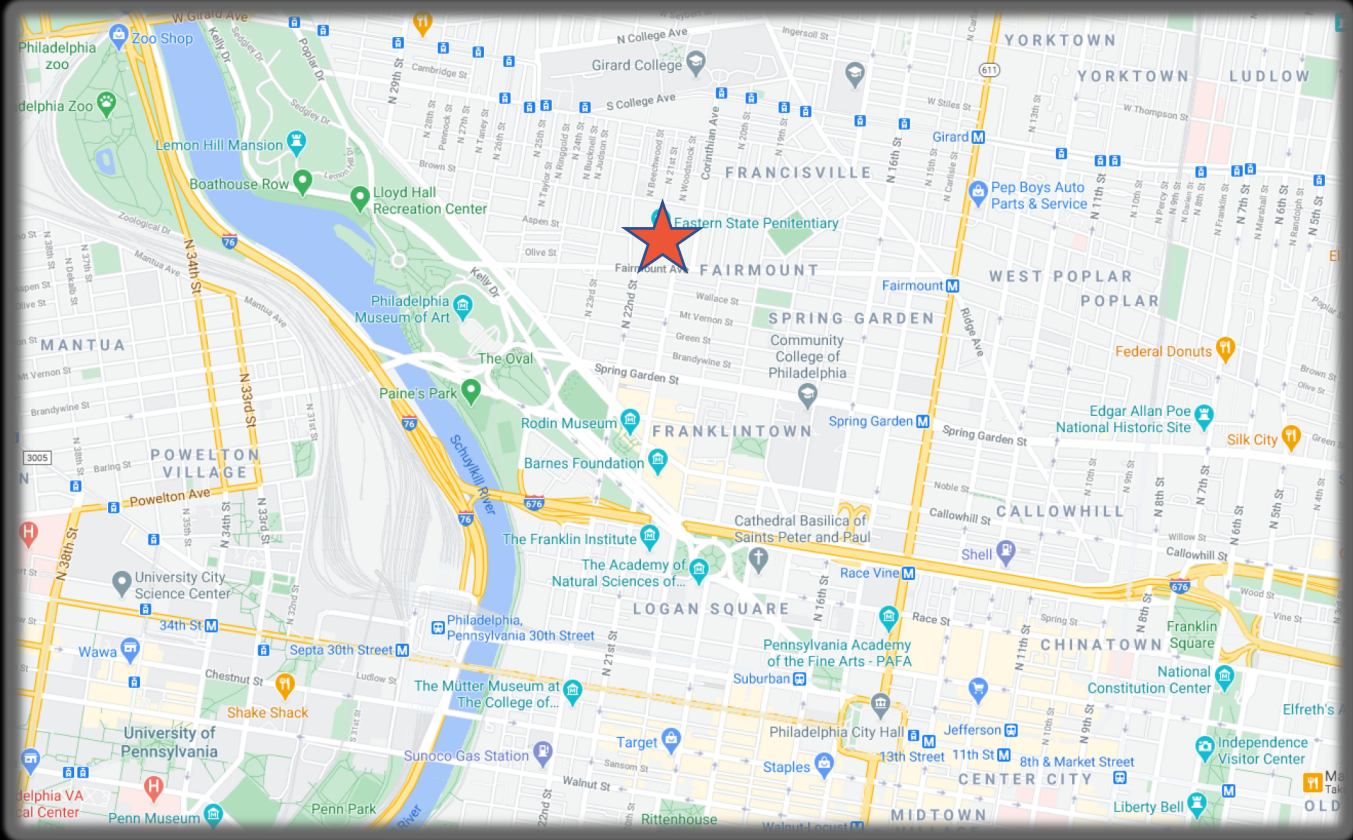
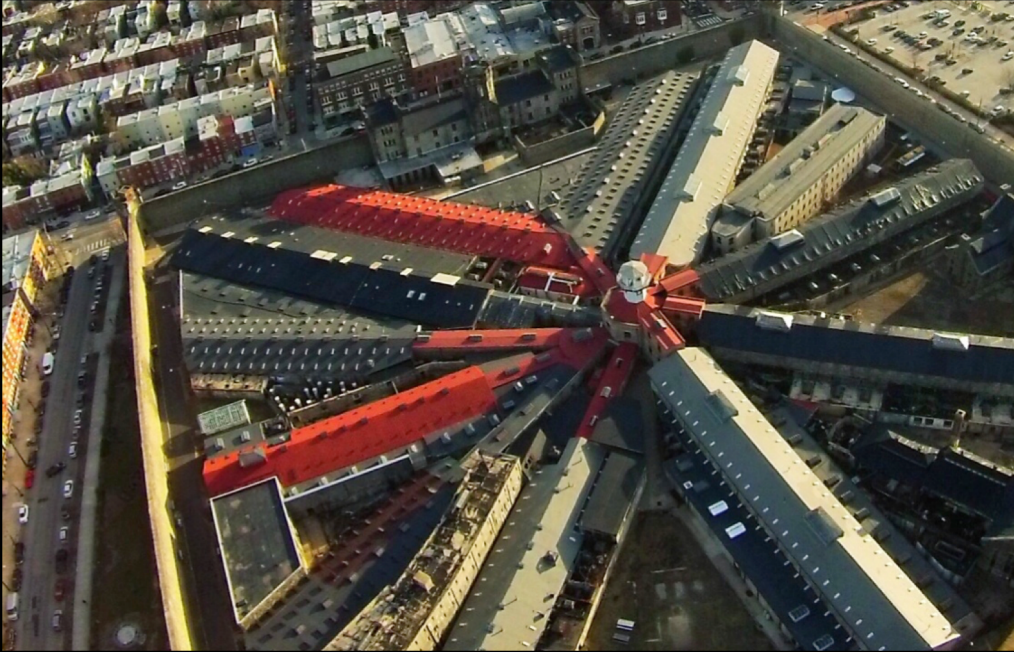
October 22, 2020

2020 AMMC Presentation | Mission Possible: One Museum's  
Journey to a Sustainable Membership Program

**EASTERN STATE  
PENITENTIARY**  
 **MEMBERSHIP**  
Revisit the Past, Rethink the Future.



# Eastern State Penitentiary is located in the heart Philadelphia, PA.



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- Imagined by (mostly Quaker) reformers in the Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons
- World's first penitentiary
- Eastern State was designed by John Haviland and opened in 1829



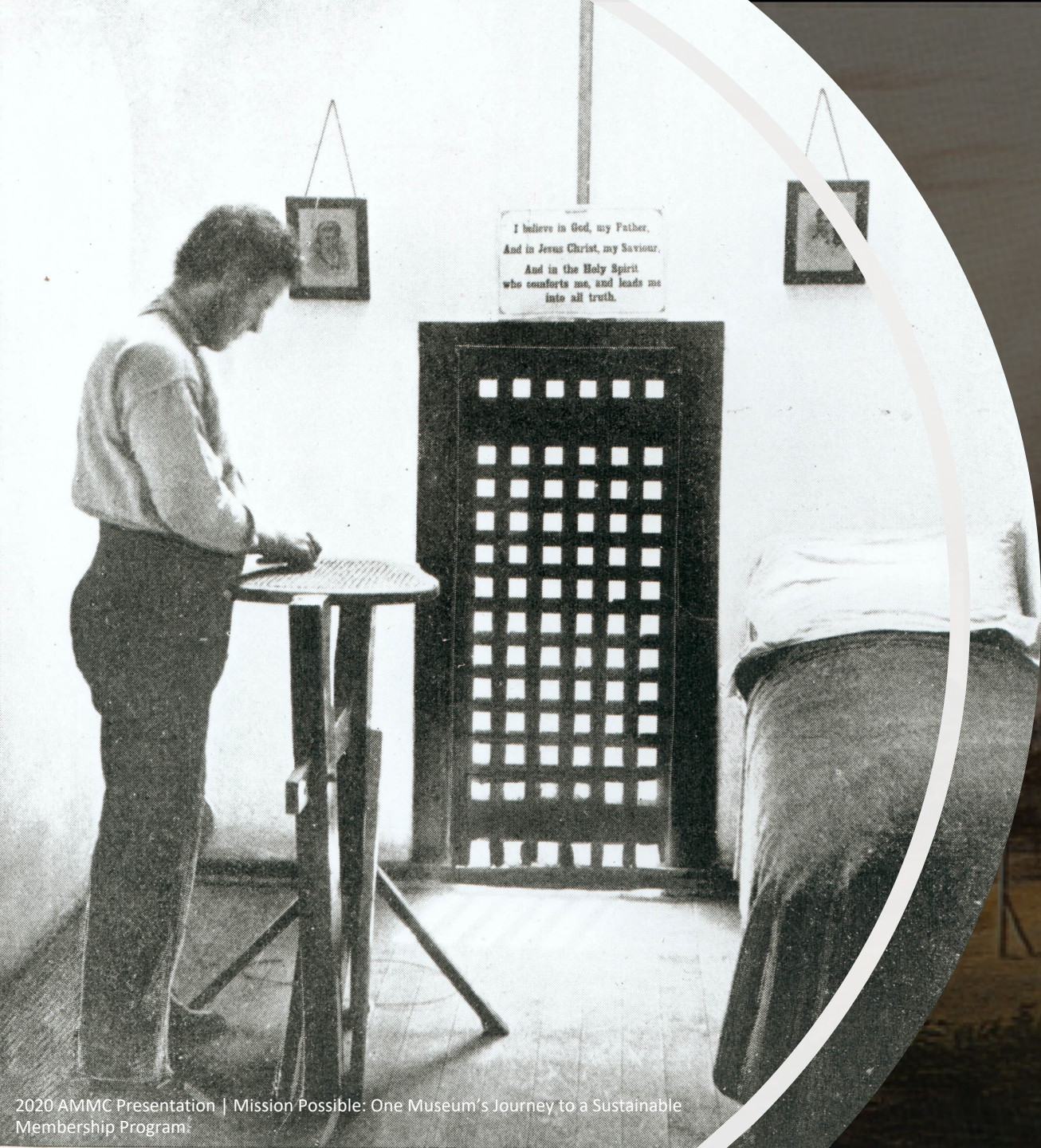




In 1965, Eastern State Penitentiary was named a National Historic Landmark for its influence on the design and operation of 300 prisons on six continents







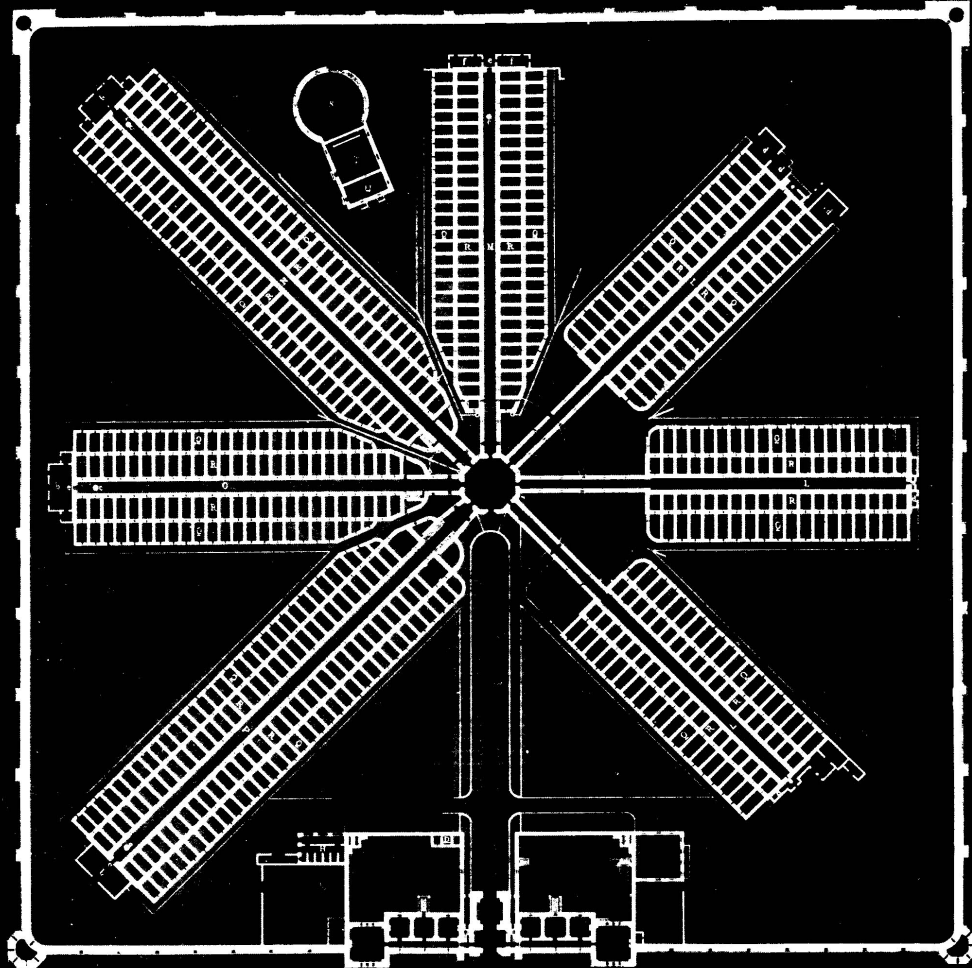
I believe in God, my Father,  
And in Jesus Christ, my Saviour,  
And in the Holy Spirit  
who comforts me, and leads me  
into all truth.

Prisoners lived and worked in isolation in their cells 23 hours/day with two half hour periods of exercise in individual open-air yards.

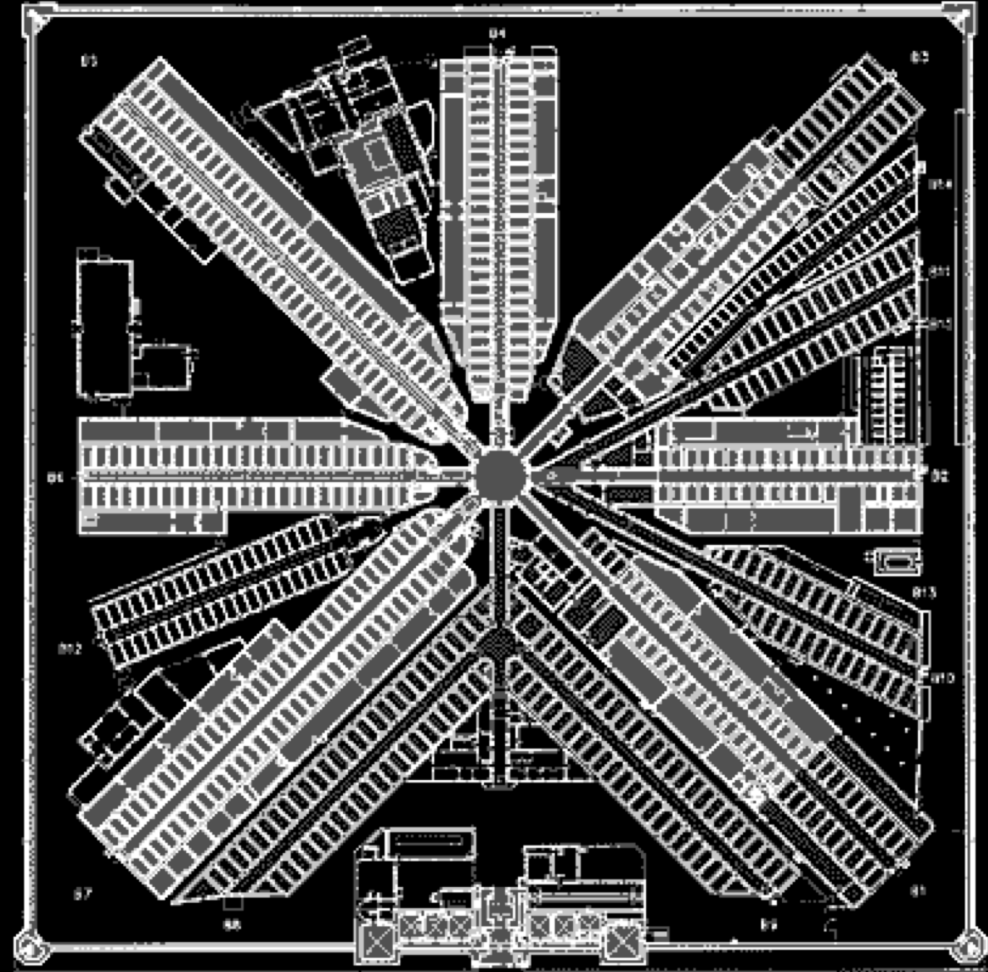




# Eastern State's Radial Plan Grows



1836: Designed for 450 prisoners



1960: Housing up to 1800 prisoners



1970: Eastern State closes and prisoners are transferred to SCI Graterford

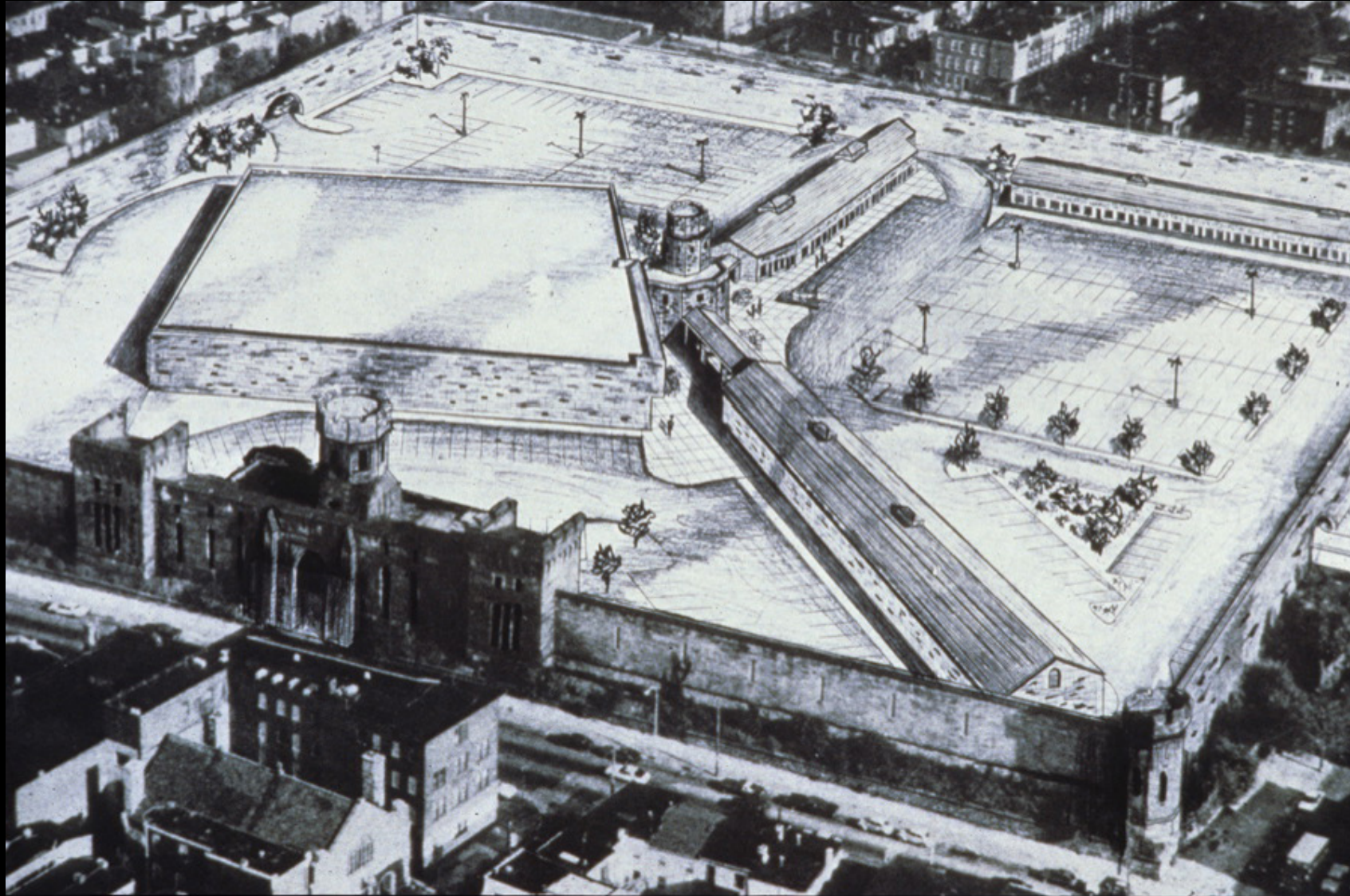


1980: The City of Philadelphia takes ownership of the site

1985: Eastern State became an abandoned urban jungle







1974-1989: Plans for redevelopment emerge...

- Retail stores
- A Parking lot
- Condos
- A night club

... and are rejected in favor of preservation.





1991: Stabilization and preservation begin, first Halloween fundraiser is held



1994: Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site opens for daily tours





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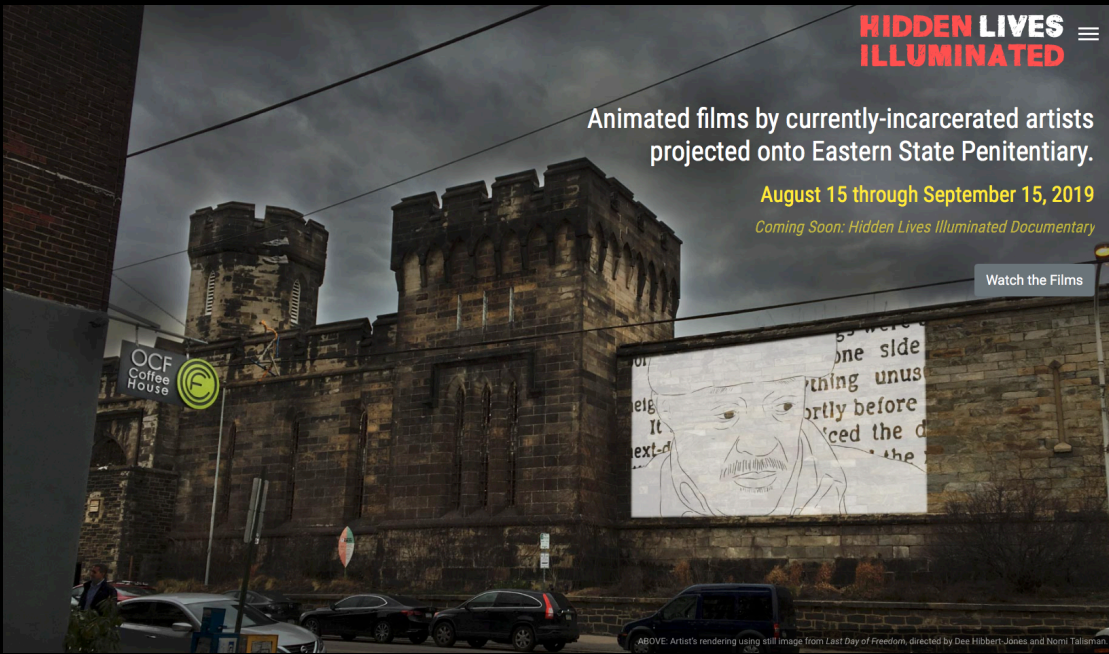
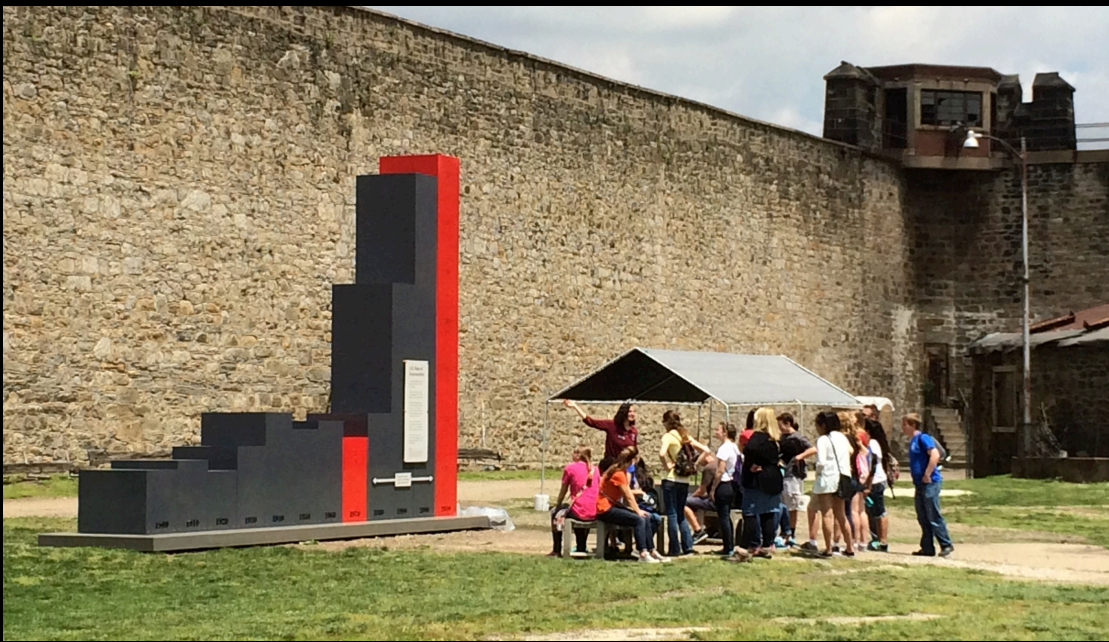




# From Preservation and Stabilization to Interpretation







**HIDDEN LIVES ILLUMINATED**

Animated films by currently-incarcerated artists projected onto Eastern State Penitentiary.

August 15 through September 15, 2019  
Coming Soon: Hidden Lives Illuminated Documentary

Watch the Films

ABOVE: Artist's rendering using still image from Last Day of Freedom, directed by Dee Hibbert-Jones and Nomi Tallman.

## Programmatic Impact through Exhibitions:

- *The Big Graph* (2014)
- *Prisons Today: Questions in the Age of Mass Incarceration* (2016)
- *Hidden Lives Illuminated* (2019)



**Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site  
interprets the legacy of American  
criminal justice reform, from the nation's  
founding through to the present day,  
within the long-abandoned cellblocks of  
the nation's most historic prison.**


*- Adopted by the Board of Directors, June 2017*




The fundraiser lurking behind this success...  
Terror Behind the Walls





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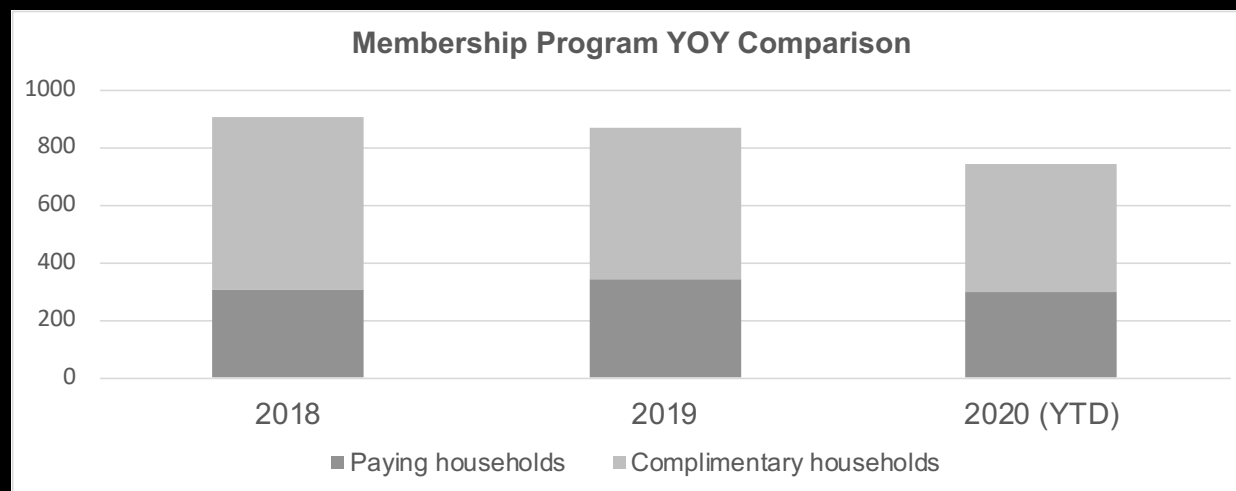
A group of people, including a woman in a green shirt and a man with glasses, are looking at artifacts displayed in a glass case. The artifacts include a blue container, a brown object, and some small items. The background is a textured wall.

# Mission Possible: One Museum's Journey to a Sustainable Membership Program



# Eastern State's Membership Program By The Numbers

- \* 742 total member households
- \* 300 paying members
- \* 442 complimentary members



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# The History of Eastern State's Membership Program

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- **2018**

- Researched other membership programs nationwide with social cause missions
- Surveyed members and non-members
- Launched the *Member Saturday* program

- **2019**

- Designed membership's new look and feel
- Updated systems
- Launched the new program with an upgrade offer

- **2020**

- Created a paying pipeline for our complimentary Neighborhood member program
- Pivoted to virtual programs in the face of Covid-19
- Reopened in August, 2020

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We surveyed our members, non-members and lapsed members.

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*The membership program supports and engages a **community** of individuals who are eager to become more deeply involved in our **mission and activities**. With a visitor-centric approach and an organizational commitment to accessibility and inclusion, our member program develops meaningful relationships, offers opportunities to participate in innovate programming, and creates a pathway to **philanthropic** growth.*

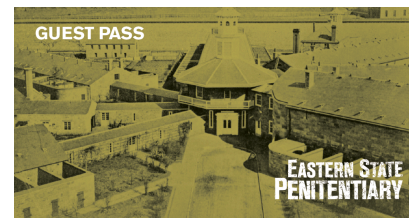
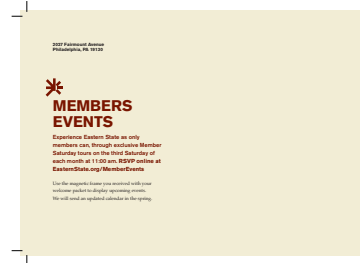
# Updated Core Benefits

- \* Free, unlimited daytime admission to the historic site
- \* Invitations to members-only experiences
- \* 20% Discount in the museum store
- \* Complimentary one-time guest pass(es)
- \* Express admissions line
- \* Free photography pass
- \* Discounts on ticketed events
- \* Subscription to quarterly Member News

# New Welcome Packet

Revisit the Past.  
Rethink the Future.

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**Eastern State Penitentiary Member Guest Pass**

Please complete the following information to redeem.

Member's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Guest Name \_\_\_\_\_

Guest Address \_\_\_\_\_

Guest Address Continued \_\_\_\_\_

Guest Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

2027 Fairmount Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19120  
(215) 236-3300  
[www.EasternState.org](http://www.EasternState.org)

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**Revisit the Past. Rethink the Future.**

The conversation about criminal justice reform is more important than ever, and it starts with you. Immerse yourself in history. Learn more about contemporary issues. Dive deeper with an Eastern State membership which includes free daytime admission, invitations to members-only experiences, and much more!

**Ways To Join**

**Online** Apply today's admission toward a membership. See a staff member for details.

**Email** [membership@easternstate.org](mailto:membership@easternstate.org)

**Call** (215) 296-5111 x224

**Online** [www.EasternState.org/Membership](http://www.EasternState.org/Membership)

**Mail** Membership Department  
Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site  
2027 Fairmount Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19130

**EASTERN STATE PENITENTIARY**

Courtesy: Membership History Team, 1997.  
Photo: Library of Congress, Martin Anacker Building Survey.

# Consistency Across Collateral

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# New Renewal Portal and Updated Website

▼ [Individual - \\$55](#)

For one person.

Core benefits plus a one-time guest pass for friends and family.

[JOIN](#) [GIFT](#) [RENEW](#)



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**Great news! You are the lucky recipient of a gift membership.**  
Your membership ensures that we can continue to interpret the legacy of American criminal justice reform through engaging programming while also preserving our National Historic Site for generations to come. Take advantage of your low daytime admission benefit starting now. Use your temporary membership card in attendance to access the historic site, and don't forget to show it in the museum store for 20% off of your purchase. Look for your permanent card in the mail soon.

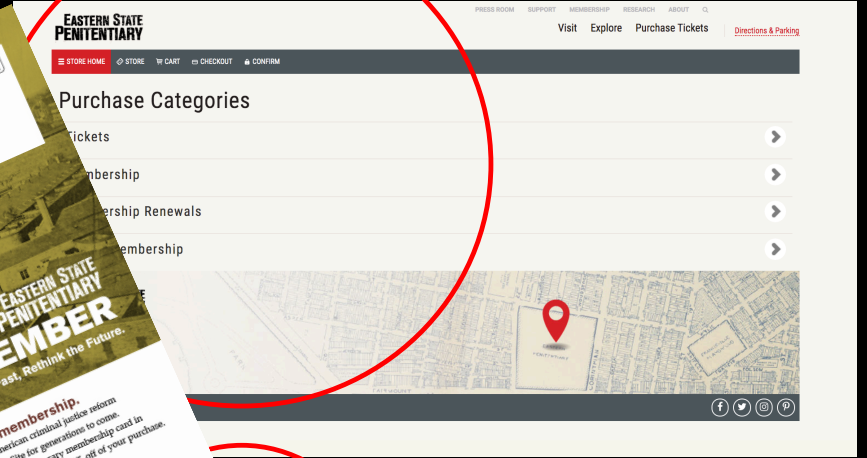
Now take a moment to explore all that membership has to offer:

- Plan your visit at [www.EasternState.org](http://www.EasternState.org).
- Check out our exhibits, like the award-winning Prisons Today: Questions in the Age of Mass Incarceration.
- Register for an upcoming members-only event at [www.EasternState.org/Membersaturday](http://www.EasternState.org/Membersaturday).

**Plan to visit a museum with the North American Reciprocal program benefit?**  
Show the North American Reciprocal Museum (NARM) program logo on your temporary or permanent member card when you visit a participating museum and receive up to two complimentary admissions. Visit [narmassociation.org](http://narmassociation.org) for more details.

**Questions?**  
Email: [membership@easternstate.org](mailto:membership@easternstate.org)  
Call: 215-236-3111 x224

Eastern State Penitentiary is a non-profit organization. A portion of your membership is tax deductible. Look for an acknowledgment letter in the mail soon with detailed information about your membership purchase.



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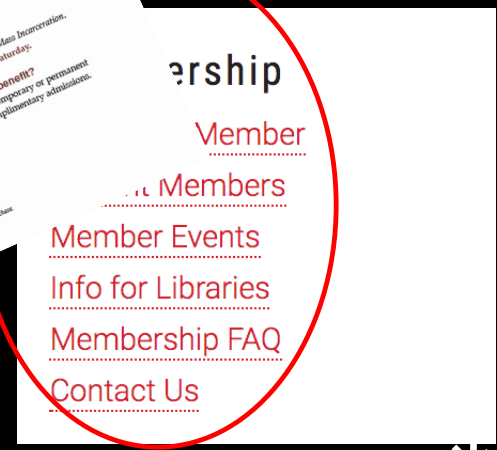
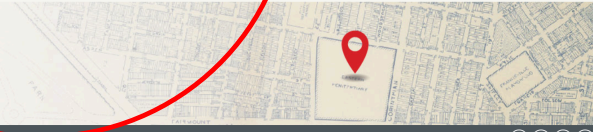
STORE HOME | STORE | CART | CHECKOUT | CONFIRM

PRESS ROOM | SUPPORT | MEMBERSHIP | RESEARCH | ABOUT | CL

Visit | Explore | Purchase Tickets | Directions & Parking

Purchase Categories

- Tickets
- Membership
- Membership Renewals
- Membership



- Membership
- Member
- Members
- Member Events
- Info for Libraries
- Membership FAQ
- Contact Us

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# Program Launch

- ✱ Upgraded paying members for free
- ✱ Special offer to add 12 months at 10% off
- ✱ Created an avenue to move complimentary members to paying members

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# Member News

## Member Spotlight: Mark Dorfman and Chrissa Pedersen

As a Philly native, Mark was always aware of Eastern State, but it wasn't until Mark and his wife Chrissa started bringing friends and family to the historic site several times a year that they realized they wanted to support it by becoming members.



Two years after joining the member program, Mark and Chrissa continue to enjoy coming back to Eastern State often. We sat down with them to learn more about their love for the site and what inspires them to give.

**Why did you decide to become members?** "We wanted to support an important piece of our city's history. When we travel, we always seek out archeological sites and historically significant places and with ESP we have one right in our own backyard."

**What do you like most about the member program here?** "We love **Member Saturday**. Our favorite one so far was Uncovering Stories through Genealogy with Annie Anderson."

**What's your favorite place on site?** "Difficult question because we love all of it, but I'd say it may be the art installation by **Jesse Krimes, Apokaluptein16389067-II**. It's comprised of 39-panels of surreal landscapes on bed sheets which the artist mailed piece by piece while he was incarcerated. The juxtaposition of these dreamlike images on the walls of what once was a solitary confinement cell is truly transformative. It's a perspective shifts between art and institution, escapism and reality."

**The Right of Return X Represent Justice Experience**  
Join us for a special, pop-up art experience - this week only! In honor of the release of the film Just Mercy, Eastern State will host The Right of Return X Represent Justice Experience in Cellblock 8 from January 15 through January 21.  
The experience features art by a national cohort of predominantly formerly incarcerated artists, centering on the voices of those most impacted by incarceration. In addition to featuring current Eastern State artist installations like **Apokaluptein16389067-II** and **#BackGirlhood**, the experience brings new art to the penitentiary for one week only. For more details, visit [www.EasternState.org/events](http://www.EasternState.org/events).

**Recycle old electronics and support your community.**  
Have any old remotes, phones, or laptops lying around your house? Why not recycle them this Monday and support your community at the same time? As part of Dr. Martin Luther King Weekend, we're offering free electronics recycling from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm on Monday, January 20. The recycling station will be located outside on Fairmount Avenue, so all our neighbors can participate.  
Bring your unwanted tablets, printers, keyboards and more to Eastern State. Our partner, PAR-Recycle Works, will take care of the rest. PAR-Recycle Works provides transitional employment for people returning to the community from prison. By recycling electronics, PAR-Recycle Works employees have the chance to address an environmental problem while building job skills, reconnecting with family, and giving back to their communities. It's a win-win!

**RECYCLE WORKS**  
Recycling electronics. Restoring lives.  
267-335-5455

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Member News | January 2020

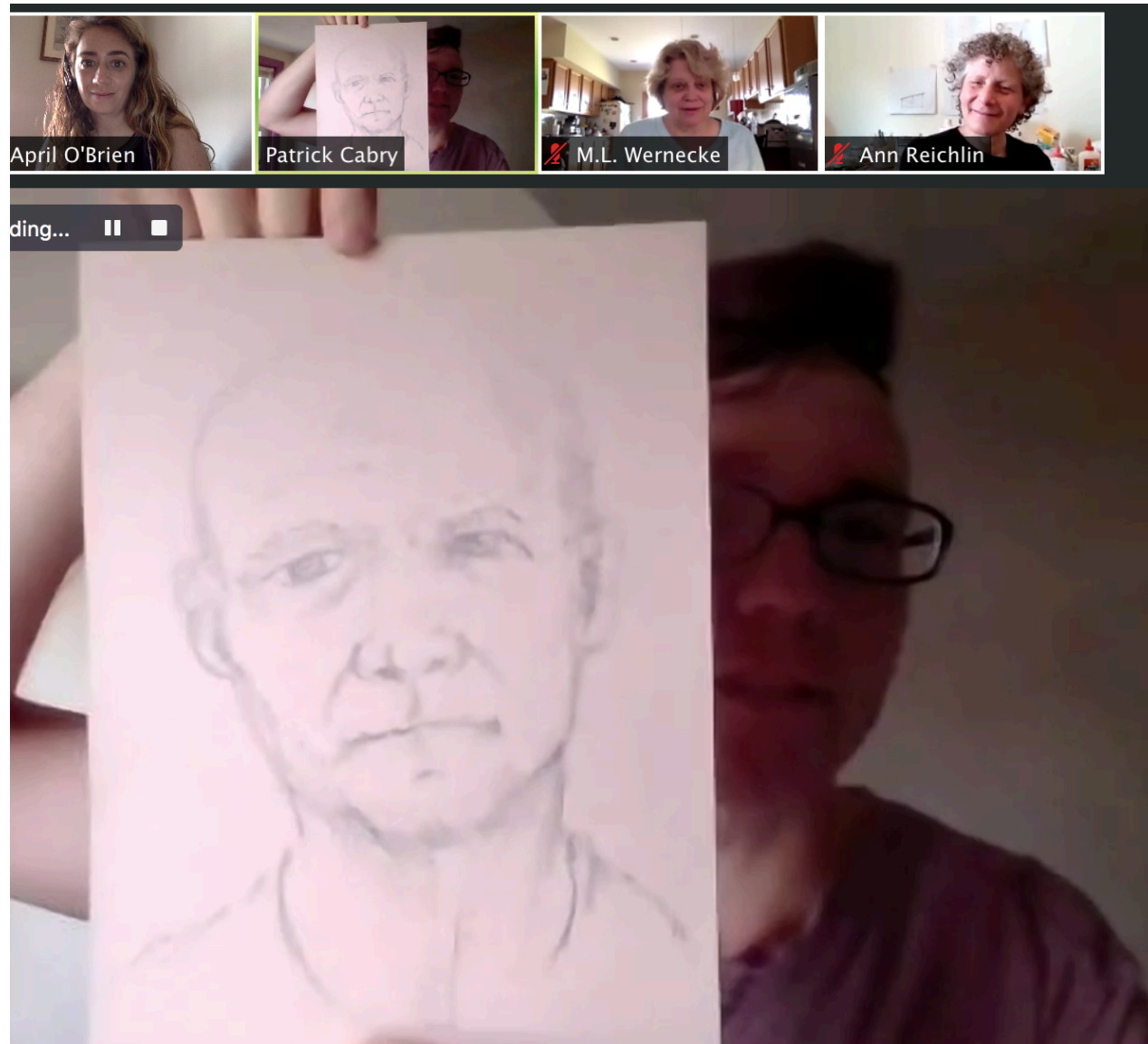
Quarterly communications highlighting perks and featuring members' stories

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*Member  
Saturday*







# What would you do with Capone's Cell?

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# Transformation Yoga Project

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Perimeter Wall Field Bag  
Member Saturday | September 2020  
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A Field Guide to  
Eastern State's Perimeter Wall  
Member Saturday | September 2020  
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Field Bags



# The Story of Ron Johnson

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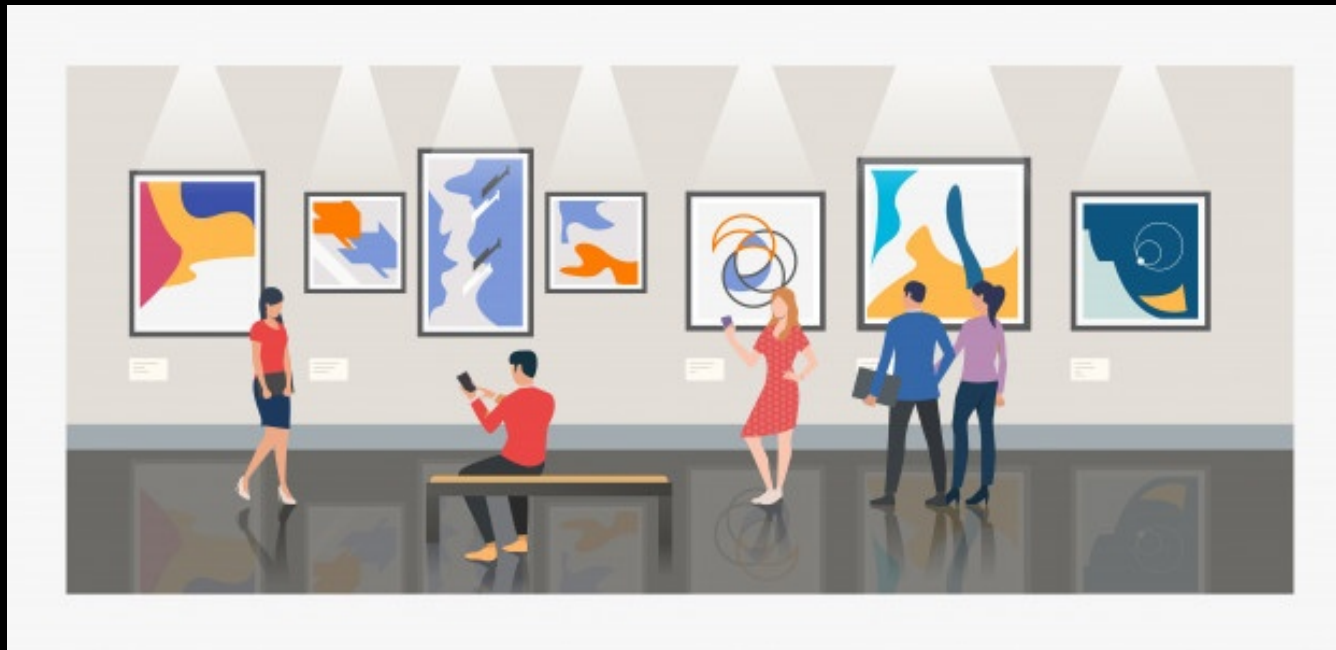
# Eastern State's Membership Program Featured As Case Study

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# The Field Continues to Evolve



...what about membership?



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Benefits

Value

Connect with the  
museum!

??

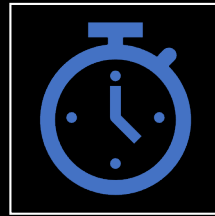
Sense of  
Belonging



# Data Collection



Semi-structured  
interviews



Ranging from 30 to  
45 minutes



Non-members and  
Members

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# Key Findings

- ✦ Members and non-members reacted positively to Eastern State's new mission
- ✦ Access, value and association continues to play an important role in membership retention and acquisition
- ✦ Relationship to incarceration

# Member Preview



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# Reopening Eastern State



Thank you for supporting us by visiting.

Revisit the past, Rethink the future: Become a Member today!

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[www.EasternState.org/Membership](http://www.EasternState.org/Membership)

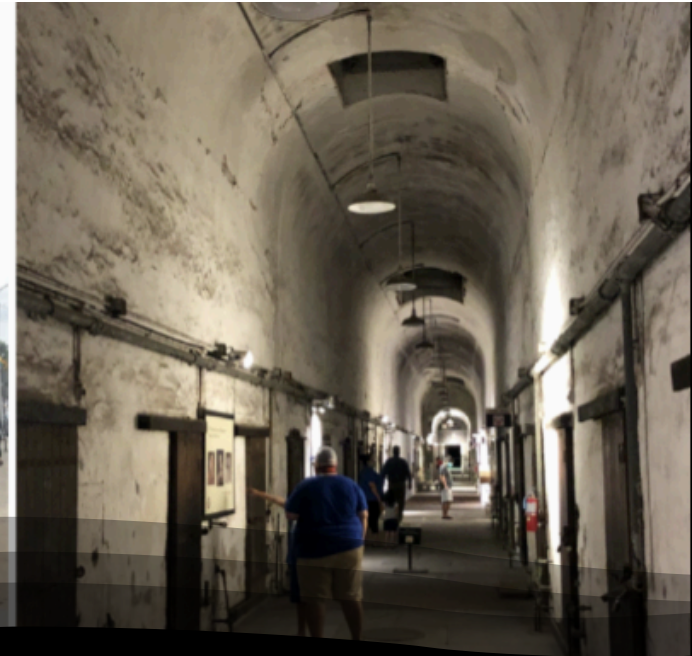
The advertisement features a black and white photograph of a man sitting at a desk in a long, vaulted prison hallway. The Eastern State Penitentiary logo, a stylized starburst, is positioned to the left of the text.

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The logo consists of the Eastern State Penitentiary name in a bold, sans-serif font, followed by the word "MEMBERSHIP" in a larger, bold font. Below it is the tagline "Revisit the Past, Rethink the Future." and the stylized starburst logo.



# *Night Tours* Member Preview

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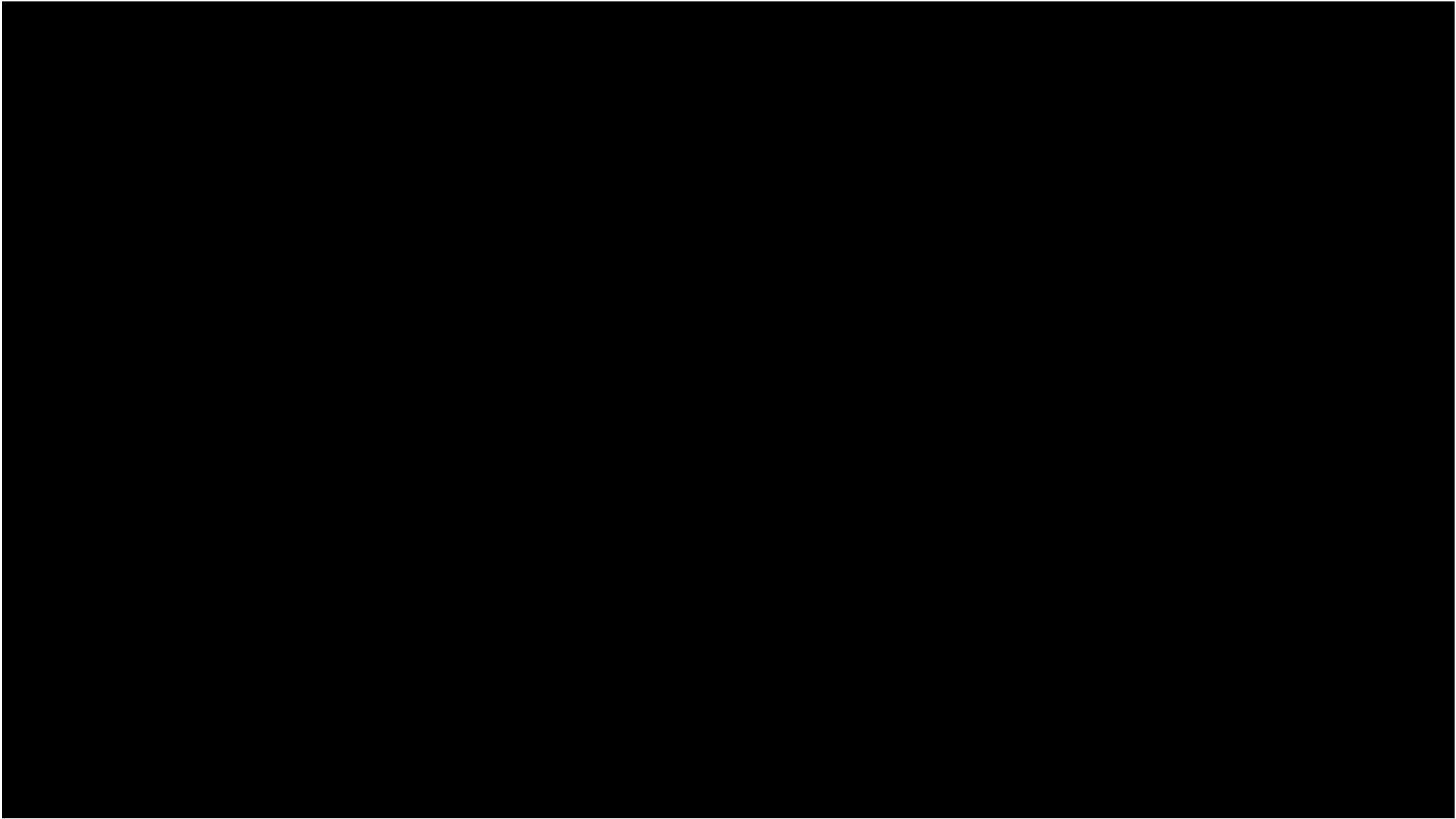
# Artifacts After Dark



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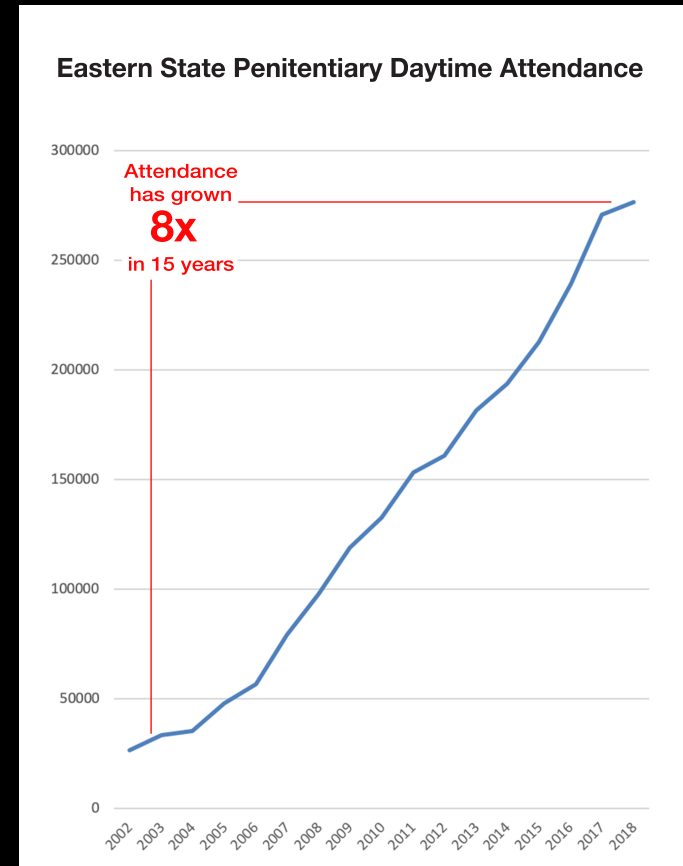




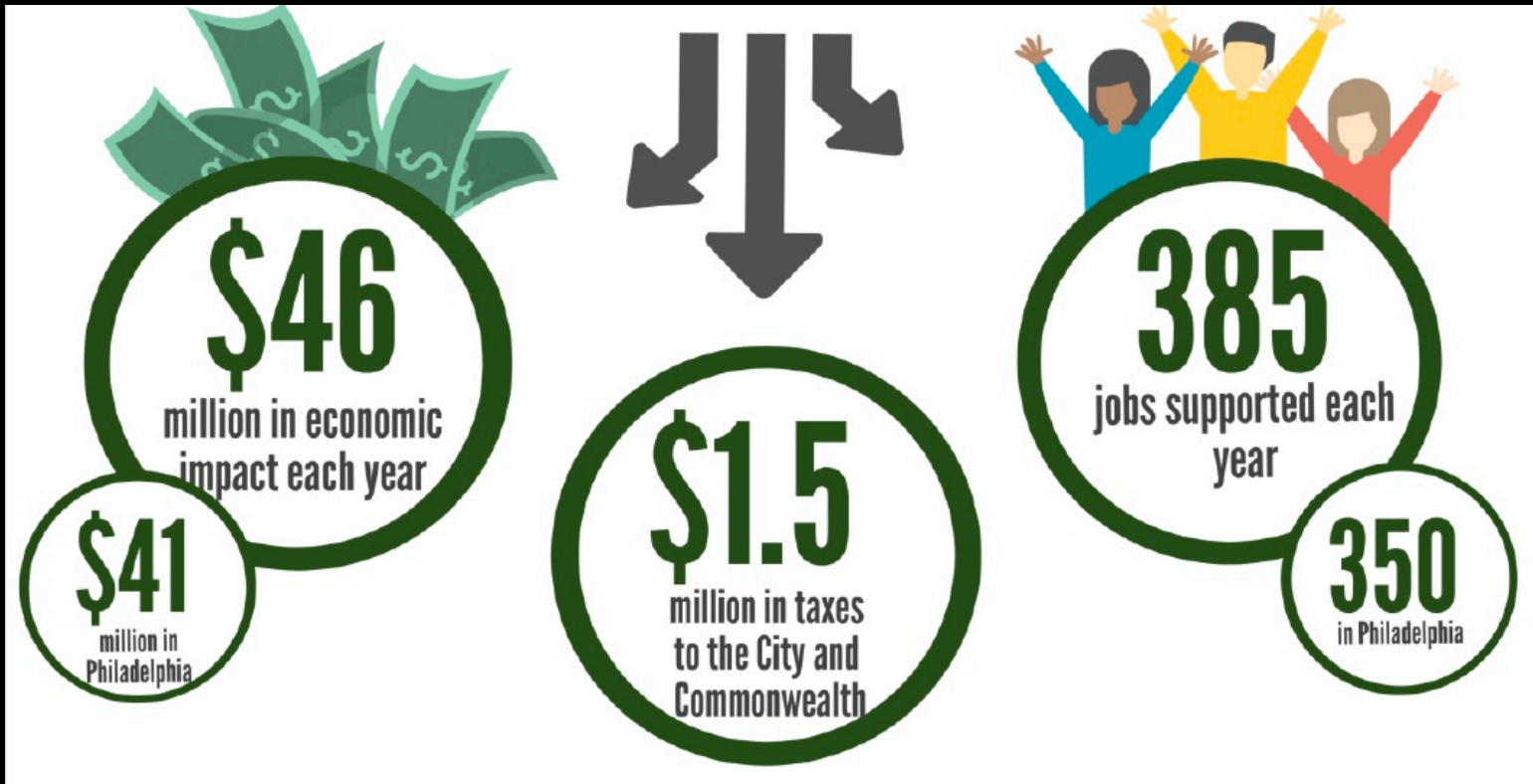


In 2019 (pre-pandemic):

- 👍 310,000+ visitors
- 👍 28,000 students
- 👍 47% visitors are under 35
- 👍 \$10M budget



# Economic Impact (pre-pandemic)







Planned Visitor Center

Phase I: complete!

Phases II and III: funding dependent



# TEMPORARILY CLOSED

- **Membership programs went virtual.**
- The Searchlight Series, our monthly speaker program went weekly;
- *New!* Hospital Tours, a livestream program that explored how the penitentiary's past can help illuminate healthcare in prisons today;
- *New!* Prisons and the Pandemic a web series that shared the latest on the COVID-19 inside of prisons and jails throughout the United States; and





# Night Tours

*New in 2020*

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