Oral Defense Announcement  
University of Missouri – St. Louis Graduate School

An oral examination in defense of the co-authored dissertation for the degree  
Doctor of Education with an emphasis in Educational Practice

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The Heritage Leadership Process: Exploring Meaning Making and Social Emotional Competencies in Heritage Interpretation and Education for Sustainability

Date: May 31, 2019  
Time: 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
Place: Collabitat East Conference Room C WEB-CRC

Abstract

This study explores qualities leaders identify as being critical to work in heritage fields and drivers in the leadership process. It also establishes a foundational definition of the term heritage leadership. After reviewing existing data to identify significant questions related to heritage leadership, the research team interviewed leaders in Heritage Interpretation and Education for Sustainability with a specific focus on leadership, meaning making, and social emotional competencies as guiding constructs in heritage leadership.

A proposed definition of the term heritage leadership resulted:  
Heritage leaders aspire to serve others and to create meaningful connections to shared natural and cultural heritage through contextual application of skills and competencies, thereby fostering understanding with the intent to preserve and protect heritage for future generations.

This study further explored heritage leadership as a process that leaders follow stemming from personal aspirations and attributes and moving to the development of skill sets and mindsets in preparation for engagement in meaning making. The characteristics identified in this heritage leadership process guide recommendations for organizational focus on personal and professional development opportunities for staff and students in the related fields.

Generation of meaningful, emotional connections to shared social, cultural, and natural heritage is seen by heritage leaders as critical to engaging citizenry in efforts to understand, preserve, and protect shared heritage. Heritage leaders believe that the forging of these connections is crucial to the future well-being of our communities and societies at large.

Defense of Dissertation Committee

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