



The Natural History Museum of Utah Introduces Explorer Corps

The summer-long challenge encourages Utahns & tourists to discover natural history in every county

SALT LAKE CITY, May 25, 2021 – Ever wondered what is unique about each of Utah’s 29 counties? The Natural History Museum of Utah is helping spotlight natural and cultural history wonders in each of them with the Natural History Explorer Corps, launching Memorial Day Weekend.

Custom markers, produced by Utah’s own O.C. Tanner, have been placed in every county to celebrate an iconic natural or cultural history location in that area, showcasing Utah’s diversity and richness. All summer long, Utahns and visitors will be encouraged to seek out the markers to inspire their own exploration of what makes each county—and Utah—so special.

“We are beyond thrilled to roll out the Natural History Explorer Corps program, which has been designed to encourage and support learning about and visiting 29 off-the-beaten-path wonders in Utah,” said Jason Cryan, executive director, Natural History Museum of Utah. “It’s also a great way to encourage our friends and neighbors in Utah to safely get back out there in the spirit of education, adventure, and friendly competition.”

From members of state and county leadership to public works employees, librarians, historians and museum directors, Explorer Corps is the product of enthusiastic collaboration across both state and local levels.

“County commissioners, councilmembers, tourism directors and our staff know all too well the role that tourism plays in our local economies – and how the last 18 months or so have hit us hard,” said Jared Andersen, county commissioner, Morgan County. “I believe Explorer Corps can be another tool in our toolkit to make sure our county and our local communities are strong, and encourage everyone to get back out there this summer. We’ll see you at Devil’s Slide!”

Program planning began back in 2019 as NHMU commemorated its 50th anniversary, with a goal of honoring this state that is home to fascinating fossil discoveries, beautiful landscapes and varied environments. Even with a year-long delay and setbacks due to the pandemic, the vision for Explorer Corps didn’t falter. In fact, it expanded with thanks to partnerships with O.C. Tanner and the State of Utah, plus additional support from Big-D Construction, Kellville Vans, KÜHL, the Utah State Library Division, the Utah Association of Counties and Utah Symphony.

Each Natural History Marker was designed and crafted by O.C. Tanner, the global employee recognition and engagement company founded in Utah in 1927. Once each marker was completed, Big-D Construction drove the state from top to bottom, roughly 6,000 miles, installing one marker in each county as they travelled.

“Our company has a long history of commemorating events in Utah and now we get to celebrate our home state, itself,” said Dave Peterson, chief operating officer at O.C. Tanner. “Our design for the state markers was inspired by elements like the Beehive state, the Museum’s 50th anniversary and the actual location and it’s unique qualities. We are excited to have locals start finding their county’s marker and look forward to continuing this partnership throughout the summer and beyond.”

In all, NHMU’s Explorer Corps program and its partners developed:

- 29 commemorative markers—one in every county—celebrating Utah’s natural history
- Books and learning materials for every public and tribal library and bookmobile in the state
- Natural history-themed summer programming for all ages
- The *Race to 29!* and Explorer Corps weekly giveaways offering marker hunters great prizes
- An official Explorer Corps mobile app to help participants track their marker visits
- A printed Explorer Corps passport offering the same benefit to anyone without a mobile device
- Explorer Corps tie-ins with this summer’s Forever Mighty concert series

The *Race to 29!* and weekly Explorer Corps giveaways will offer participants the chance to win various prizes, including a weeklong adventure in a luxury Winnebago from Kellville Vans in the summer of 2022. Explorer Corps badges, KUHL clothing and other great prizes will also be available. The challenge kicks off at 12 a.m. on Friday, May 28 and runs through Labor Day.

For updates on the program and to find out how locals can get involved, visit nhmu.utah.edu/explorer-corps.

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About the Natural History Museum of Utah

[The Natural History Museum of Utah](http://nhmu.utah.edu) is one of the leading scientific research and cultural institutions in the country. Established in 1963, the Museum’s collections contain over 1.6 million objects and offers innovative exhibitions and educational programs to thousands of residents and visitors each year, including traveling and permanent exhibits, special events and other programs. With an expected attendance of 300,000 visitors a year, the Museum also offers a variety of outreach programs to communities and schools throughout Utah, reaching every school district in the state annually. The Museum has an active science program with more than 30 scientists and 10 field exhibitions each year.

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