



My middle school has a tradition called “School on the Mountain.” At the end of their eighth grade year, students take part in five days of team building and learning outside, much of which takes place at Mount Magazine State Park. Students identify leaves, test water quality, take history hikes, create press paintings, write descriptions in prose and verse, build fires with almost no supplies, build shelters and ambulatory transports out of natural materials: you get the idea. I’ve worked with the team of teachers with this for several years. Recently I remarked to a fellow teacher that, isn’t it interesting that there are never discipline issues during this week. He said simply, “School’s aren’t made for boys.” That struck me. What type of student is our current school “made” for? What’s missing, and who is missing out?

That week I watched students in hands-on, out-of-doors activities growing and learning and laughing. I thought about the different styles of learning that were being less and less supported in the school environment as the move to streamline and automate and replicate identical instruction with the hope of producing identical outcomes becomes the norm. I thought, how can we, the librarians, the support staff for learners, provide rich, stimulating experiences for these different learning styles? That question bumped around inside my head and hit up against my experience at a Crystal Bridges Teachers’ Institute. The question hummed in the background when I took students to the Heifer Ranch in Perryville and visited the Heifer International Campus in Little Rock. When I attended a STEM fair at the Jacksonville Air Force Base I watched students engage and question and wonder, and the question nudged me to act. As anyone who works with learners of any age can tell you, we learn differently. I did some re-reading on Howard Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences, and I reached out to some of the resources that had inspired me. What came together is an exciting collaboration.

This year AAIM is offering a unique opportunity, a pre-conference facilitated by professionals from *Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art*, *Heifer International*, and *The Stem Coalition of Arkansas*. These organizations are state and global innovation leaders. The learning will take place at Crystal Bridges in Bentonville. The cost for the event is only \$45 (which includes lunch) and is open to the first 100 participants who sign up. The training is 8:00am-3:00pm and will consist of three rotations. Each rotation is designed for participants to experience learning through multiple senses with the goal of aiding teachers in creating learning experiences that engage multiple intelligences.