

Advocating For Your Story Easier Than You Think!

By Kate Smith, OLHA Trustee-at-Large and Trustee, Wadsworth Area Historical Society

The Ohio Local History Alliance Advocacy Committee is challenging all 10 Ohio regions to hold an advocacy event and they're willing to help make it a success!

The purpose of these events is to get organizations comfortable with the idea of "doing advocacy" in an easy way and begin to train those associated with us in how to communicate the importance of our stories with future supporters and partners.

The plan is simple! With help from your Regional Representatives and the Alliance Advocacy Committee one (or more) sites can plan simple events during the year. Here are a few tips to get you started. Start Small. You can create a new event or just piggy back on an event you're already planning. These can be things like exhibit openings, open houses or Ohio Open Doors. Pick something that already has your "elevator speech" built into it. Invite local supporters like city council members or donors that may be familiar with your story or any other officials you have relationships with. Prepare your staff and volunteers with quick info to share and encourage them to engage in conversations which help highlight what the site does for history AND the



Future community leaders participating in Leadership Tuscarawas visit the Dennison Railroad Depot Museum for a VIP tour.

community. Have information available for attendees and provide goodie bags to make sure they take their information home!

This is a great way to get attendees to come directly to your site to see what you offer and hear what you have in store. In 2016, 7 Regions held an advocacy event, here are some examples. Region 3 – Wadsworth Area Historical Society held a City Government Open House playing host to over 40 members of the

local government who enjoyed lunch and a tour. Region 5 – The Dennison Railroad Depot Museum held an event alongside Ohio Open Doors and welcomed Leadership Tuscarawas for a VIP Tour.

We would love to coordinate with one or more sites that would be interested in hosting an advocacy event in 2017! Please reach out to your Regional Representative if you're interested in information about how to get started, plan and invite key people to your event. ■