A Different Story

Each year, we share numbers to help tell the Children’s Museum’s story.

This year, they tell quite a different one.

At first blush, it’s not a happy tale. A fraction of our usual visitors. Hundreds rather than thousands of students taking part in outreach. No school tours, no free community events. Mostly empty Museums.

When we looked deeper, however, we realized the Museum’s Fiscal Year 2020-2021 was a real success story!

Our staff was amazing. The core group that stayed on during the COVID-19 shutdown was creative and nimble and up for any challenge. Pivot was the keyword. We tried many new ways to reach the families of Southern Arizona. If it fell short, we tried something else. Pivot.

We took our programs and events virtual and reached more than 478,000 people online. We opened the Museum to small family groups for Downtown Pop-in Playdates and Oro Valley Outings. More than 1,200 visitors got a Museum experience they’ll never forget.
We continued our Brain Box program to bring hands-on learning to as many children as possible. We reopened, and re-closed, and reopened again for good in March 2021. We happily welcomed back daily visitors, appreciated the smiles - masked now - more than ever before.

But that's only part of the story. We were only able to do all those things because the real heroes of the story - all of you - continued to support the Museum and its programs during the most challenging times. We gratefully affirmed that the community we serve appreciates and values its Children's Museum.

Your financial support allowed us to pivot to virtual events, such as Studio Spark and a highly successful Evening of Play.

478,523 people reached through virtual programming and events

390 Students taking part in virtual outreach

We’ve created innovative in-person programs like Make It! Workshop and Generation Creation. It has also allowed us to expand our MyTime Inclusion program from once a month to every weekday.

A $170,000 grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services led to the launch of Aprendemos, a new program focusing on accessibility for marginalized groups such as refugees and foster children, with an emphasis on bilingual programs and free weekly Discovery Nights.

There are more ways to experience the Museum now than ever before, thanks to your belief in what we do!

We are definitely happy to be getting back to normal operations at the Museum! But as we look back on this year, we remember the challenge of closure as an opportunity which led to growth and innovation that our visitors will benefit from for years to come.
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$50,000 & up
Armstrong McDonald Foundation
Edna Gray
The George Mason Green & Louis C. Green Foundation
Pima County
Ruth McCormick Tankersley Charitable Trust
Town of Oro Valley

$20,000 - $49,999
Andra Heart Foundation
Arizona Commission on the Arts
Arizona Complete Health
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Holscraw Advisory Endowment Fund*
Institute of Museum and Library Services
James C. Stewart Charitable Foundation
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First Things First
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Joseph Stanley Leeds Foundation
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Roche
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The Stocker Foundation*
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Bayer U.S.
Beach Fleischman PC
Caterpillar, Inc
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Country Fair White Elephant, Inc.
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Krista Conway and Andrew Rogers
Carrie and Chuck Durham
Danielle Fidel
Robert Fischer and Kerri Strug
Robert and Laurie Kaye Glaser
Charlene Grabowski and Anne Hunt

*Funds held at Community Foundation for Southern Arizona

Donations from July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021
Mission
To provide fun, play-based, interactive, hands-on learning experiences for children and their families.

Vision
To inspire children and their families to reach their full potential through discovery, creativity and learning.

Leadership Team

Hilary Van Alsburg
Executive Director

Vanessa King
Director of Education

Sarah Osborne
Director of Strategic Engagement

Carol Sayler
Director of Finance

Teresa Truelsen
Director of Marketing

Joel Trupiano
Director of Exhibits

Jordan Rivera
Associate Director of Education

Michael Bilharz
Associate Director Guest Experiences