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Regeneration and Renewal

Our future was and is, indeed, in play.

This last year brought a joyful return to serving children and families onsite — and so much more. In summer 2021 we welcomed our first families back — with care and love.

It was the financial support of so many generous individuals and organizations, buoyed by government relief funds, that made this possible.

The museum's staff and volunteers went far beyond just reopening and rebuilding the community's museum: they kept their finger on the pulse — through listening sessions and surveying thousands of visitors for what they most needed. Staff responded with determination as conditions shifted from tenuous to playful (and back again). They adapted and celebrated each new challenge as another chance to innovate.

Following each weekly status assessment, we grew bolder — adding open hours, navigating masking, and securing partners to support diverse programs that families needed and wanted. Each month brought new ideas and progress.

In October 2021 an exclamation of joy came from adults and children alike. The new Wonderground came alive as a visible affirmation that children were back in the heart of our city.

We hosted numerous vaccine clinics for all ages, and we hit the streets with the new MCM Roadshow van, bringing hands-on collaborative exhibits to neighborhoods. We pulled off an online version of the American Girl Benefit Sale whose proceeds rippled out to benefit 27 other non-profits that serve children, and after almost a year of planning launched our innovative new cafe.

We are all in this together. Our commitment remains — to provide experiences that strengthen children so they can become their best selves and contribute their gifts to make the world a better place.

Wait until you see what's coming next!

With gratitude,

Deborah Gilpin President & CFO

Deb gipin

Jennifer C. Johnston Board Chair



210 Number of days open to the public, July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022



The cafe has served those in need and inspired those with means. Some visitors pay nothing to feed their whole family. Some pay \$5 or \$6 for a mac & cheese dish. At least one person dropped \$100 in the cash box for a bag of chips to help provide meals for others!

MCM is already fielding questions from interested museums across the country and will present on the project at InterActivity 2023, the upcoming national children's museum conference.

- Pay-what-you-can meals and snacks consumed each month: 1,450
- Average amount paid by a family for their meal: \$6.63
- Number of pay-what-you-can cafes in US museums: 1

On July 21 of 2022, we opened Little John's Lunchbox, the first pay-what-you-can restaurant in a US museum.

We'd been setting the table for this new cafe for a long time. MCM has been a leader in the museum field around sustainability and accessibility for decades. And we love to play with our food! We grow it on our rooftop and in

If the cafe cooler were a real lunch box, how many juice boxes would fit inside?

15,230

the Wonderground. We educate about it in our exhibits and programs.

So when Chef Dave—friend, collaborator, and Little John's Kitchens founder—approached us with the idea to create a pay-what-you-can cafe in the museum that would serve EVERYONE delicious, healthy food, we quickly began planning together.

The Lunchbox is a model of sustainability, turning fresh food EXCESS into fresh food ACCESS. Our composting system includes food, packaging, and tableware.

The new cafe is outstanding. I have three kids, and we're on a very tight budget. The new cafe allowed me to get them a light snack for a reasonable price. And I was really grateful that I didn't have to carry four waters and four snacks around all morning in my handbag.

- MCM Visitor



Seeing spots? It may be our colorful polkadotted outreach van making its way around Dane County!

June 2022 marked the launch of MCM Roadshow, a new series of mobile exhibits and programs designed to reach not only Madison's large community festivals but also smaller events in neighborhoods where museum visitation is low and access to major cultural events is limited.

Children built forts, tested their structural designs, engaged in imaginative play, created art, and got to know some of the friendly faces on our staff. In its inaugural summer season MCM Roadshow served our community at over 30 events.

On one outing, children were so engaged and having so much fun building with foam blocks that they didn't even want to go to get ice cream. After that, the Roadshow motto became "better than ice cream."

Roadshow key partners, summer 2022:

- Parks Alive, a new collaboration between Madison Parks and City of Madison Neighborhood Resource Teams
- MSCR Art Cart
- MMSD Play and Learn
- Community festivals, including Juneteenth,
 Disability Pride, Africa Fest, Orton Park
 Festival, Urban Triage Harvest Festival, United
 Cerebral Palsy Family Frolic, Outreach Magic
 Pride Festival, and Urban League of Madison
 Unity Picnic
- Neighborhood events and block parties, including YWCA-Madison, Open Doors for Refugees, Kennedy Heights Community Center, and Goodman Community Center
- Public events including Olbrich Botanical Gardens Butterfly Action Day, Dane County Fair, Día de Fútbol, and Concerts on the Square Kids Tent

How tall would the gerbil be that would use the giant gerbil wheel?

3' TALL



During the 2021–2022 school year, many of our Access for Everyone partner organizations continued to keep cohorts of kids and families separated into small groups to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus. With the support of generous sponsors and the creativity of our staff, we were able to create new opportunities that

ensured community access to the museum.

We hosted dozens of small group visits outside of our public hours for partner organizations, including MSCR after school program sites, Goodman Community Center Preschool, and YWCA Madison.

In summer 2022, we partnered with Madison

Metropolitan School District to provide private museum visits and arts enrichment programming for over 1,200 students from the MMSD Summer Arts Academy.

The museum's exhibits provided crucial opportunities for open-ended, active play and social emotional learning, augmented by arts education programming, including music

and creative movement, a community mural installation project, and West African drumming.

As MCM, and the community at large, resumed larger in-person events, we hosted joyful celebrations at free admission events including the Wisconsin Science Festival's Science on the Square, Downtown Family Halloween, Santa Day with the Progress Center for Black Women, Remake Learning Days, a celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, and the return of our annual SummerPalooza festival.

New collaborations helped to foster even more community connections. We held community listening sessions with families from Centro Hispano, Bayview Community Center, and Ho-Chunk Nation to help inform exhibit development. We also hosted a series of free, public, COVID-19 vaccination clinics with AMI Expeditionary Healthcare, providing vaccines for 794 local kids and adults.



475

Number of photos taken with Santa at MCM event held with the Progress Center for Black Women

1,200

Number of children served by the Summer Arts Academy 794

Number of children (and some adults) vaccinated at clinics held on site



In October of 2021 we replaced our defunct former parking lot with an awe-inspiring, four-season, outdoor play space. This 10,000-square-foot exhibit represents the museum's single biggest expansion since our move to Hamilton Street over a decade ago.

This is not your typical playground made of plastic and metal. The trunks supporting the

Thicket climber come from black locust trees, an invasive species whose wood is unusually durable. The yellow tiles covering the Beehive structure were cut from old fire hoses. The metal designs welded across the playhouse's windows are made from repurposed tools, and the roof is covered in license plates and steel from an old barn. The project employed around 100 local contractors and artists, who worked

with natural materials sourced from the area as well as upcycled exhibit elements. Keeping it local strengthens our economy and reduces the environmental impact.

The Wonderground offers a model for sustainable design and an example of how the use of natural materials creates a beautiful environment that engages kids with all their



senses. And rising up in the very center of Downtown, full of laughing, moving bodies, it's also a testament to how Madison values playfulness, creativity, and children and families.

Kids have loved playing there from the day it opened. In its first year, it became the most popular, talked about part of the museum.

The Wonderground?
Amazing. The indooroutdoor den tucked
underneath the building
overhang? Utter genius.
What a brilliant place to
play. Thank you, Madison
Children's Museum!

- MCM Member



Highlights of the Wonderground

- The Thicket climbing sculpture
 A 23-foot-tall climbing sculpture takes center stage, weaving together natural structural wood elements into a playful invitation to adventure.
- Cocoon Climber Little kids can build their balancing skills climbing across something like a downed tree, with netting all around to create a tunnellike experience.
- Giant Bucket Kids are invited to think about math and volume. But the bucket also invites imagination and child-driven play. How do you play in a giant bucket? Kids find their own answers.
- The Orchard, Cabin Yard & Gardens
 The museum's historic 1830s cabin
 was relocated onto a small knoll as
 part of the new Wonderground space.
 The cabin garden is planted with
 native, era-appropriate vegetables,
 fruits, and grasses.
- The Down Under Protected from the elements by a roof and three walls, the Down Under is a place for special programs—and kicking back. Caregivers enjoy the lounge-like atmosphere as their kids play nearby.



Like most adults, we get excited about successfully launching a new project: the Wonderground... Little John's Lunchbox... The new MCM Roadshow outreach program... That's the marquee stuff of annual reports.

But young children don't need a project manager or Gantt chart to achieve great things. Allow them the freedom of open-ended, creative play in the rich environment at Madison Children's Museum—the breakthroughs happen on their own schedule.

In the last year, at some point...

A 9 month old in the Wildernest wanted a better view of the fish in the tank and pulled themselves up to stand on their own for the first time...

A four year old climbed to the top of the Hodge Podge Mahal and, with the encouragement of another child at the top, slid 32 feet down the dragon slide, beaming with accomplishment at the bottom...

A six year old spent a half an hour experimenting with the ice boats in Coops to Cathedrals and planted the seeds for a career in engineering...

A seven year old learned about reptiles from an MCM discovery guide and touched Earl the Snake for the first time, realizing that things aren't as scary when you understand them...

A nine year old played tag with their grandma in the Wonderground and discovered that "old people" still like to play...

When kids choose their own playful path, there's no telling what they'll learn or exactly when—but it's certain that those flashes of discovery, insight, and empathy will change them in deep and lasting ways.

2,300

Number of children who got to pet a chicken

100

Gallons of paint brushed on the Art Studio's paint wall 1,006

Number of babies welcomed through our First-Time Parent Membership 26

Percentage of visitors who utilized our Access for Everyone programs to visit

Financial Overview

Fiscal Year 2022 July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

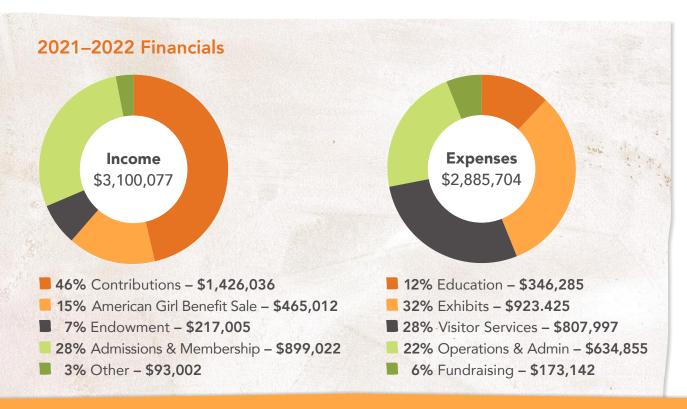
Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

MCM reopened to the public with limited hours in June 2021, just prior to the beginning of the fiscal year. With increased use of Access for Everyone reduced priced admissions and memberships, and with most of our traditional earned revenue streams not available at prior levels, the "Our Future in Play" campaign (2020–2022) provided critical contributed resources to support operations.

Relief Funds

Madison Children's Museum received approximately \$1.4 million in federal and state relief funds, which helped buoy the museum during our closed period (2020 – 2021) and continues to support us as we work to rejuvenate our earned revenue streams. These relief funds are not reflected in operations here.





How many feet of toilet paper does the museum use in a week?

14,000

Fiscal Year 2022 Donors

Madison Children's Museum relies on generous donors to support and fund the advancement of our mission each year. We gratefully acknowledge all the individuals, companies, foundations, and government entities for their gifts, sponsorships, and grants, which supported a year of playing, laughing, and learning. Donors are listed according to their total monetary and in-kind donations received between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022.

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We also thank 343 individuals for their contributions of less than \$50.

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\$100,000 & Above



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Marvin P. Verhulst Family Foundation

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\$5,000 - \$9,999





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\$1,000 - \$2,499

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TRIBUTES

Madison Children's Museum gratefully acknowledges the following donors for their contributions honoring family and friends received between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022.

In honor of Brenda Baker

Diane Endres Ballweg Eliot Butler Sarah & Kevin Davidson Mary Jo Elert Deborah Gilpin Angela Johnson & Justin Bitner Kia Karlen & Geoff Brady Valerie & Andreas Kazamias Sharon Klotz Charles Ledin & Dolly Ledin Marianne Madar & Jim Jensen Charles & Sally Miley Amy & Jerry Nickles Andrew & Carol Phelps Peggy & Tom Pyle Pierre Rideau & Cassandra Krause Bird Ross & Tom Loeser Dean & Orange Schroeder Mary Ellyn & Joe Sensenbrenner Ruth & Kevin Shelly Gail Simpson & Aris Georgiades Jeanne Vergeront & Andrew Dick Jonathan Zarov & Ellen Samuels

In honor of Stephen Blitz

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In honor of Lauren Engelke

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In honor of Sofia Elizabeth Guzman-Park Anna Park

In honor of Lucy Elisabeth Paler Lynn & Craig Renner In honor of Jean Wardin

Shannon Connell

In memory of Lyss Bradford

Tim, Lauren, & Lily Engelke

In memory of LaVerne Colangelo

Barbara & John Allen

In memory of Anja Colette

Anne LaDue-Satek & Jason Satek

In memory of Chloe Eckelberg

Chloe K Eckelberg Memorial

In memory of Mary Ann Fahl

Toni & Henry Walski

In memory of Guy Martin

Marilyn Martin

In memory of David Villa

Jane Villa

In memory of Brett M. Wise

Mitchell & Roslyn Wise



VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to our volunteers! Volunteers helped welcome visitors, answered questions, cleaned up, and did everything from running the Gerbil Wheel and watering and weeding the rooftop gardens, to bringing our animals out for kids to see and touch, and keeping the Art Studio stocked. Individuals listed volunteered between September 1, 2021 and August 31, 2022.

Wendy Ahl
Aadil Ahmad
Barbara Allen
Talia Bergerson
Carlee Cantrall
Meghan DeBot
Miranda DeBot
Laura Flucke
Christine Gauder
Gretchen Hill
Varshini Kamaraj
Will Kelly
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Nisha Stukel
Gabriella Torzewski
Madelynn Zarka

Mai Zoua Ziong

Sarah Naatz

We have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of these lists. If you believe an error has been made, please contact our development team at (608) 256-6445 or at give@madisonchildrensmuseum.org.

100 N. Hamilton St. | Madison, WI 53703

WE DID ALL THIS AND MORE!

- Unveiled the Wonderground
- Opened Little John's Lunchbox pay-what-you-can cafe
- Launched MCM Roadshow
- Successfully completed the Our Future in Play campaign
- Played, laughed, and learned with you

