



AN EXTRAORDINARY YEAR OF
LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

Annual Report 2007-2008

REFLECTING ON A SUCCESSFUL YEAR



The Spark Cart is a popular Museum destination for many visitors and a recognizable symbol to the community of a Museum visit.



Dear Museum supporter,

Minnesota Children's Museum had a fantastic fiscal year in 2008, due in no small part to the support you've provided! The Museum's numbers - from attendance to revenue to volunteer hours and to visitors who came at free or reduced admission - were at the highest levels in the institution's history. We achieved this success by paying close attention to visitor service, delivering exhibits with wide learning appeal, and by continuing strong community partnerships.

In this year's exciting special exhibits, children explored the concepts of disabilities and empathy; visited with old friends like Curious George™ and the monsters and Muppets of Sesame Street™; and found new ways to run, jump, and even fly. Improvements to favorite permanent galleries such as *Habitot*®, *Our World*, and *World Works* helped keep children's experiences both fresh and familiar at the same time.

Friends and partners - both old and new - continue to strengthen and expand the Museum's reach to more Minnesota and western Wisconsin families than ever before. When we passed the 430,000 visitor milestone, it was a direct result of these beneficial associations - allowing a record number of children to have fun and feel successful while learning through play.

Thank you for choosing to be a part of the Museum's mission, and sharing in its vision. Without the involvement of community-minded partners like you, the Museum would not be able to serve so many children and touch so many families.

Sincerely,

Sarah Caruso
President
Minnesota Children's Museum

Tom Abood
Chair of the Board
Minnesota Children's Museum

Museum classes add concentrated focus to state standards during a St. Paul Public School field trip.

Success by the numbers

Some of the biggest numbers this museum has ever seen came in fiscal year 2008. Community members like you helped contribute to this record growth.

	FY08 #	% change from FY07		FY08 #	% change from FY07
Total attendance	430,233	+6%	Total volunteer hours	15,928	+15%
Access program			Total volunteers	600	+20%
• Target Free 3rd Sunday	37,649	+15%	Youth volunteers	79 volunteers	+30%
• Access members	2,184	+22%		3940 hours	+8%
• Passport to Play	12,960	+8%	Interns	53 interns	+103%
Museum-to-Go classes	856	+18%		3691 hours	+83%
Professional development	451	+106%	Traveling exhibit attendees	1.6 million	+18%
Family Nights	5,136	+19%	Member visits	127,632	+1%
			Program hours	6,439	+21%
			Visitors served through programs	340,039	+61%



By pretending to be a doctor or nurse, children gain familiarity and confidence about encounters with the medical community.



Children learn from scientists by exploring electricity.

SMART PLAY AT WORK

A budding engineer creates a gear train by rearranging and turning magnetic gears on a newly-installed *World Works* component.



The benefits of early childhood education have been backed up again and again by research over the past several decades. This growing awareness has resulted in many new children's museums opening across the nation. These children's museums help the entire field by exposing more families in more geographic locations to the value of visiting these early childhood development centers.

From early on, Minnesota Children's Museum has been a leader in exhibit production for itself and other children's museums. Designing and developing some of the most respected and innovative traveling exhibits in the field, the Museum has earned renown among its peers and in the mainstream media. More than 7.7 million visitors across the continent have interacted with Minnesota Children's Museum exhibits, maneuvering Curious George™ across a building front, visiting Clifford the Big Red Dog™ on Birdwell Island, and practicing math skills in *Go Figure*.



Making an impact on children's lives every day

Thanks to General Mills' national funding, Minnesota Children's Museum developers produced the first-ever fitness exhibit for children. *Run! Jump! Fly! Adventures in Action™* motivates children to find new ways to move and have fun. When children see physical activity as something they want to do - rather than something adults want them to do - they can become a leading force in shaping healthy futures for America's next generation.

During the exhibit's first four months, more than 186,000 visitors had tried out "flycycling," "snowboarding," yoga and kung fu. The exhibit represented the launch of a new Museum focus area in health and fitness.

Run! Jump! Fly! Adventures in Action™'s development was guided by some of the principles set forth by the Association of Children's Museum's initiative, *Good to Grow!* This initiative promotes eating good foods in the right amounts; getting plenty of exercise; tracking computer and TV screen time; and connecting with the outdoors - all ingredients in healthy development and essential to sparking children's learning through play.

A young visitor works her way across the monkey bars while exploring *Run! Jump! Fly! Adventures in Action™*.



Students from a local school work together to create a city during a social studies-themed Museum class.



PARTNERSHIPS EXTEND OUR MISSION

Throughout the years, new initiatives have strengthened the Museum's approach to visitor experience. In some cases, these new initiatives have helped fill a void in the service community and the children's museum field.

A partnership between the Museum and Ramsey County Department of Public Health created the three-year-old adaptation of the Wakanheza project. Designed to help prevent violence against children, the project assists individuals and organizations to be more open and receptive to the needs of families through empathy. The partnership has helped organizations and individuals around the metro area interact positively with parents.

After winning a second award in as many years from the Association of Children's Museums (ACM), the Museum modified Wakanheza to a toolkit providing

materials for training staff members at museums across the country. Since its online launch in January, a dozen children's museums have integrated the program into their own operations.

ACM bestowed another award to the Museum in 2008. The ACM and VSA arts *Universal Design for Learning Award* recognized the Minnesota Children's Museum's Accessible Play Initiative. Funded by the Frey Foundation, this unique community partnership joins the Museum and organizations that directly serve children and families with disabilities in the Twin Cities metro area.

The overall goal of the Accessible Play Initiative is to increase these families' participation with the Museum so they can comfortably experience its informal learning environment. In order to accomplish this goal, the Museum consulted with disability specialists to enhance visitor programs and services, invested in staff training, and implemented a comprehensive inclusion plan.

A young visitor gets an up-close encounter with a real snake during a live animal program.



A *World Works* visitor experiments with soap and bubble wands and learns about surface tension in the process.



Your support helps us build strong alliances

As a nonprofit organization, Minnesota Children's Museum has a long and rewarding history working with partners locally and nationally. These joint ventures help to strengthen communities in ways a single organization on its own could not. In recognition of these associations, the Museum expresses its respect and gratitude to its 2007-2008 partners.

Achieve Academy (Hmong Spanish Charter School)
All Around the Neighborhood – West Side, St. Paul
Angel Foundation
Anoka-Washington Head Start
ARC - Greater Twin Cities
Association of Children's Museums
CAP Head Start
CAP-RW Head Start
Carver County Social Service
Carver-Scott Educational Cooperative – Chaska
Cedar Riverside Community School – Minneapolis
CHAT
Chicago Children's Museum
Common Bond – Skyline Tower
Community of Peace Academy – St. Paul
Community School of Excellence – St. Paul
Concordia University
Courage Center

Dakota, Carver Head Start
Dunedin Public Housing – St. Paul
Gillette Children's Hospital
Girl Scouts – Minnesota and Wisconsin River Valleys
Greater Twin Cities United Way
Higher Ground Academy – St. Paul
ISD #112 (ELL ECFE Program) – Chaska
La Oportunidad – Minneapolis
Lake Phalen Elementary School
Loring Bethlehem Community Center – Minneapolis
Minnesota Children's Hospital and Clinics
Minnesota Department of Education
Minnesota Department of Human Services
Neighborhood House, West Side, St. Paul
New Beginnings (Teen Mom High School
at Carver/Scott Educational Cooperative – Chaska)
Pacer Center
PICA Head Start

Pillsbury Community Centers – Oak Park, Minneapolis
Pillsbury – Waite House
Project for Pride in Living – Minneapolis
Ramsey County Department of Public Health
RAP Head Start
Resources for Child Caring
St. Paul Parks and Recreation (3 groups) –
St. Paul
St. Paul Public Schools
Torre de San Miguel – West Side, St. Paul
Vietnamese Social Services of Minnesota
Watertown Community Educations –
Summer School Program
Westside Citizens Organization
Women's Lifework Planning Center – Mankato
Yang Family – Rosemount
YMCA – St. Paul

Seagate Inventor's Workshop
Day was a hair-raising
experience for many visitors
when they encountered the
Van de Graaff generator.



26 YEARS OF SUPPORTING FAMILIES AND EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING

We thank all our donors for your generosity.
Your support is essential as we work to spark children's learning through play.

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\$50,000 and above

3M Foundation
General Mills Foundation
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Exhibit Sponsors

General Mills - *Run! Jump! Fly! Adventures in Action™*
(National sponsor)
HealthPartners - *Run! Jump! Fly! Adventures in Action™*
Lifetime Fitness - *Run! Jump! Fly! Adventures in Action™*
3M - *Curious George™: Let's Get Curious!*

Government Support

City of St. Paul Cultural STAR Program
State of Minnesota



Children take on many different roles
in the *Our World* gallery, including a
customer shopping for groceries.

Your gifts are an investment in the future of Minnesota's children

Individual Donors

👑 \$25,000 and above

Thomas J. Abood

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Showcore
Summit Brewery
Trinchero Family Estates
Ultimate Resort
Vomela

FINANCIALS

Statement of Financial Position June 30, 2008

Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$1,274,348
Accounts Receivable	83,371
Pledges and Grants Receivable	569,049
Prepaid Expenses	206,387
Investments	5,394,361
Land, Building and Equipment, Net	8,112,751
Total Assets	\$15,645,267

Liabilities

Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	\$345,831
Deferred Revenue	787,071
Total Liabilities	\$1,132,902

Net Assets

Unrestricted – Undesignated	\$1,309,913
Unrestricted – Designated*	1,693,624
Temporarily Restricted	7,347,075
Permanently Restricted	4,161,753
Total Net Assets	\$14,512,365

Total Liabilities and Net Assets..... \$15,645,267

Statement of Activity Year Ended June 30, 2008

Support and Revenue

Grants and Contributions	\$2,246,159
Museum Admissions	1,353,086
Memberships	668,190
Program Income	974,913
Investment and Other Income	217,367
Total Support and Revenue	\$5,459,715

Expenses

Program	\$4,048,220
Administrative	1,353,030
Fundraising	431,081
Total Expenses	\$5,832,331

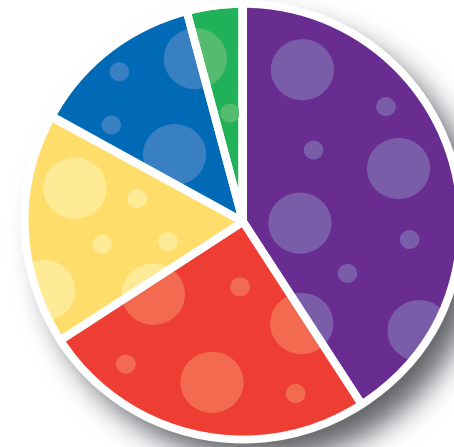
Non-Operating Income	150,000
Change in Net Assets	(222,616)

Net Assets, Beginning of Year	14,734,981
Net Assets, End of Year	14,512,365

*Unrestricted-Designated Net Assets includes amounts designated by the Board of Directors for the following purposes:

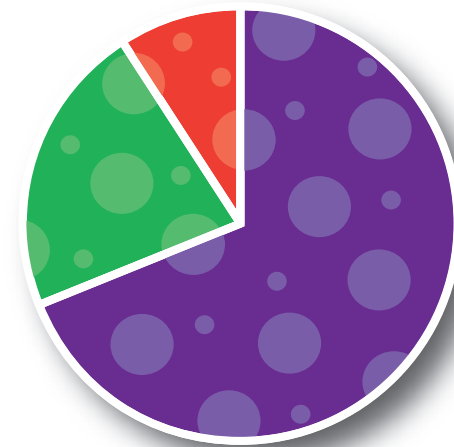
Fixed Asset Replacement	\$500,000
Cash Operating Reserve	275,000
Endowment Cumulative Earnings	918,624

SUPPORT & REVENUE



- 41% Grants and Contributions
- 25% Museum Admissions
- 18% Program Income
- 12% Memberships
- 4% Investment and Other Income

EXPENSES



- 69% Program Expenses
- 23% Administrative Expenses
- 8% Fundraising Expenses



Three nature artists use paintbrushes, water and rocks to create a masterpiece at the *Rooftop ArtPark*.

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Stephen Zawoyski

Children learn about the properties of water through experimentation and repetition in *World Works*.



Mission

Sparking children's learning through play.

Foundational Beliefs

Early learning is the foundation for lifelong learning.

Families are our children's first teachers.

All children deserve a time and place to be children.

Diverse perspectives enrich children's lives.

Playing *is* learning.

Minnesota Children's Museum

Smart Play

10 West Seventh Street, St. Paul, MN 55102 • 651-225-6000 • MCM.org

