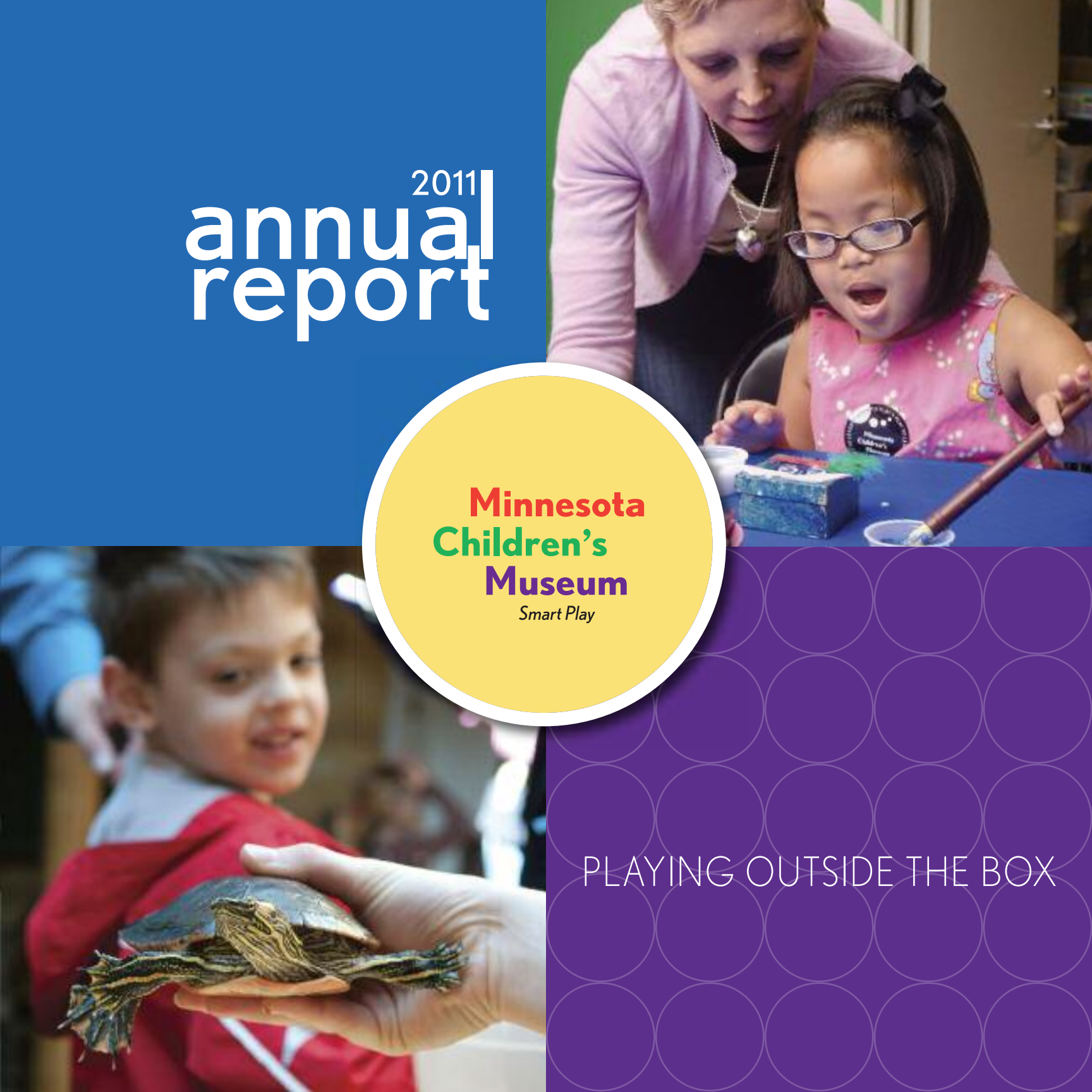


2011
annual
report

Minnesota
Children's
Museum

Smart Play

PLAYING OUTSIDE THE BOX





Dear Friends and Supporters:

Your valued partnership helped Minnesota Children's Museum welcome more than 429,000 visitors in the past year. In large part, these visitors were children whose curiosity about the world and hunger for creative exploration was expressed through their unfettered love for play.

Ironically, in this year of near-record attendance for the Museum, our culture at large is experiencing a decline in unstructured, child-directed play. Play is a child's innate format for learning, propelling an eager young mind from observation and wonder to discovery and understanding. The profound impact of child-initiated play influences brain development, cognition and social-emotional health.

The work of the Museum is to create "space" where a child's inborn drive to play can be expressed and fulfilled. Increasingly, this work is taking place outside of the Museum's walls and reaching children across the state and the country. Highlights from the past year include laying the foundation for a satellite children's museum in Rochester and installing play-based learning environments in three Twin Cities' libraries with 11 additional installations planned over the next three years.

Furthermore, the Museum developed and launched three original traveling exhibits *Dinosaurs: Land of Fire and Ice*[™], *Framed: Step Into Art* and *Storyland: A Trip Through Childhood Favorites*[™] that are embarking on national tours which will impact millions of adults and children over the next few years.

Although much growth has taken place outside of the Museum in the past year, those who cherish the places and programs at our St. Paul home can take heart in the fact that the coming year will bring a capital campaign to expand and renovate this much-loved space. We look forward to sharing our exciting plans with you and deeply appreciate our continuing partnership.

With warmth and gratitude,

Dianne Krizan
President
Minnesota Children's Museum

Bill McKinney
Chair of the Board
Minnesota Children's Museum

A CARDBOARD BOX OR HIGH SPEED TRAIN: REINFORCING 21ST CENTURY SKILLS THROUGH PLAY

Imagination turns what is into what can be.

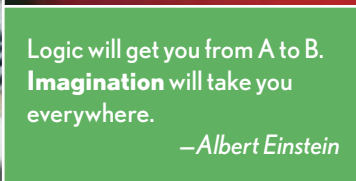
When imagination takes flight all things are possible.

For thirty years, Minnesota Children's Museum has been a launch pad for big ideas, joyful learning and development of the kind of creativity that can transform rectangular brown corrugated cardboard into a cutting-edge vehicle that rockets into space.

Creativity is the foremost attribute of leaders, according to a 2010 IBM global survey of 1,500 CEOs. And yet, over the last two decades, studies have shown that creativity in the United States has declined, with the most distressing lapse among our youngest children. In essence, the nation is in the throes of a creativity crisis.

Our future prosperity requires leaders equipped with both a strong basis of factual knowledge and a highly creative mind to manifest the breakthrough thinking for which our world thirsts. Minnesota Children's Museum's driving force is supported by decades of research that open-ended, child-directed play is the spark for creativity and fruitful imagination.

In September 2010, Minnesota Children's Museum adopted a five-year strategic plan to dramatically expand Minnesota's children's access to play-based learning environments and champion the essential role of play in a child's early development – wherever the setting. What follows is a report on progress made over the past year implementing our four community impact goals designed to nurture play and creative thinking for Minnesota's children.



There's no better way to teach kids than in a **fun, interactive** environment. You do an excellent job coming up with exhibits that are **engaging**.

—Museum visitor



Logic will get you from A to B.
Imagination will take you
everywhere.

—Albert Einstein

ONE SHINY BOX COMPLEMENTED BY SMALL, ENTICING PACKAGES: MOVING BEYOND THE MUSEUM'S WALLS

GOAL

Reach 600,000 visitors a year with high quality, play-based early learning experiences

During our recently completed fiscal year, Minnesota Children's Museum served a near-record breaking 429,834 visitors—the second-highest number in Museum history. While these guests experienced the Museum's flagship location in St. Paul, a growing number of adults and children were encountering installations beyond Museum walls.

Buoyed by a planning grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the Museum has pioneered a Museum-library partnership designing and developing early literacy learning environments beginning with three metro libraries: Wescott, Hopkins and Sun Ray. Groundbreaking in nature, these environments foster adoption of the six pre-literacy skills and engage adults in proactively stimulating children's learning. Over the next

three years, the Museum will extend this exciting project to 11 additional metro and statewide sites.

The Museum also developed and began touring an early literacy exhibit throughout Minnesota – *Storyland: A Trip Through Childhood Favorites*. Based on three beloved childhood storybooks, *Storyland* offers multi-media, interactive literacy learning and promotes a life-long love of reading.

In winter 2012, the Museum will open a new museum in Rochester, where residents in this fast-growing region will be able to experience playful learning opportunities. The new museum will welcome a projected 30,000 children and adults each year thanks to start-up support from the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Legacy Fund. Ultimately, the growth in St. Paul combined with new environments across Minnesota will increase the Museum's impact to serve 600,000 visitors annually.



I like the way the environment supports a child's imagination. I think it's great that they give **ideas** of ways to interact with your kids around the different activities.

—parent,
Hopkins Library



I have loved Minnesota Children's Museum since my father first took me...[now as a parent], it is a great place for children to **explore** and **learn** without having to hear "don't touch" or "you can't climb on that!"

—Museum visitor



PLAY LIKE THERE IS NO BOX: STRENGTHENING PLAY FOUNDATIONS AT HOME

GOAL

Empower parents to engage in their children's learning wherever the setting

Albert Einstein once said, "To stimulate creativity, one must develop the childlike inclination for play and the childlike desire for recognition." Because a child's home is his or her very first—and possibly most important—place for learning, parents can create rich, playful learning environments at home to support development of essential skills.

The Museum seeks to enhance parent and caregiver awareness of ways to spark their children's learning through play. Within our new exhibit, *Storyland: A Trip Through Childhood Favorites*, children are immersed into environments like Peter's bedroom from *A Snowy Day* or the Rabbit's den from *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. At the same time, information directed at adults includes the latest research on developing pre-literacy skills translated into simple ideas for home. Millions of adults and children will be impacted by this innovative literacy project when *Storyland* embarks on a four-year national tour in February 2012.



THE NUMBERS

- Delivered over 5,600 hours of daily programming
- More than 1,000 volunteers donated over 28,000 hours
- Nearly 11,000 families invested in memberships



At the Pint-sized Science class, I learned ways to look at what I'm already doing in a new way so I can present it to parents in a way that **empowers** them.

—early childhood educator

EXPONENTIALLY GROWING THE BOX: THE FEW IMPACTING THE MANY

GOAL

Equip 5,000 early childhood educators by 2015 with knowledge to effectively engage children in play-based learning

Building a future of imagineers and creative thinkers without great teachers and early childhood educators is unthinkable. These professionals interact with children at a highly critical phase of life; yet professional development opportunities are limited for preschool educators.

Over the past three years, the Museum's programming for early childhood educators has increased by 300%. During fiscal year 2011, the Museum

provided workshops and classes to 1,591 educators who employed new-found expertise with 40,000 children in communities across the state.

The Museum's vision is to serve as a state-of-the-art professional development resource for early childhood educators and caregivers. A recent *Newsweek* article on "The Creativity Crisis" stated that in early childhood, distinct types of free play are associated with high creativity. The Museum strives to infuse educators with a sense of creativity, imagination, wonder and curiosity first in order to cultivate those same capacities within children. In partnering with teachers, the Museum seeks to spark empowered thinking for the children they serve.



I've been in the field for over 30 years, the Preschool Math Institute presented many new ideas.

—early childhood educator



I take more time to **build relationships** with my students and their families than I did before taking the Intentional Provider workshop.

—early childhood educator



GETTING EVERYONE IN THE BOX: BUILDING PLAY SPACES IN STRESSED COMMUNITIES

GOAL

Increase school readiness opportunities for children who face the greatest educational disparities

Imagine a future in which every child reaches his or her full potential as a creative thinker, life-long learner and educated citizen. At the Museum, that future is our present.

Minnesota Children's Museum's Access program, supported by many corporate, foundation and individual donors, provided free and reduced-price admission to more than 100,000 visitors in fiscal year 2011. This program is important to make sure financial barriers do not limit a child's exposure to early learning experiences. The Museum's strategic plan envisions expanded opportunities and deeper engagement with communities where poverty and school readiness are of particular concern.

Throughout the past 12 months, Museum staff built relationships and listened to parents and leaders in North Minneapolis and St. Paul's Promise

Neighborhood about how best to support school readiness. Government, corporate and foundation support will allow the Museum to develop and install permanent literacy-learning installations in places where families naturally gather – including libraries and community centers.

FILLING THE BOX WITH OPPORTUNITIES: REACHING MORE MINNESOTA CHILDREN

Children deserve every opportunity for a life filled with curiosity, creativity and a zest for knowledge. The Museum is working to help every child achieve his or her potential by creating stimulating learning experiences, improving proximity to those environments and inspiring intentional adult involvement. By addressing these critical needs, the Museum is working toward its ultimate vision of activating *a community that embraces the essential role of play in fueling the imagination, creativity and love of learning that prepares children for success in school and life.*



THE NUMBERS

- Over 2,200 families received free memberships
- Nearly 60,000 children from schools around Minnesota experienced the Museum first-hand
- More than 26,500 visitors attended Target Free 3rd Sundays



I feel like a better mother because I can take my children there and give them **opportunities** for fun and learning.
—member, Access program

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY. YOUR SUPPORT SPARKS CHILDREN'S IMAGINATION AND CREATIVITY.

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FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Minnesota Children's Museum's fiscal year 2011 financial performance remains strong with a 5% increase in total net assets from fiscal year 2010.

The Museum's financial strength lies in its diversity of revenue sources including both earned and contributed income. Generous philanthropic giving represents 30% of total revenue; while Admissions and Membership represent 35% and Program, Investment and Other Income represent 35% of total revenue providing a well-balanced income model.

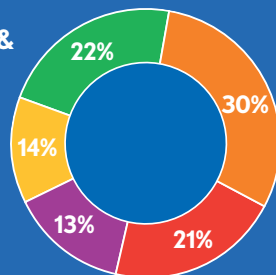
Earned revenue is sustained and continues to grow through advertising and marketing efforts which equal 10% of the Museum's overall annual expenses. Expenses in fiscal year 2011 increased 6% as the Museum welcomed significantly more visitors and grew service beyond the St. Paul location.



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

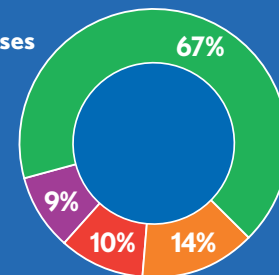
	June 30, 2011	June 30, 2010
ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 1,034,862	\$ 1,105,089
Certificates of Deposit	540,618	539,971
Accounts Receivable, Net	221,735	209,295
Pledges and Grants Receivable	1,098,786	1,178,427
Prepaid Expenses	238,423	271,413
Investments	4,832,461	4,146,547
Land, Building, Equipment & Exhibits, Net	7,062,714	6,869,621
Total Assets	\$ 15,029,599	\$ 14,320,429
LIABILITIES		
Capital Lease Obligations	\$ 54,267	\$ 17,085
Accounts Payable & Accrued Expense	560,745	374,646
Deferred Revenue	797,900	798,577
Total Liabilities	\$ 1,412,912	\$ 1,190,308
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted – Undesignated	\$ 936,400	\$ 931,764
Unrestricted – Designated	860,000	835,000
Temporarily Restricted	7,658,534	7,201,604
Permanently Restricted	4,161,753	4,161,753
Total Net Assets	13,616,687	13,130,121
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$ 15,029,599	\$ 14,320,429

Support & Revenue



- Grants and Contributions
- Museum Admissions
- Program Income
- Membership
- Investment & Other Income

Expenses



- Program*
- Administrative
- Marketing & Promotion
- Fundraising

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted	Unrestricted Designated	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total June 30, 2011
SUPPORT AND REVENUE					
Grants & Contributions	1,036,958	-	877,400	-	1,914,358
Museum Admissions	1,363,033	-	-	-	1,363,033
Memberships	891,587	-	-	-	891,587
Program Income	810,463	-	-	-	810,463
Investment & Other Income	503,105	15,206	905,774	-	1,424,085
TOTAL REVENUE	<u>\$ 4,605,146</u>	<u>\$ 15,206</u>	<u>\$ 1,783,174</u>		<u>\$ 6,403,526</u>
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	\$ 1,341,450		\$ (1,341,450)		
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE	<u>\$5,946,596</u>	<u>\$ 15,206</u>	<u>\$ 441,724</u>		<u>\$ 6,403,526</u>
EXPENSES					
Program	3,931,401	-	-	-	3,931,401
Administrative	838,838	-	-	-	838,838
Marketing & Promotion	589,346	-	-	-	589,346
Fundraising	557,375	-	-	-	557,375
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$5,916,960</u>				<u>\$ 5,916,960</u>
Operating Change in Net Assets	\$ 29,636	\$ 15,206	\$ 441,724		486,566
NON-OPERATING ACTIVITY AND TRANSFERS					
Board Designated Reserves	\$ (25,000)	\$ 25,000			
TOTAL CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	<u>\$ 4,636</u>	<u>\$ 40,206</u>	<u>\$ 441,724</u>		<u>\$ 486,566</u>
NET ASSETS – Beginning of Year	<u>\$ 931,764</u>	<u>\$ 819,794</u>	<u>\$ 7,216,810</u>	<u>\$ 4,161,753</u>	<u>\$ 13,130,121</u>
NET ASSETS – End of Period	<u><u>\$ 936,400</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 860,000</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 7,658,534</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 4,161,753</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 13,616,687</u></u>

*The Museum, whose mission is “sparkling children’s learning through play,” is proud to report that 67% of operating expenses are dedicated to program expenses. This total excludes program expenses that were capitalized. In addition to general program expenses, the Museum capitalized and will depreciate \$597,009 (or 10%) of total expenses associated with building new exhibits and renovating existing galleries.

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Minnesota Children's Museum

Smart Play

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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.