



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Children's Museum of Pittsburgh Announces Expanded Commitment to Ongoing Diversity and Inclusion Work**

### ***New Initiatives Focus on Black, Minority, and Underserved Children and Families***

PITTSBURGH (August 7, 2020)—Children's Museum of Pittsburgh is broadening its commitment to diversity and inclusion through facilitated engagement sessions, hiring a leader to guide our diversity and inclusion work, and establishing a permanent board committee to ensure continued progress. These efforts, along with our existing policies and programming, will continue our commitments to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and other minority audiences. Children's Museum of Pittsburgh's remains an organization built on a foundation that is designed for diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion for all visitors, former and current employees, partners, and community members.

#### **Engagement Sessions**

The museum strives to learn from the experiences of diverse audiences so that we can design programs and policies to ensure that every child and family feels welcome, safe, and seen – in particular Black, minority and marginalized children and families. In addition, we are committed to ensuring a work environment where different perspectives are valued and employees are comfortable expressing ideas and concerns. To achieve this goal, we are holding a series of engagement sessions, to be run by an independent facilitator, where we welcome current and former staff and members of the community to discuss how the museum can become a model of racial justice and equity. Anyone interested in participating in these sessions should email: [deai@pittsburghkids.org](mailto:deai@pittsburghkids.org) - more details will be posted as they are scheduled.

We are making a concerted effort to engage past employees side by side with current employees specifically to understand the concerns they have expressed in an open letter. We are accelerating our Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion (DEAI) efforts and we ask that the author and signees join us in the engagement sessions.

#### **Permanent Board Committee**

The museum Board of Directors added a permanent committee on Diversity, Equity, Accessibly and Inclusion (DEAI). The chair of this committee joins the executive committee of the board.

### **Newly Created DEAI Staff Position**

The museum Board of Directors and leadership has created a new position responsible for developing and implementing DEAI strategies and policies. This person will work as a museum-wide collaborative partner to foster and improve a diverse, equitable, accessible, and inclusive culture for employees and visitors. This position will report directly to the Executive Director of the Museum, Jane Werner. The individual will lead in educating museum staff how to dismantle oppressive systems and help hold the Museum accountable for the DEAI commitments it makes, thereby assisting the museum in fully achieving its mission throughout the entire community.

The DEAI position is [posted here](#), and we will be recruiting widely to fill the position.

### **Our Approach to Diversity and Anti-Racism**

The museum is finalizing a framework document: *Our Approach to Diversity and Anti-Racism*. We are continuing to review this internally, and will be sharing it for public feedback in the near future. The framework provides more detail about these newly announced initiatives and it will document will be shaped by the work of the facilitator and everyone who participates in the engagement sessions.

“Since March, we have been working to REIMAGINE the museum to be new and different when we reopen safely. We have expanded the scope of that work to elevate diversity and inclusion because museums aren’t neutral spaces; they are a reflection of and outgrowth of their environment,” said Jane Werner, Executive Director. “I’m grateful that we have past and present staff whose passion has further accelerated our plans. Our work now is to identify and implement changes that touch every aspect of the museum.”

Children’s Museum has a long history of programs that support Black families and children and we know that by expanding this work we can be an even better ally. Navigating through two equally important societal changes, COVID-19 and racial/social injustice, is providing the opportunity for the museum to conduct a deep re-examination. We call it REIMAGINING, and we will continue that work with an expanded focus on racial justice so that we become a stronger organization and better friend to and ally of Black children and families now and into the future.”

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For all past staff members who would like to participate in the engagement sessions, please email: [deai@pittsburghkids.org](mailto:deai@pittsburghkids.org).

If you are a community member who would like to participate in an upcoming engagement session, please email: [hi@pittsburghkids.org](mailto:hi@pittsburghkids.org)

To learn more about the Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh, visit: [pittsburghkids.org](http://pittsburghkids.org)

To learn more about MuseumLab, visit: [museumlabor.org](http://museumlabor.org)

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