Dear Friends,

Each year, Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh sets out to tell our dearest friends, supporters, and neighbors about the work we’ve done in the past year with their help. Through inspirational stories on our impact, an Annual Report is a place to celebrate our accomplishments. This year is a little different. This report encompasses a little over two years, and will simultaneously tell the stories of some of the Museum’s highest highs and how it has adapted and persevered when faced with some of the most challenging events in its history.

In the following report, you will have the opportunity to read about the opening of MuseumLab, our new museum for older kids; a fantastically ludicrous new exhibit; our incredible partners and artists; and how the Museum has committed to reimagining itself when it reopens to the public in 2021.

2020 has been especially difficult, though invigorating, as a year that has tested our conviction to our values and our mission. In the face of so much change, Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh has had to reinvestigate what it means to be the community resource it aspires to be. Both the addition of MuseumLab and the closure of our facilities due to the pandemic has challenged the norms of how we serve our community and neighbors who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

I am proud of how the Museum has risen to the occasion. Through celebrations, hardships, and transformations, Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh has kept its neighbors and community top of mind. It has prioritized acting kindly, with intention. It has leaned into the philosophies of Fred Rogers and the concept that impactful experiences can happen in our smallest interactions.

Our future looks so different than what we expected, and we aren’t quite to the other side yet. But I am incredibly hopeful. I am also very grateful for you, our friends and supporters. We truly would not be here without you.

Thank you for your support, your guidance, and your advocacy.

Sincerely,

Mike Duckworth
Board President, Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh
2016 – 2020

Images in this report represent events that took place through June 2020, many of which were prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent health and safety guidelines.

This year is a little different. This report will simultaneously tell the stories of some of the Museum’s highest highs and how it has adapted and persevered when faced with some of the most challenging events in its history.

Impactful experiences can happen in our smallest interactions.
On a clear day in September 2018, a crane raised a steel beam in place at the former Carnegie Library of Allegheny and the assembled crowd of dignitaries, Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh staff, supporters and visitors cheered. With this, the future of Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh and its Northside campus was in sight.

After several more months of work—windows installed, concrete poured, original mosaic floors polished—the building would become MuseumLab, a new museum for kids 10 and up.

Opening day, April 27, 2019, was chilly and windblown – the arch of green balloons around MuseumLab’s entrance threatened to break free and float away as opening remarks were made. But inside the excitement for the revitalization of this historic building was electric. Visitors explored new exhibits and artwork and took in how the building’s original grandeur was energized with repurposed materials and fresh features from an award-winning design by KoningEizenberg Architecture with architect of record PWWG. Performances by local artists such as The Krunk Movement, DJ Shoe and Steel City Slackers punctuated the day.

In Make Lab, visitors found a scaled up MAKESHOP, with soldering irons, woodworking equipment, laser and vinyl cutters, and sewing and embroidery machines in the first year of MuseumLab, we piloted many 10+ drop-off workshops here, with youth learning new skills in media such as iron-on decals, resin jewelry, marimbas, pop-up cards and sculpted wood. Youth workshops were supported by Cognizant’s Making the Future program and the John E. and Sue M. Jackson Charitable Trust.

Make Lab was also the base of our new Afterschool program, started September 2019, where youth could tackle longer-term projects of their choice as they formed bonds with staff and each other.

When MuseumLab opens in 2021, Make Lab will introduce new tools for metal arts as part of Fusion, presented by the Alconia Foundation. In the coming year, Make Lab will also focus on mixing these analog techniques with the digital technologies in the adjacent Tech Lab gallery.
Visitors can paint and engage in a virtual reality space, model in 3D, try a VR puzzle game and explore visual phenomena.

techn lab

Building on our decade-long partnership with Carnegie Mellon University’s Entertainment Technology Center (ETC), TechLab offers visitors cutting edge new technology to explore as they help prototype graduate student projects. Visitors can paint and engage in a virtual reality space, model in 3D, try a VR puzzle game and explore visual phenomena. They can also step inside Saturday Light Brigade Radio Production’s satellite studio to explore recording and broadcasting. In the future, ETC’s ARCADE AR platform will be used to position animations, build interactive narratives, and layer educational content in MuseumLab.

studio lab

In its first year, Studio Lab featured two inspiring exhibits. The first was Nek Chand: A Hidden World—you can read more about this in the Artist & Residencies section. The second was Channel: An exhibition about messaging between generations, led by guest curator Sean Beauford, who was inspired by youth exhibit ideas. Channel features painting, photography, installation and multimedia art by 10 young, local artists—Saige Baxter, Tyler Calpin, Brendan J. Hawkins, Corrine Jasmin, Steven Montinar, Binh-An Nguyen, Jameelah Platt, Sasha Schwartz, Katherine Sharpless and Shori Sims. Their art examines how your childhood voice is a powerful vehicle and lens for communication between generations. We will continue to use this youth curator process as we establish MuseumLab as a place that exists for and empowers youth.
The Gallery also features our collection of art and artifacts celebrating the lasting legacy of Fred Rogers.

creative change & ever onward

We’ve had some great celebrations in MuseumLab since it opened, but no two stand in starker contrast than the MuseumLab Gala in June 2019 and the Great Night In Gala in June 2020. In June 2019, we gathered to celebrate the opening of MuseumLab with chairs Don and Audrey Heberle and many friends and supporters. The building’s significant history and exciting future was evident in the pulse of that night. The next year, the COVID pandemic necessitated some creative changes to our annual gala, so we created the Great Night In Gala. We delivered pasta dinners and wine to attendees’ homes, as well as 300 local families experiencing food insecurity, and created a night of virtual entertainment, with appearances by Museum friends, athletes and celebrities, and rousing performances by local youth.

While the first year of MuseumLab ended with unexpected challenges from the COVID pandemic, it also delivered several awards and achievements. We were thrilled to earn Gold LEED status by the U.S. Green Building Council, the culmination of an effort to create a sustainable, accessible facility for the community. MuseumLab was also awarded the first Universal Design certificate from the University of Buffalo’s Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access (IDeA).

We were proud to also receive these awards and recognition over the past two years:

- 2019 Vanguard Award from the Green Building Alliance
- Architizer A+ Award for Cultural-Museums 2020 Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Award
- 2020 Institutional Award of Merit from the Pennsylvania Federation of Museums and Historical Organizations
- 2020 Design Silver Award from the American Institute of Architects: Pittsburgh
- Urban Land Institute’s 2018 Visionary Place Award
- USA Today’s 10 Best Children’s Museums Reader Poll
- Dezeen Awards 2020 Civic and Cultural Interior of the Year

MuseumLab was also awarded the first Universal Design certificate from the University of Buffalo’s Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access (IDeA).
In 2017, Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh’s Senior Director of Design Anne Fullenkamp and Associate Director of Business Development Rachel Mastromarino attended the American Alliance of Museums convention. There they met executives from the non-profit Rube Goldberg, Inc. who had seen their work on the popular Very Eric Carle: a Very Hungry, Quiet, Lonely, Clumsy, Busy Exhibit. They were especially impressed by the Museum’s Play with Real Stuff philosophy, which asserts that children deserve concrete learning experiences that are relevant to their lives.

Jennifer George, Rube Goldberg’s granddaughter, was interested in bringing her grandfather’s work to contemporary children’s audiences. Ms. George had released a best-selling book on her grandfather, The Art of Rube Goldberg, and was looking for a partner to develop an exhibit on Rube Goldberg’s machines. In Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh, she found the perfect partner.

The new exhibit, Rube Goldberg™: The World of Hilarious Invention!, ran October 2018 through May 2019, and focused on interaction, process and the spirit of do-it-yourself. Using Rube’s original illustrations and inventive storytelling as inspiration, we created a collection of new 3D, life-size machines and hands-on, interactive components that connect Rube’s iconic cartoon contraptions to the way things work in the physical world. Ms. George also wanted to ensure that the exhibit honored her grandfather, a successful cartoonist and satirist, so it was critical that the exhibit was infused with his fantastical sense of humor.

During the run of the exhibit, the Museum hosted the annual Rube Goldberg Machine Contest in which nine teams competed. Additionally, the Museum offered impromptu machine building workshops and programming activities—and oftentimes, we would find parents equally engrossed in building alongside their children.

Like all of our original exhibits, Rube Goldberg™: The World of Hilarious Invention!, made its premiere in Pittsburgh, welcoming hundreds of families and engaging them in programming before traveling the country. The exhibit is currently booked at locations throughout the country through Summer 2022.

And the joy continues... In February 2020, the Museum received a collection of more than 100 illustrations from the estate of Rube Goldberg, which we will curate into an art exhibit called Rube Goldberg Illustrated to display in the Museum.
Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh’s Education Department is the engine that drives rich learning experiences for students, educators, children and families.

Over the last two years, we offered a multitude of workshops, events and camps for our visitors, in topics ranging from felting wool, cardboard building and hand sewing to papermaking, garden exploration and portrait painting. In addition, teaching artists welcomed more than 30,000 students for school visits, workshops and youth programs.

MuseumLab allowed us to expand all of this learning into advanced subjects, processes, tools and materials suitable and attractive to a middle school audience. Here we were also able to incorporate more technology into hands-on activities. One example of this is our Mother’s Day activity in 2019—visitors laser cut their own wooden embroidery hoops in Make Lab and then embroidered a special message inside it to create a unique handmade gift.

School groups also began to explore MuseumLab’s exhibits and interactives in Spring 2019, and we began to learn from and deepen connections with Manchester Academic Charter School (MACS) students that fall as they settled into their new home.

In Tech Lab, our partnership with CMU’s Entertainment Technology Center allowed the Museum to present and explore cutting edge technologies and technical fields with children and families. Youth engaged with ETC graduate students and their projects to assist in testing, ideation, prototyping and building.

MuseumLab continued to evolve over its first year and some of its most exciting inventions were born when students worked across exhibit spaces on a project. For example, a visitor polished a glass piece from Studio Lab’s mosaic station, then brought it to Make Lab to solder wire around it to create a bracelet. Visitors engaged with fine art in a unique, tactile way by using a scanner from Tech Lab to create and print a 3D model of Nek Chand’s sculptures in Studio Lab.
In makeshift home studios across Pittsburgh, staff began to film demonstrations of projects featuring common materials, clear instructions and their inspiration and encouragement.

**virtual learning**

The COVID pandemic led us to expand our tech capabilities in a new direction—virtual learning. Almost as soon as the Museum closed, our teaching artists took on the challenge of offering activities that visitors could do at home. In makeshift home studios across Pittsburgh, staff began to film themselves leading demonstrations of DIY projects featuring common materials, clear instructions and their inspiration and encouragement.

To date, our Museum@Home program has produced and posted more than 65 videos, including Let’s Try, Let’s Go Outside and Behind the Scenes segments. We’ve compiled how visitors say “hi” these days, celebrated MuseumLab’s first birthday in song, and led a virtual Neighborhood Singalong. We had collaborative sessions with Attack Theatre and Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, and posted offerings from visiting artists such as Lee Robinson and the Channel exhibit artists. USA Today highlighted our online content as one of its 10 Best Children’s Museums.

MuseumLab’s Teaching Artists also pivoted the fledgling Afterschool program when the Museum closed due to the pandemic. The new model paired virtual sessions with kits delivered to students’ homes that included drawing materials, books, sewing materials, electronic kits and snacks. Afterschool programs were supported by Cognizant’s Making the Future program and the Arconic Foundation.

As the virtual school year ended, we fully transformed our summer camp program to virtual camps and studios. For 10 weeks, our staff used teleconferencing tools to facilitate camps with 130 children from around the country, ages 3–13, on topics ranging from rainbows, the five senses and squishy things to ‘zine making, applique and postal pop art.

Finally, supporting educators is a service the Museum provides every year through its professional development program. In the in-person version, our Museum teaching artists lead sessions on making, early childhood, art and technology for more than 250 educators each year, including two week-long Maker Educator Boot Camps. In the virtual realm, these programs were successfully retooled to offer 26 hours of educator training on topics such as Weaving & Geometry, Cardboard Building, Hervé Tullet’s Art and Backyard STEAM. And our online Maker Educator Boot Camps were attended by 25 educators from 12 different U.S. states and Ontario, Canada.
Over the past two years, the combination of Children’s Museum and MuseumLab programs has created an extensive selection of learning experiences for children of all ages and their families. Programs range from early childhood sessions, story times and sensory-friendly afternoons to a variety of art exploration, 21+ nights, and cultural programs.

One standout program of this time frame was STEAM Carnival, an arts-and-making-focused fall festival that brought together regional creatives of all ages to showcase cross-disciplinary work in science, technology, engineering, art and math. Students, educators, artists, makers and visitors explored, created and demonstrated STEAM projects over three delightful days in November 2019.

STEAM Carnival was made possible through the generous support of The Grable Foundation and the BNY Mellon Foundation of Southwestern Pennsylvania, and a partnership with Two Bit Circus Foundation.

Family Day featured a full campus of STEAM projects, groups and performers including circus arts, Bharatanatyam, experimental music, and a car take apart.

Education Day featured more than 600 students participating in Education Day by exploring soldering, LEDs and 3D printing, playtesting interactive machines created by CMU’s IDeA Te program, working on a collaborative glass mosaic, carving patterns with a handheld CNC machine, and enjoying a variety of performances.

Professional Development Day sold out with almost 100 educators and 252 Act 48 hours earned. STEAM learning sessions were led by staff and community partners. Topics included interactive storytelling, robotics, animation, winter gardening and game design.
Community engagement is an indispensable part of our vision at Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh. Collaboration is essential to our mission and as such we have developed dozens of robust partnerships with local, regional, and national groups to extend all of our work on behalf of children and families. The past few years have seen exciting new partnerships as well as the evolution of established relationships.

Since 2004 the Children’s Museum has shared its space and formally partnered with four in-house child-focused organizations: Allies for Children, Reading is FUNdamental Pittsburgh, The Saturday Light Brigade, and two Pittsburgh Public School Early Childhood Classrooms. With the opening of MuseumLab, Allies for Children has moved over to a new, larger space on the Garden Level of the Library building. The creation of MuseumLab has sparked the idea of a campus in the North Side that focuses on the whole child.

MuseumLab is home to several non-profit partners, including Manchester Academic Charter School (MACS), the University of Pittsburgh’s Department of Education, and three separate partnerships with Carnegie Mellon University—the Entertainment Technology Center, Integrative Design, Arts, and Technology (ideAte), and the Masters of Arts Management Program’s Experiential Learning Initiatives.

We see our partnership with MACS as the key to unlocking the potential of MuseumLab. In our out-of-school environment, we have the unique ability to test, develop, fail, iterate and try again in a setting that enables and supports innovation. Schools and traditional education settings cannot do this. When the concept for MuseumLab was formed, we knew that partnering with schools was a key piece of the innovation puzzle. MACS began their first year in MuseumLab in August 2019. Combined with the two existing Pittsburgh Public School Pre-K classrooms in the Children’s Museum, 200 students were now using Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh as their school.

MACS educators explore learning through changing art and exhibits at MuseumLab, and we test, observe and prototype with students onsite. MACS integrates MuseumLab activities into their classroom schedule – last year, students participated in facilitated activities in exhibit spaces for an elective class four times per week. Additionally, we partnered with MACS to offer food service to its students through our Big Red Room Café, and organized a Family Night event for student families at MuseumLab.
Deeply embedded in Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh’s ethos is art. Our partnerships with artists provide our visitors with new perspectives. The exhibits, installations, and programs in the Children’s Museum and MuseumLab create a one-of-a-kind community space that celebrates creativity, expression, problem solving, and experimentation. The primary homes for these programs are the Studio in the Children’s Museum and Studio Lab in MuseumLab.

This past year, the Studio featured an exhibit inspired by the works of international artist and author Hervé Tullet. The exhibit, Move Along and Change Your Place, was a hands-on participatory exhibit that explored where ideas and inspiration originate. Then in February 2020, the Studio opened an exhibit entitled Puppets: A Beautiful Fantasy, focused on character development, movement, and storytelling. The Museum’s delivery of art programming combining a variety of interactive experiences runs throughout its spaces.

The inaugural exhibit in Studio Lab was an immersive installation of the Museum’s collection of sculptures by the artist Nek Chand, and ran from April 2019 through February 2020. Nek Chand was an untutored Indian artist whose work began by setting stone sculptures around a small clearing near his home and evolved into a 25-acre installation of several thousand. In Nek Chand: A Hidden World, the Museum’s collection of 35 sculptures were curated and displayed in the Studio Lab gallery along with digital images and video of the figures in their original location, The Rock Garden of Chandigarh, India.

This exhibit provided visitors the opportunity to explore Chand’s process of mosaic tiling, layering and carving to create their own figure sculptures. Studio Lab also incorporated other art forms to create work inspired by Nek Chand, including large scale, collaborative embroidery. To complement the Nek Chand exhibit, Studio Lab hosted its first Artist in Residence—mosaic artist Linda Wallen.
In Summer 2019, we also began work with Sean Beauford as Studio Lab’s Curator in Residence. Sean led a “Create and Curate” Intensive Summer Camp for middle school youth. Participants visited the Aviary, City of Asylum and the Carnegie Museum of Art to speak to artists and exhibit designers, and explore various exhibition styles and formats. They also spoke to Children’s Museum staff to understand the tools, materials and techniques used to make an idea or story come to life in an exhibit. The camp ended with a showcase of the students’ work, including gallery models and writings. This process then informed the creation of the Channel exhibit.

MuseumLab is also home to several commissioned art pieces, including a major sculptural installation, entitled OverView, which layers fabric, cables, and hardware to mimic the original stained glass patterns of the Library’s ceiling. Created by art group FreelandBuck, this piece is located in the Grable Gallery off the Main Lobby.

The Museum also hired five artists—Gabe Felice, Brandon Koch, Ramon Riley, Mia Taraducci and Maureen Walsh—to create murals and installations in MuseumLab.

After more than a decade of facilitating artist residencies that promote hands-on experiences, the Museum welcomed Neil Mendoza as its first Technologist in Residence from October 2019 to March 2020. Neil uses sculpture, electronics, and software to transform inanimate objects and spaces into interactive experiences.

During his residency, Neil developed The Tyranny of Birds, an installation consisting of a flock of robotic birds made of bread that take flight when real birds appear on the screens surrounding them. The Technologist in Residence program was made possible by the BNY Mellon Foundation of Southwestern Pennsylvania.
The business partnerships that Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh engages in continue to open up new and unique possibilities for extending our reach. Led by the Exhibits team and Senior Director of Design Anne Fullenkamp, we have worked with hundreds of businesses and entities over the years to design innovative spaces, products and programs that facilitate play, experiential learning and social interaction for children and families.

**kidsport**

In 2017, we partnered with the Allegheny County Airport Authority to create Kidsport, an interactive space at Pittsburgh International Airport designed for families to ease traveling with children. Kidsport was updated in 2019 as part of the airport modernization project and now includes interactive Mister Rogers and Daniel Tiger exhibit pieces.

**presley’s place**

The story of Presley’s Place, as with most interesting stories, begins with an unexpected encounter. An airport employee met with Christina Cassotis, CEO of Allegheny County Airport Authority, and shared that he appreciated the Kidsport addition to the airport. He asked if there could be a space in the airport designed to make air travel easier for children like his son, Presley, who had been diagnosed with autism.

This initial conversation launched a project that involved Hayes Design Group Architects, airplane parts donated by American Airlines, and even tours of a commercial airplane hangar. Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh designed a full-scale space where families could safely experience a real airplane, working with XYZ Custom, Inc. to create a replica jet bridge, cabin divider and threshold ramps. The space includes overhead lights, seats and tray tables – and the most important details - scale photographs of the approach into Pittsburgh from the sky installed as wallpaper.

Presley’s Place has enabled the Airport Authority to better serve its family travelers, and won the American Institute of Architecture Pittsburgh’s 2019 People’s Choice Award.

Looking forward, the Museum is continuing its work with the Airport Authority and has designed a 300-foot mural celebrating Pittsburgh as part of the continued airport modernization project.
Children's Museum of Pittsburgh has a long history of perseverance, adaptability, and financial stability. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a layered, complex effect on the Museum’s finances. The Museum has adapted again, striving to fulfill its responsibility as a cultural anchor for the North Side community and for Allegheny County.

**Earned & Contributed Operating Revenue Trends**
- Earned Revenue
- Contributed Revenue

**Endowment and Board Designated Trends**
- Endowment Assets
- Board Designated Fund

**FY 19–FY 20 Financial Summary**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>FY 2019</th>
<th>FY 2020</th>
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Thank you to the individuals, foundations, companies, and government agencies who contributed to the Museum in 2019 and 2020. We are deeply grateful for your unwavering support.

Donors listed contributed at least $100 to support the Museum’s projects and operations between July 1, 2018–June 30, 2020.

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Gift made by Financial Executive International: Pittsburgh Chapter

Honoring Beth Wainwright and Sarah Stallings
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In Memory of Beth Cohen
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Executive Director—Jane Werner, Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh
Dear Friends,

Change is inevitable and constant. Sometimes that change is gentle, and sometimes it arrives in the form of crisis, which triggers adaptation.

2020 has been a year of crisis—the combination of the global pandemic and the re-ignition of calls for racial equity with new vigor has forced the world, our country, and Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh to clearly define its purpose, vision, and path forward.

In this time of crisis, all nonprofits have been hard hit and forced to adapt. Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh closed its doors to the public on March 13, 2020, a gut-wrenchingly painful yet necessary decision for the safety of our community.

The closure of the Museum’s facilities bestowed one blessing upon the staff and Board—an abundance of time. Resources for nonprofits are limited, always, but this time to pause, reflect, and plan has unleashed a creative force that will help the Museum evolve and adapt for whatever the future may bring. The next section of this report will give you a sneak peek into what the Museum has planned for our next stage, and we are thrilled to share it with you.

This past year also brought about one more bittersweet transition—the Board President that oversaw the opening of MuseumLab, Mike Duckworth, is stepping down from his post and I am taking his place. Mike has left me huge shoes to fill, but I am eternally grateful for the inspirational leadership he has shown through the Museum’s most exciting and most trying times. Mike, thank you.

To all of our donors, supporters, and friends, I hope that this report fills you with the relentless optimism that I think characterizes Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh and provides us all with the drive to move forward.

Here’s to 2021.

Sincerely,

Karen Larrimer
Board President, Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh
We have all heard so many descriptions repeated again and again—difficult, unprecedented, challenging—describing our current environment. For the first time since its founding in 1983, Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh has been forced to close to the public for over nine months. COVID-19 has upended every aspect of our lives worldwide. We have adjusted over and over again. Remarkably, thanks to strong leadership, we have chosen to view this crisis with optimism. We have tested the hypothesis: how can we view this as an opportunity?

Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh has worked hard to be nimble and resilient, focusing on how to emerge stronger and help others along the way. In this time of forced pause, the Museum has time to reflect and reimagine, and envisions a new, better version of itself that is forward-thinking and fresh, diverse, financially stable, and responsive to the community. To this end, the Museum seeks critical support for its bold Reimagine Initiative, as well as support to bolster and replenish its resources into the future, ensuring that it can remain an asset for children and families for years to come.

The question we’ve asked ourselves is what would we do, if we had the chance to do things differently. Thanks to strong leadership, we have chosen to view this crisis with optimism.

The question we’ve asked ourselves is what would we do, if we had the chance to do things differently.
reimagining social justice: deaij

Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh is built on a foundation that supports diversity, equity, accessibility, inclusion and justice (DEAIJ) for all visitors, former and current employees, partners, artists and community members.

Navigating two equally important societal changes, COVID-19 and racial/social injustice, has given us the opportunity to deeply examine how we can expand our focus on racial justice and become a stronger organization now and into the future.

Our most recent steps include hiring a new leader for diversity and inclusion work, establishing a permanent committee of the board, retaining a diversity catalyst, and continuously gathering feedback that can be put into action. In October, Mónica Méndez joined the Museum as our Head of Culture Change and will oversee all DEAIJ efforts. Mónica is a diversity and inclusion leader with considerable experience in strategy development, implementation, and change management.

Additionally, Valerie Kinloch, Dean of the University of Pittsburgh School of Education and a member of the Museum’s Board of Directors, has taken on the leadership of the board’s permanent committee on DEAIJ and in this role is joining the executive committee of the board. The Museum has retained Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council Diversity Catalyst Cecile Shellman to help us with learning and continuing to weave this important work into our day-to-day operations. Cecile has been leading listening sessions, town halls, education and training, survey and benchmarking work, and case study sessions.

We also started the After School at MuseumLab program in October 2020 for middle school youth, focusing specifically on social justice through arts and making. Participants tackle current issues that affect their lives, learn new art processes and combine them to work toward positive change in the world.

These efforts, along with our existing policies and programs, will continue our commitment to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BPOC) and other minority and marginalized audiences. The DEAIJ approach is an ongoing commitment with no end point; it involves actionable and accountable ongoing steps that grow the Museum’s focus on diverse and equitable outcomes.

After School at MuseumLab is made possible by generous support from The Grable Foundation.
Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh has always been a place of inspiration for me. It is a place that inspires kindness, joy, creativity, and curiosity.

Dear Friends,

Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh has always been a place of inspiration for me. It is a place that inspires kindness, joy, creativity, and curiosity. Beyond that, it is also a place that sparks important conversations within families, empowers children and youth to explore their worlds, and reminds us of the importance of slowing down and appreciating what surrounds us. Watching families form memories in our buildings and in the park fills me with joy and purpose.

This closure of the Museum’s physical spaces in response to the pandemic challenged what we thought it meant to be a museum. In a recent revision of our mission statement, we expanded the description of our work to include the ways we interact with our community that cannot be contained within physical walls. As of September 2020, the new mission statement of Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh is:

To provide innovative and inclusive museum experiences that inspire kindness, joy, creativity and curiosity for all learners.

We forge connections with artists, community partners and neighbors to work on behalf of children, youth and families.

This new mission statement also makes it abundantly clear that the Museum prioritizes the connectivity of our community. Through both our celebratory and painful experiences, we are connected. For the sake of our children and youth, we must together find ways to evolve and adapt.

MuseumLab stands as a testament to the Children’s Museum’s willingness to take big risks when the rewards could be huge for children and families. Absolutely no one is grateful for civil unrest spurred by racial inequity, nor a global pandemic, but I am filled with optimism and hope for how the world may change in response.

It is my most sincere hope that this report makes you proud of the ways the Museum has inspired and served, adapted and evolved, pivoted and reflected. We have Reimagined the future of Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh, in pursuit of being the most equitable, joyful, community-focused Museum we can be.

Thank you for your friendship and your support.

Sincerely,

Jane Werner
Executive Director, Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh
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