

Annual Report 2009

# Play, Learn, Grow.



[www.mychildsmuseum.org](http://www.mychildsmuseum.org)



# Our Mission

The mission of the Children's Museum of Denver is to create a community where children and their grownups learn through play.

Center for the Young Child



Trick or Treat Street



Jet Pack International

**"It's the little things that make the big things possible. Only close attention to the fine details of any operation makes the operation first class."**

– J. Willard Marriott

## A Letter to Our Supporters

Dear Friends,

Despite the adversity of the challenging economy, the Children's Museum of Denver enjoyed significant triumphs in fiscal year 2009. Once again, we set an attendance record, welcoming more than 289,000 children and their grownups, a 6% increase from 2008. We also made great progress in preparing our new exhibit, Bubbles, for its debut in 2010.

We know that in tough economic times you have less money to spend on family activities and we consider our attendance record an affirmation: You see us as a good return on your hard-earned dollars.

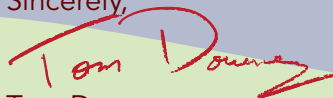
To keep you coming back, we continually looked for ways to give you and your youngsters a better Museum. Based on comment cards that many visitors filled out and informal comments passed to our staff, we know that you place a high importance on what some people might consider "little things." We've tried to get those "little things" right.

Take Museum upkeep, for example. We've always worked hard to keep the Museum clean, neat and ready for fun and learning, but decided we could do more. We hired a new service that thoroughly cleans the Museum each night and assigned a day porter to circulate continuously through exhibits to tidy up every minute we are open. We've also prioritized maintenance, so that our Playscapes and other tools for learning are in good working order when you visit.

As we look ahead, we are excited about Bubbles, our new exhibit opening in May 2010. It will help fill the needs you have shared with us for science-oriented exhibits and for activities that appeal to children of all ages. We will continue to turn to you for greater insight to further improve the Museum. Your feedback and ideas are essential to the work that we do and toward shaping its future.

Thank you for making us one of the most popular children's museums in the country. We look forward to even bigger and better things in years to come.

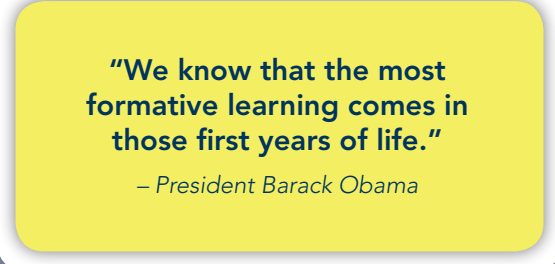
Sincerely,



Tom Downey  
President



Deborah Wapensky  
Board Chair



**"We know that the most formative learning comes in those first years of life."**

– President Barack Obama



## Year at a Glance

We, too, know that learning doesn't begin only when a child starts formal schooling. Children are exploring and learning from the moment they are born. Everything the Museum does – whether through programs, exhibits or printed materials – is directed toward cultivating young children's enthusiasm for learning and developing necessary skills for success in school. In fiscal year 2009, the Museum proudly achieved these milestones in carrying out its mission to create a community where children and their grownups learn through play:

- ⌘ *We served a record-breaking 289,735 children, parents, teachers and other caregivers, a 6% increase from the year before;*
- ⌘ *We provided 12,833 free admissions to children in low-income schools and child care centers through our Sponsored Admissions Program;*
- ⌘ *We welcomed 1,783 Head Start children and their families through the City of Denver's 5 By 5 Project, which introduces participants to leading cultural facilities free of charge;*
- ⌘ *We completed the sixth year of the Museum's G.R.O.W. (Growing Respect by Observing our World) Science and Literacy Collaborative, involving more than 900 Denver and Adams County children from Title I schools, along with their teachers and families;*
- ⌘ *We opened our doors free to the public the first Tuesday evening of each month, thanks to the generosity of the Target Corporation, drawing more than 11,000 children and their caregivers;*
- ⌘ *We finished the second year of the Rose Community Foundation's Building Organizational Operating Strength Together program, which helps us evaluate and plan Museum services and operations;*
- ⌘ *We carried out the first year of the Museum's three-year Strategic Business Plan;*
- ⌘ *We served more people per square foot of exhibit space than any other children's museum in the country.*



## The Financials

### STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

#### Support and revenues

Gifts and grants	\$ 1,833,993
Earned revenue	\$ 1,535,685
Special events revenue-net	\$ 214,520
Interest & miscellaneous income	\$ 38,829
<b>Total support and revenues</b>	<b>\$ <u>3,623,027</u></b>

#### Expenses

Program	\$ 2,297,008
Supporting	\$ 1,250,726
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$ <u>3,547,734</u></b>

Change in net assets	75,293
Net assets at beginning of year	<u>3,985,988</u>
Net assets at end of year	<u>\$ 4,061,281</u>

### BALANCE SHEET

#### Assets

Current assets	\$ 624,718
Investments	\$ 1,227,696
Property and equipment-net	\$ <u>2,687,427</u>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$ <u>4,539,841</u></b>

#### Liabilities and net assets

Liabilities	\$ <u>478,560</u>
Net assets	
Unrestricted	\$ 3,929,330
Temporarily restricted	<u>131,951</u>
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>\$ <u>4,061,281</u></b>
<b>Total net assets &amp; liabilities</b>	<b>\$ <u>4,539,841</u></b>

The Children's Museum of Denver, Inc. is audited annually by an independent audit firm. Copies of the audit are available upon request.

**Birthday Bash-  
Meet Me In Paris**



**Trick or Treat Street**



## Twelve Months of Learning and Fun

Sweltering or brisk, sunny or overcast, drizzling or dry. Just as no two days are identical, no two visits to the Children's Museum are exactly the same.

In fiscal year 2009 (July 2008 - June 2009), our themes changed monthly and our programs almost daily, making each trip to the Museum a new adventure. Children and grownups enjoyed another year of ever-changing fun and learning, season by season.

### **July 2008:**

During Stellar Science Month, we predicted weather, grew plants and explored colors. Junior Jobsite opened for a three-month run to teach children the nuts and bolts of construction.

### **August 2008:**

Messin' Around Month got sloppy and gloppy with paints, clay, sand and more.

### **September 2008:**

Our Diverse Community Month highlighted humanity's variety, while Hop, Skip & a Jump Start's family-friendly races got everyone into exercise. Farm critters from our partner, The Urban Farm at Stapleton, were corralled in the plaza for our first-ever Storybook Farm. And we began to stay open late each Wednesday, so busy families had new opportunities to learn and play.

### **October 2008:**

BOOtiful Bugs Month introduced visitors to dragonflies, fireflies, ladybugs and even germs, those tiniest of "bugs." Everyone smiled for the camera at our annual photography fundraiser "Say Cheese." And no one could miss Trick or Treat Street, our ever-popular yearly Halloween festival.

### **November 2008:**

Blast to the Past Month time-traveled through history from the time of prehistoric dinosaurs to the groovy 1960s. Kids had a super time at the first of several Superhero Wednesday nights where visitors were encouraged to come clad as Spidey, Batman or other super-types.

### **December 2008:**

W-w-w-winter might be ch-ch-chilly, but Winter Wonderland Month celebrated the coolest of seasons with lessons about snow, polar bears, igloos and more. Kids snacked with Santa on one special Saturday. And 2009 arrived early with December 31's Noon Year's Eve, a pint-sized party with balldrops and "fireworks" – little feet jumping on giant sheets of bubble wrap.

## ARTS a la Carte



## Backyard Explorers



### January 2009:

During Wild West Month, visitors mosied in to learn how the West was won. To support Denver's Road Home, the city's comprehensive plan to end homelessness, we invited youngsters to the Museum for a pajama party.

### February 2009:

Big Red Fun Month was red-olent with shades of scarlet: rose-colored glasses, crimson sugar cookies, ruby roses and more.

### March 2009:

Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes Month welcomed spring by demonstrating the advantages of exercise and healthy foods. Guests also test-drove components of our exciting new Bubbles exhibit (opening spring 2010), while everyone wore green for our St. Patrick's celebration.

### April 2009:

Celebrating Creative Creatures Month involved learning about snakes, turtles, bears and other denizens of the natural world. And a hoppy – we mean happy – bunny-suited volunteer led the way to egg-stravagent egg-sploration during the annual Bunny Trail EggVenture.

### May 2009:

Visiting storybook characters such as Curious George delighted youngsters during the ever-popular Get Caught Reading Month. Wild hairdos prevailed on Crazy Hair Day, while Never Never Day featured Peter Pan-costumed performers from the International Youth Ballet. And for the 36th time, we celebrated the Museum with a Parisian-themed Birthday Bash. Ooh la la!

### June 2009:

The Birthday Bash may have been in May, but June was Party Month – with every day a celebration. We closed out the fiscal year with a second visit from Junior Jobsite, a monstrous Mighty Machines event and good-health lessons from the For Kids By Kids 9Health Fair.



## Mighty Machines

Earth Day



CMD Fire Station No. 1



## Programs and Playscapes

Month after month in 2009, the Children’s Museum offered exhibits and programs to help children think critically, solve problems, expand large- and fine-motor skills, and learn more about art, literacy, science, math and social development. Whether in the Museum or in the community, or for formal groups or informal family visits, children had a wide variety of choices.

### In the Museum

**Playscapes:** The 11 exhibits in the Museum enable children to role-play on a real fire engine in CMD Fire Station No. 1, dress as woodland creatures in *Under My Feet and Over My Head*, test-drive proposed new exhibits in *WillItWorks*, grocery-shop in *My Market* and build unique creations from recycled materials in the *Assembly Plant*. Even the youngest visitors can explore soft, safe and quiet areas in the *Center for the Young Child’s* pond, meadow, grove and village.

**Programmed Field Trips:** School groups visiting the Museum dance and sing as they enter the world of the classic children’s story “*The Gingerbread Man*,” don hard hats and use real tools to enter the construction zone of *Just Toolin’ Around*; and become backyard science sleuths in *Nature Detectives*. Group programs enhance a variety of curricula such as music, science, geography, theater, dance, math, reading and writing. In 2009, we welcomed 13,283 children from schools throughout the metro area.

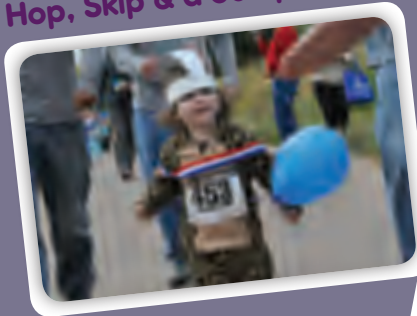
### In the Community

**Outreach and Group Programs:** Children can benefit from our play-and-learn philosophy without ever visiting the Museum. In FY09, our talented team of educators took a wide variety of programs into the community’s schools and daycare centers, serving more than 7,000 children, teachers and caregivers. Programs are carefully designed to meet state educational standards and to augment school curricula.

Some of the programs we provide invite students to step into our 26-foot-tall *Earth Balloon* to learn about geography and cultures around the world; better understand the body’s internal workings with *Stuffee*, a giant doll with removable organs; and crawl into *Star Lab*, a portable planetarium, to explore constellations.

*Note: Some programs are available both in the community and in the Museum.*

Hop, Skip & a Jump Start



Bubbles Prototyping



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### \$500 - \$999

Anonymous

### \$100 - \$499

### Up to \$99

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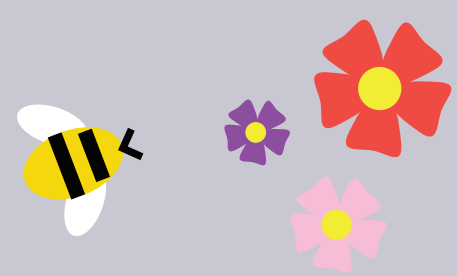
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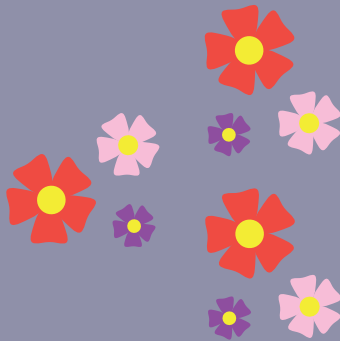


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