



betty brinn
CHILDREN'S
museum



2019 Annual Report

A message from the **Executive Director**



This year was marked by significant change at the Betty Brinn Children's Museum. The organization's Executive Director of 21 years – Fern Shupeck – retired in April. She spent two decades transforming the Museum into the successful organization it is today, and we thank her for her years of dedication and commitment. As the Museum's new Executive Director, I look forward to helping shape the next generation of innovative young minds in Milwaukee.

Last year's leadership transition led to a number of organizational changes, including simplifying the Museum's mission statement to highlight its role as a premiere educational resource for children and families. **The Museum's mission is to inspire all children to wonder and explore their world through play and innovative, hands-on learning experiences.** Our mission hasn't changed – it has simply been restated to better reflect our commitment to serving the community.

The Board has devoted many hours to brainstorming, discussing and strategizing about the future in order to continue the Museum's positive growth. The Board is guiding long-term strategic planning and striving to improve our organization's culture, structure, revenue streams and educational programming to meet the needs of children and families in our community.

I am happy to report we have plotted the Museum's future course by developing a strategic plan that reaffirms our deep commitment to children and families and supports our work to develop playful experiences, exhibits and programs that spark curiosity and contribute to a child's healthy development. Furthermore, our new strategic plan builds on the organization's strengths and provides ample opportunities for growth to help secure our future.

We also remain committed to introducing science, technology, engineering, arts/design and math (STEAM) concepts to young children to encourage exploration, collaboration and the development of a broad range of skills that will help them succeed in school and beyond.

Since its inception, the Museum has served more than 4.5 million children and adults. We are proud that our educational services reached more than 200,000 people both on- and off-site in 2019, including those that benefited from outreach programs that reflect our commitment to ensuring Museum accessibility for all children. As the only children's museum in the greater Milwaukee area and a long-standing community resource, our organization will continue to develop meaningful programming that meets the needs of families in our region and helps create a strong foundation for lifelong learning.

Thank you for your commitment to improving the lives of children and families in our community. Your ongoing support ensures the Betty Brinn Children's Museum will be able to continue providing engaging learning experiences.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'BK' or 'Brian King'.

Brian King
Executive Director

2019 Overview



202,432

individuals served in 2019.

173,295 visitors to the Museum.

29,619 participated in off-site programming.

66,734 Museum members visited the facility.

2,046 families received free, year-long memberships through our *Family Focus* program.

5,319 individuals visited the Museum on a *Neighborhood Night*, our free admission evenings.

1,896 *Neighborhood Night* visitors participated in a *Be a Maker* workshop.

Field Trip & Group Visits

24,909 children, educators and chaperones visited the Museum for a field trip or facilitated program.

536 educators attended professional development sessions through the *Teacher Studio* program.

6,291 children participated in our *Focus Field Trip* programs.

3,313 children became young makers through our *Be A Maker Field Trip* program.

207 scouts earned their STEAM merit badges in our makerspaces.

7,999 students and educators from under-resourced schools visited the Museum for little or no cost through our *Special Admissions Program*.

Creating places that invite wonder.



Special Exhibits

In October, the Museum debuted its ninth traveling exhibit - *Some Assembly Required*, which was created in partnership with Build-A-Bear Workshop, Inc. The exhibit engages children in activities that help foster the development of key social-emotional skills and highlights Build-A-Bear Workshop's Core Values: achieve, collaborate, celebrate, give, learn, and embrace. It encourages children to tinker, invent and solve problems, as they work together to build a bridge, play in a band, plant a pretend garden, and solve basic code.

In addition to our new traveling exhibit, we reintroduced a number of our feature exhibits that inspire learning for visitors, including *Trivial Pursuit®: A 50-State Adventure*, our baseball-themed *Big League Fun* exhibit and *Let's Play Railway!™*. Our popular *Hands-On Harley-Davidson™* exhibit also received updates, with new ride-on video experiences, props and custom activity components.

Special Events

The Museum hosted three signature events in 2019 that provided exclusive opportunities for families and friends to play together and support our educational mission. In August, we hosted *Big League Fun Night* to celebrate the return of our beloved baseball exhibit. Families were treated to a special evening of play that included meet-and-greets with our friends from the Milwaukee Brewers.

In September, we presented *Maker Faire® Milwaukee* at the Wisconsin Center, where more than 16,000 aspiring makers attended hands-on workshops and demonstrations hosted by hundreds of artists, hobbyists, tech enthusiasts, and businesses from throughout our region who shared their incredible skills, knowledge and work.

Our largest fundraiser of the year, *Take Me Out to the Gala*, was held in November and our supporters hit it out of the park by raising more than \$286,000 to help fund our community outreach initiatives, while enjoying an evening at the Museum with a silent auction, dinner and dancing.



Programming - **curiosity required!**



In 2019, the Museum offered a diverse range of educational programming for families and students that encouraged children to find their interests and learn through playful, hands-on activities designed to foster their academic, social, emotional, and physical growth.

Educational Programs

Museum educators engaged our youngest visitors in story times, simple experiments and learning games during these free, small classes created especially for visiting babies, toddlers and preschoolers and their adults: *Tot Time*, *Pint-Sized Science*, *Environmental Explorers*, *Our Five Senses* and *RIGAMAJIG*.

Be A Maker Programs

During the year, children and families gathered in the Museum's *Be A Maker* space for creative workshops that encouraged children to use unique materials, real tools, digital resources, and technology. Museum maker educators hosted year-round open-making hours, field trip and Scout programs, as well as a special Hour of Code event and a summer workshop series in partnership with Sculpture Milwaukee.

For K-12 educators seeking to implement making, makerspaces and STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) learning into their curriculum, the Museum offered free, monthly professional development meet-up events as part of our *Teacher Studio* program presented in partnership with the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Exploring their world.

Field Trips

The Museum welcomed 24,909 students, educators and chaperones as part of our Field Trip program in 2019. Our program served as a resource for teachers, Scout leaders and other organized groups seeking to enhance their students' knowledge and expand classroom learning. Our self-guided visits and facilitated *Be A Maker* Field Trips and Focused Field Trips reflect Wisconsin and national academic standards, as well as Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards and developmental milestones recognized by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.



Community Enrichment

We also partnered with dozens of peer organizations to offer a variety of enrichment opportunities all year round, including *Dance with Me* with Danceworks, Inc., *Stories and Songs* with the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music, reptile meet and greets with Reptile Education Through Contact, painting with Stickman Painting Studio and the *Insect Zoo* with Presto-X.



Playful learning for all.

The Betty Brinn Children's Museum is dedicated to ensuring accessibility for all children and families. In 2019, our *Community Outreach Initiatives* made it possible for thousands of families and students to benefit from Museum experiences that help children learn and grow.

Neighborhood Night

Each month, the Museum invited the community for free open play during special evening hours on our *Neighborhood Nights* and 5,319 people visited throughout the year to explore our exhibits and participate in creative, facilitated workshops in our *Be A Maker* space.



Family Focus

We enrolled 2,046 qualifying families in our free, *Family Focus* membership program, which offers 12-months of unlimited access to our facility and enrichment programs, along with the opportunity to secure transportation assistance for Museum visits.

Special Admissions Program

Through our *Special Admissions Program*, 7,999 students and educators from under-resourced schools, childcare centers and community organizations were granted a field trip to the Museum for little or no cost during the year.



Honor Roll

We are honored to acknowledge our 2019 Annual Campaign donors who made gifts, pledges or pledge payments of \$100 or more to the Museum, as well as our supporting sponsors and donor-level members. Thank you!

We make every effort to ensure the accuracy of the Museum's Honor Roll. If you find an error, have questions, or need additional information, please email development@bbcmkids.org.

\$100,000 or more



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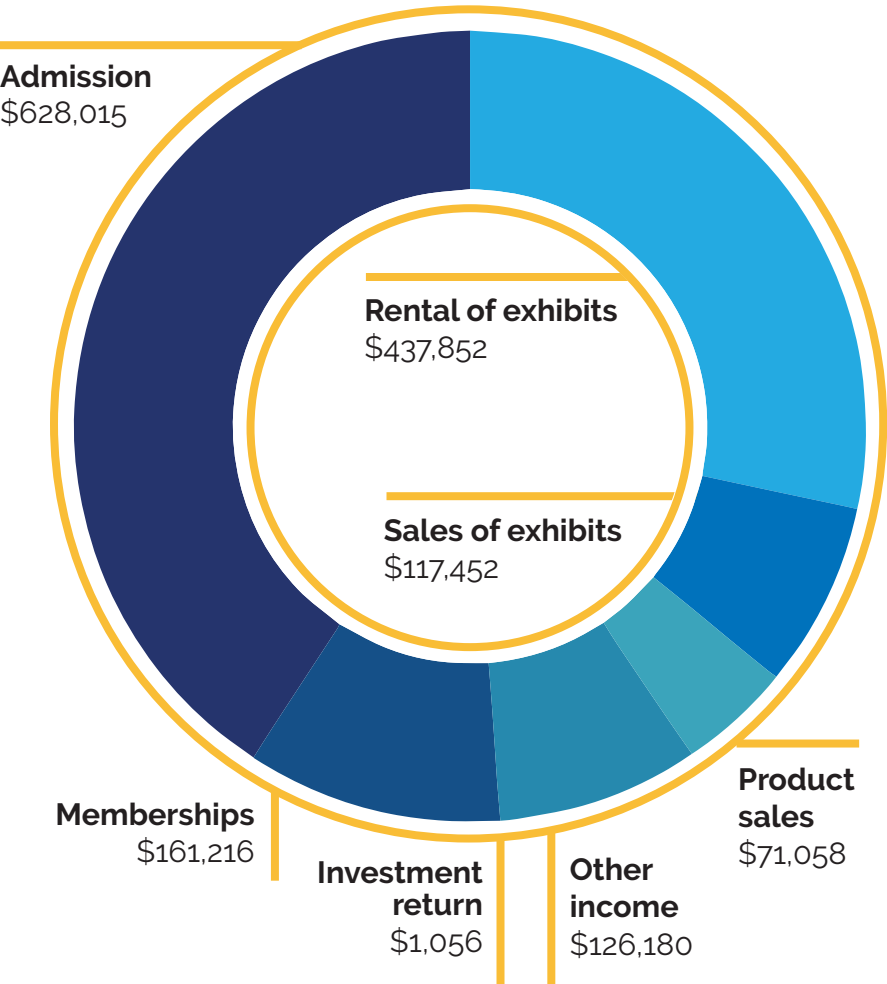
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Financials

Statement of activities

Earned revenue \$1,542,929

Contributions \$1,033,147



Expenses \$3,338,391

Program services

Museum experience	\$786,235
Outreach	\$197,895
Exhibit development	\$791,188
Educational initiatives	\$275,676

Supporting Activities

Management and general	\$720,334
Fundraising	\$454,579
Membership development	\$112,484

Total expenses \$4,201,388

Change in net assets (\$1,625,312)

Total income \$2,576,076

Balance sheet

Assets

Current	\$1,230,183
Investments	\$1,364
Exhibits	\$3,972,376
Leasehold improvements	\$1,384,248
Equipment	\$272,976
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(\$4,269,907)
Other assets	\$77,910

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current liabilities	\$1,050,816
Net assets	
Unrestricted	\$1,170,267
Restricted	\$448,067
Total net assets	\$1,618,334

Total liabilities and net assets \$2,669,150