



PROVIDENCE

Children's
museum

2019 Annual Report

Letters from Our Leadership



As a young child in South Boston, I didn't feel that museums belonged to me. They existed outside of who I was, where I belonged, and certainly not something I could see as a career choice. Now, having spent my career in design, education, and museums, I know how untrue that narrative was. But I also recognize the importance of access to creativity on a personal level. The opening of the Creativity Initiative in 2019 marked an important step for PCM and the children of Providence. Here, children know that this welcoming and joyful spot to play is theirs. Our access

programs make sure that no matter what their circumstances, we are their spot to play. And we want all the grown-ups in their lives to understand that this is the first stop on their children's cultural pathway - that their ownership of this cultural institution will lead to a greater comfort and passion for creativity, arts and the other cultural institutions they may visit, contribute to, or lead.

Caroline Payson, Executive Director



When we think about a children's museum - it is not just a museum for children, but a museum that children own. The ownership of this institution belongs not to the grown-ups who plan, guide, and steward the museum, but the children who come through the doors to play with physics in Water Ways, take apart systems in the Maker Space, put on an apron to sort plantains, and explore the depths of their creativity with our new immersive Creativity Initiative installations. They may not realize this - they're having fun after all! - but they are becoming

lifelong learners. Falling in love with the joy of discovery, being rewarded for trying and trying again, and seeing the magic of exploration will stay with our visitors far beyond their time in our building. CI expands and reinforces the skills that will help them be successful adults - supporting Social Emotional Learning and STEAM related activities. And there is much more to come.

Martha Roberts, Board President



**YEAR 1 CREATIVITY
INITIATIVE VISITORS:
112,220**

**Extravagant Properties:
Line, Shape, and Color:
Nick Carter: 38,821**

**Air is There!
By Pneuhaus Design
Collective: 27,679**

**Feeling Real/Really Feeling:
Brooke Erin Goldstein and
Steven Lubecki: 45,720**

**Creativity Initiative
Maker & STEAM Events:
3,462**



Creativity Initiative: Year One

Sparkling curiosity and encouraging creativity in young innovators and their grown-ups

2019 marked the first year of PCM's Creativity Initiative, a series of immersive installations and programming created in collaboration with local artists, designers and makers. PCM launched three installations in the first year and expanded regular programming to include the Museum Maker Club, Creative Artifacts Gallery and Cultural Connections. In addition, the initiative allowed us to highlight special guest artists during our Free Friday nights.



Extravagant Properties: Line, Shape, and Color by Nick Carter

Working in collaboration with PCM Exhibits Team, Nick Carter used the geometry of the world around us to introduce line, shape, and color: key elements of art and design. His immersive space incorporated 2D and 3D to challenge visual perceptions, delighted visitors with the interplay of pattern and shape, allowing kids to play with light, color, geometric forms and patterns to make their own designs.



Air is There! by Pneuhaus Design Collective

This installation by Pneuhaus reminded us that air is nothing short of extraordinary. Through inflatable sculptures and hands-on learning stations, visitors were invited into a new experience of air as a building material and physical force in an interactive environment. The centerpiece of the show was Catenary, a large inflatable sculpture that invited children to live and play in its root-like arches.

Feeling Real or Really Feeling by Brooke Erin Goldstein and Steven Lubecki

Synesthesia is a phenomenon in which the activation of one sense leads to the automatic triggering of another, such as hearing a color or feeling a sound. The team of Brooke Erin Goldstein & Steven Lubecki used texture, light and sound to create **Feeling Real or Really Feeling?** a fantastical playground where visitors experienced unexpected juxtapositions that challenged their own sensational and emotional responses as they explored the Soundscape Forest, Color City, and Texture Mountain.



The Maker Studio and Innovation Lab

In 2019, we opened two state-of-the-art spaces: the renovated Maker Studio, to inspire imaginative play and creative expression, and the new Innovation Lab, to introduce technology through the magic of tinkering and take-apart exploration. A series of programs accompanied the new spaces, including Prototyping Pinwheels!, Rubber Band Powered Helicopter, Balloon Powered Inventions, Puzzling Shapes, Balloon Powered Cars, Magnet Play, Playing with Light & Shadow, Marshmallow Shooters and Whirligigs. Founder of Cambridge-based Maker Studio “Parts & Crafts”, William McFarlane served as Creative-in-Residence for the inaugural year.



Creative Artifacts: Showcasing the continuum of creativity

A new gallery of artifacts, both prototypes and finished work, were installed on PCM’s walls to demonstrate the continuum of creativity. A diverse group of artists from different disciplines showcased their work in this new venue, including jewelry and metalsmith Jennaca Davies; ceramicist Ian Buchbinder of Coywolf Studio; glass and jewelry maker Jenine Bressner; toymaker Mimi Kirchner; and painter Allison Cole.

Cultural Connections: Bringing arts and humanities to RI kids

Children who are introduced to cultural activities will be more likely to be grown-up patrons of the arts. To make sure the Rhode Island kids have that opportunity, PCM partnered with arts and humanities organizations from across Rhode Island to bring monthly programs to children and their families at PCM and evaluate engagement strategies which inspire children and parents to seek creativity outside of the museum. In 2019, children and their adults enjoyed performances, workshops, and activities from Big Nazo, Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology and Brown University, Rhode Island Computer Museum, Rhode Island Philharmonic, and Trinity Rep.

Cultural Connections at Providence Children’s Museum is made possible through major funding support from the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities, an independent state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Council seeds, supports, and strengthens public history, cultural heritage, civic education, and community engagement by and for all Rhode Islanders

Free Friday Night Workshops

Guest experts led weekend workshops and Free Friday drop-in programs in collaboration with PCM educators. Children were able to work alongside guest experts such as Pneuhaus designers to create a piece on display in the Maker Studio and to build an inflatable that was set aloft in PCM’s assembly space. John Paul McCaughey, local artist and educator, presented screen printing techniques and welcomed all guests to drop color onto a tote-bag to take home. Raffini from Rhode Island Black Storytellers, shared story and drama around a pretend campfire out in the Children’s Garden.



The Creativity Initiative is funded in part by The Norman and Rosalie Fain Family Foundation, The Murray Family Charitable Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Carol A. Peterson Foundation, the Carter Family Charitable Trust, the Providence Journal Charitable Legacy Fund, the Hassenfeld Family Foundation, the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities and the Rhode Island State Council for the Arts.



Collette Children's Theater at PCM

Collette Children's Theater: Creating a World of Wonder transports Rhode Island children to different worlds as they experience their first live theatrical performance. With generous funding from Collette, PCM was able to recruit an ensemble of professional actors and work with artists Eli Nixon and Kristen Haines on lush but durable props and backdrops using papier-mâché and batik techniques. "That's My Ball," a play using audience participation to develop empathy in young children, was the first of three productions planned for the 2019/2020 season.



AmeriCorps 2019

During the 2018/19 year, PCM continued to provide play-focused outreach to families with low-income in Providence, Pawtucket, and Central Falls through MuseumCorps, an AmeriCorps program funded in part by the Corporation for National and Community Service and Serve RI. Our 2019 team improved math skills for second through fourth grade students by running STEAM-focused Learning Clubs at Boys and Girls Clubs in Providence and Pawtucket, led open-ended, creative programming for Head Start Students in Children's Friend classrooms, and developed their facilitation skills both on PCM's floors and in community settings. The team was joined by a 2019 summer team, who supported our Creativity Initiative summer programs and invited children from our community partners to participate in printmaking classes. The PCM AmeriCorps team allows the Museum to reach more children and communities, and we're so grateful for their service!



2018/19 AmeriCorps Team



Numbers:

- **Family Night Attendance** 1,004
- **Learning Club Kids Served** 337
- **Head Start Kids Served** 1,000+
- **Memberships Given Out** 374
- **Total AmeriCorps Hours** 26,471

Wendolyn Aybar
Yahaira Batista
Madeline Cirullo
Megan Conway
Darien Dinero
Stephanie Duran
Celia Ehrenpreis

Elise Felker
Jane Freiman
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Play Led By Research

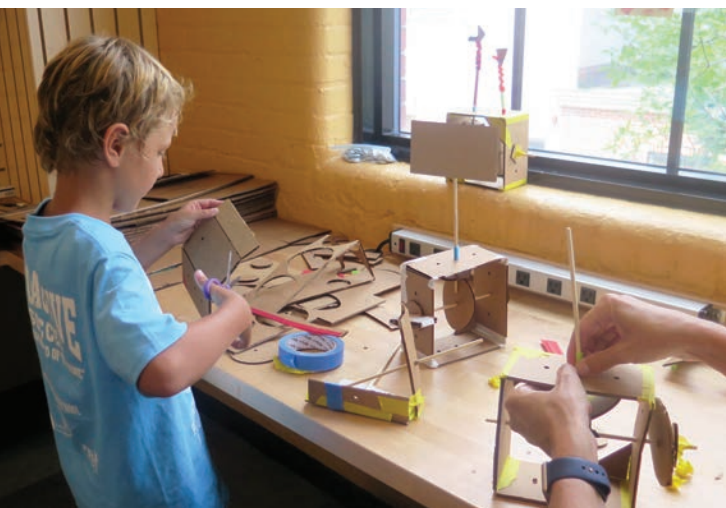
We ask WHY?

We don't just play all day - PCM is a critical leader in contributing to the body of research to better understand how children learn, and how to support those experiences. PCM contributes to child development and cognition research as part of partnerships with Brown University, Villanova University, Drexel University, the University of Texas at Austin and Providence College. In 2019, PCM continued data collection for our National Science

Foundation (NSF) funded project with Brown University, Villanova University and the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University investigating how children change their minds when presented with new information in our Mind Lab. PCM welcomed new and returning researchers from Brown University and Providence College to the Mind Lab to engage over 1,200 of PCM's visitors to better understand how children think, learn and play - and why play is important to their overall development.

Sharing is Caring

In addition to collaborating on research, PCM shares work with other leaders in play. PCM team members advocated for families and their prenatal to PreK children through *Right from the Start RI*. During the Creativity Conference in Ashland Oregon, PCM presented findings on children's understanding of creativity. At the Cognitive Development Society Biennial Conference, PCM discussed how to provide feedback to build resilience and STEM engagement in the museum setting. During the Association for Children's Museum conference in 2019, PCM joined grant partners the Thinkery, the University of Texas at Austin, the Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose, and the University of California Santa Cruz, on a panel about how university-museum partnerships inform museum practice. Exhibit and Education team provided support to early educators to expand their students' creativity, teachers providing Maker oriented afterschool programs empowering middle school girls, and Industrial Design graduate students.



We check our work

A major component of PCM's work is encouraging children to try it! Learning by doing allows for creativity, iteration, and resilience, and PCM takes this to heart through evaluation. In 2019, PCM began an in-depth evaluation of the Creativity Initiative seeking to document visitor, artist and staff experience through surveys, interviews, and observations. We also concluded a detailed investigation into the AmeriCorps pre-service training program and its impacts on member's play facilitation and lesson plan development.



Expanding the Impact of Families Together

Since its founding in 1992, Families Together (FT) has been using proven positive play experiences to help children in state care and their families move towards permanency. This year, FT served 205 families, a slight increase from 2018. A year of recognition and expansion, FT was awarded the Angels in Adoption Congressional Award for this work after being nominated by Senator Jack Reed.

FT shared their collaboration with the State of Rhode Island Department of Corrections in order to create a more child-centric visitation experience during a panel presentation at the Association of Children's Museum conference in May 2019.



Nori's Vacation

Not all dragons can fly, some must be lifted by cranes. In 2019, PCM was able to replace our old roof with one that will last for many years into the future thanks to a generous grant from The Champlin Foundation. As a result, Nori had to be sent off on vacation for a few months so the roof could be replaced. With a little help from friends, Nori was returned home safe and sound – and PCM visitors will stay out of the rain!



Grown-ups Having Fun

- **Golf Tournament:** 85 golfers from across southern New England participated in the 36th Annual Allen H. Chatterton Jr. Memorial Golf Tournament, held at Wannamoisett Country Club. The tournament netted over \$40,000 in support of PCM.
- **Dragon Ball:** The 2019 Dragon Ball raised over \$80,000 to ensure that children and families who might otherwise not be able to visit PCM have opportunities for rich play and learning experiences.
- **Noon Year's Eve:** Over 700 guests joined Providence Mayor Jorge Elorza and his son Omar at the "Noon Year's Eve" celebration, ringing in the new year for those who would be asleep at midnight. The Mayor and Omar led a celebratory parade through the museum with noisemakers and good cheer ahead of the 11:59 AM countdown and ball drop.



Statement of Financial Position

Statements of Activities For the Year Ended December 31, 2019

	WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS	WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS	TOTAL
OPERATING REVENUE			
Government contracts	\$982,829	-	\$982,829
Contributions and sponsorships	449,389	65,000	514,389
Admissions	641,423	-	641,423
Memberships	329,381	-	329,381
Program fees and services	98,189	-	98,189
Gift shop sales	10,808	-	10,808
Special events	165,325	-	165,325
In-kind donation	288,665	-	288,665
Other income	10,275	-	10,275
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE	\$2,976,284	\$65,000	\$3,041,284

Net assets released from restrictions	<u>\$313,800</u>	<u>(\$313,800)</u>	<u>-</u>
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Total revenue after reclassifications	<u>\$3,290,084</u>	<u>(\$248,800)</u>	<u>\$3,041,284</u>
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OPERATING EXPENSES

Families Together	731,583	-	731,583
AmeriCorps	607,259	-	607,259
National Science Foundation	32,441	-	32,441
Education and exhibits	1,336,826	-	1,336,826
Management and general	415,337	-	415,337
Fundraising	481,057	-	481,057
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 3,604,503	\$0	\$3,604,503

Changes in net assets from operations	(314,419)	(248,800)	(563,219)
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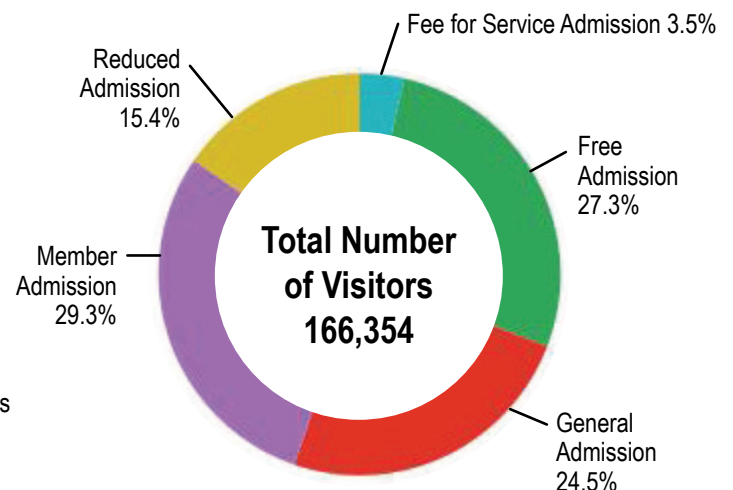
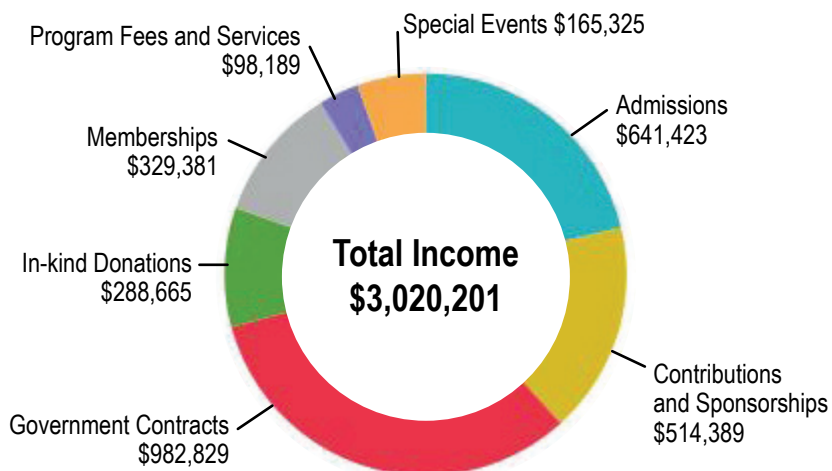
Other Changes

Contributions	-	-	-
Investment income	79,977	34,966	114,943
Loss on disposal of assets	-	-	-
Total other changes	79,977	34,966	114,943

Changes in net assets	(234,442)	(213,834)	(448,276)
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Net assets, beginning of year	2,795,833	615,446	3,411,279
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Net assets, end of year	\$2,561,391	\$401,612	\$ 2,963,003
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Charles Jones Facilities Manager	Laura Stricker Museum Researcher
Yoshie Kawakami Experience Coordinator	Janella Watson Associate Director
Cheryl Lepre Assistant Director of Families Together	
Kate Lester Communications Coordinator	

*Staff listed worked 6 months
or more in 2019; Titles as
of December 2019



In 2019, 230 dedicated volunteers, interns, and college work-study students served 8,114 hours.

100+ Hours

Terry Angotto
Elizabeth Austin
Mary Chavez
Jordan (Max)
Corporan
Juliette Dumaine
Sylvie Hack
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Zane Maio
Elisabeth Newkirk
Bridget Reilly
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200+ Hours

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Eddy Vasquez
Jennifer Villeda
West Bay
Collaborative Team
Yilin (Alice) Zhong
Jennah Carpenter
Gordon School
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Diane Grenon
Maria McFeeley
Tess Remick

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Nunah Boway
Aaron Broadbent
Leslie Nuon
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Editor: Annelise Conway
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Gifts of \$50,000 – \$100,000

The Norman & Rosalie Fain Family Foundation
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Gifts of \$25,000 – \$49,999

National Endowment for the Arts
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**Deceased

(+) Annual Campaign sustaining donors: five or more consecutive years including 2019, in increments of five years.

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Doña Fefa** (4 gifts)
Matthew Littlefield (many)
Margaret L. Worthen**

If we have inadvertently omitted or misspelled your name, please contact Communications@ChildrenMuseum.org to correct our records.



**The mission of Providence Children's Museum
is to inspire and celebrate learning through
active play and exploration.**

