

DISCOVERY MUSEUM



Report of Generosity 2024



Dear Friends of the Discovery Museum,

What a year for our museum!

In a capstone moment, Discovery Museum was recognized as one of an elite set of museums nationwide to be selected for our nation's highest honor for our field: the Institute of Museum and Library Services National Medal for Museum Service. Only 18 out of the more than 400 children's museums in the country have received this award in the 30 years of the award's existence. There was a ceremony in Washington, DC, a press release, media attention, and a well-deserved toast at our gala to celebrate our "gold medal moment."



Much more quietly, another milestone—also very meaningful—was passed: Discovery Museum served its six millionth visitor.

These two accomplishments might never have been imagined possible when we were founded in 1982 with a mission "To enhance, enrich, and increase educational opportunities for all children and families through [the Museum's] unique resources."

There is a great deal to be proud of. Discovery Museum is known as a leader in sustainable practices and outdoor and environmental education, a respected source for early STEM education that works, and a trusted purveyor of experiences that fascinate, delight, and inspire. But we could not do this alone: our volunteers, donors, advocates, and friends lift Discovery Museum up every step of the way. Each of those six million playful, happy visits speaks to our shared commitment to doing the very best for children and the grown-ups in their lives.

Thank you for all you make possible!

Sincerely,

Marie R. B. Beam
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Discovery Museum Awarded America's Highest Honor for Museums

In May, Discovery Museum was awarded a 2024 National Medal for Museum Service by the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services. Our nation's highest honor for museums, the award recognizes "significant and exceptional service to its community."

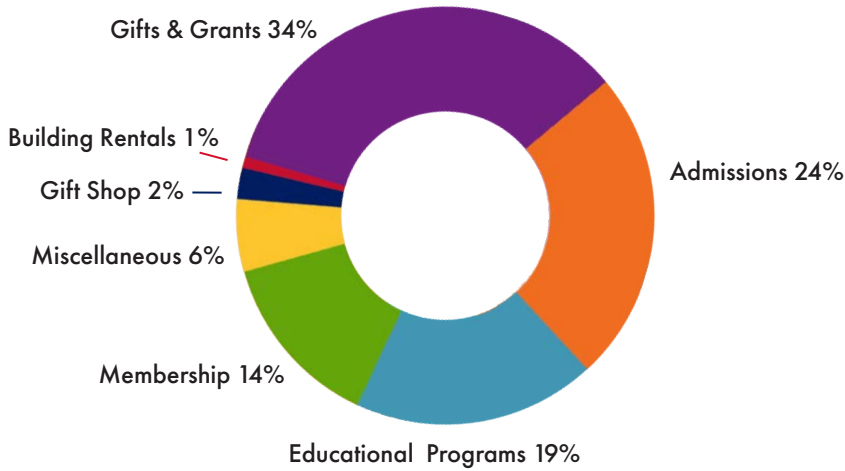
It is a singular honor. To put it in perspective: there are more than 35,000 museums in the United States. In 30 years, just 106 of them—all kinds, including art and history museums, science centers, botanical gardens, historic houses, etc.—have been awarded a National Medal. And of the 400 children's museums in the country, only 18 have ever received this recognition. We are so very proud to be among this very small group of institutions—particularly because the award is about service.

Along with tremendous pride, we feel very grateful to our visiting families, generous donors and volunteers, hardworking staff, and committed community partners that support our work and inspire us each day.

We will use this recognition as a platform to further expand our impact: partnering with dozens of nonprofit organizations that understand the unique hopes and needs of the families in their communities; serving students in their classrooms in more than 100 cities and towns throughout Massachusetts and beyond; seeking out ways to help that may not be conventional for a museum—like our collaborations with prison leadership to support incarcerated young fathers and their children; and serving families facing unique challenges and all of our visitors with creative, enriching learning experiences that support children to learn about their interests, their abilities, and their world.

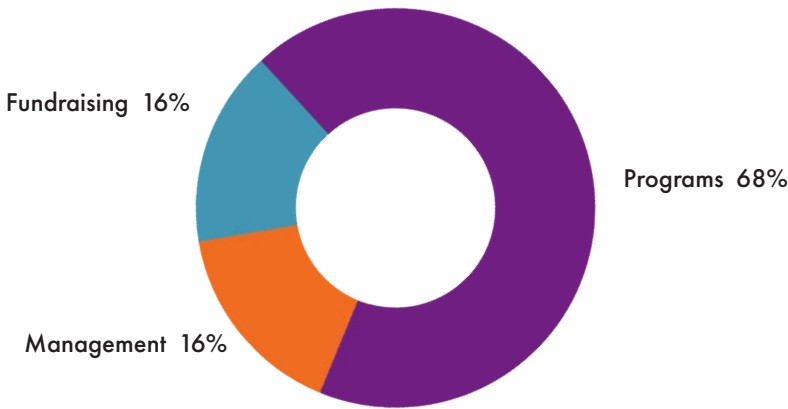


Operating Support & Revenue



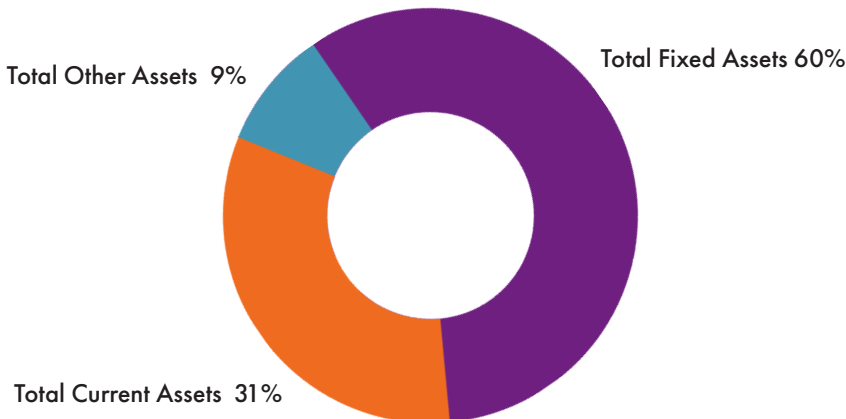
Gifts and Grants	\$1,429,689
Admissions	\$1,007,746
Educational Programs	\$782,807
Memberships	\$570,846
Miscellaneous	\$234,522
Gift Shop	\$100,380
Building Rentals	\$36,884
Total	\$4,162,873

Operating Expenses



Programs	\$2,448,593
Fundraising	\$578,818
Management	\$572,487
Total	\$3,599,899

Total Liabilities & Assets



Total Fixed Assets	\$7,513,814
Total Current Assets	\$3,994,861
Total Other Assets	\$1,114,550
Total Assets	\$12,623,225
Total Liabilities	\$1,901,750
Total Net Assets	\$10,721,475

Marie R.B. Beam began her tenure as Discovery Museum CEO.

Received the nation's highest honor for museums, the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services National Medal. The award celebrates "significant and exceptional contributions to community." Only 4% of children's museums in the country have received the award in more than 30 years.

Offered 316 public programs that served 24,055 visitors.

Selected as a 2024 Best of Boston® winner by Boston magazine, for Best Family-Friendly Activity, West.

Offered 26 free Especially for Me events for families and adults with disabilities, serving 2,013 visitors.

Donated \$35,585 worth of free passes and memberships to 515 nonprofits for their fundraisers, an 82% increase from last year.

Achieved total revenue of \$4.1M, a 9% increase.

Collected, sorted, and distributed 3,907 lbs. of clothing to 961 visitors at two Bessie's Closet free pop-up store events.

Served 28% of our visitors for free or nearly free, an increase of more than 7,000 people.

Opened a fully renovated and expanded Community Building and kicked off the return of birthday parties to our campus.

Served 245,199 in the Museum and in school classrooms. This included, in November, our 6 millionth visitor since opening in 1982.

Developed our 2025-27 Strategic Plan, through an expansive and inclusive input process with industry and government leaders, community partners, Museum members and visitors, funders, and others.

Collected 433 lbs. of non-perishable food items for Open Table and Acton Food Pantry; 263 lbs. of birthday party supplies and Halloween costumes for The Confetti Foundation and Birthday Wishes and Boxborough's FreeBee Market.

Debuted *Cause & Effect: What Happens If?* a new exhibit created and produced by Museum staff over a five-year period—and finally bringing a chain reactions exhibit back to our visitors!

Wrapped up 12 years of the Discovery Museum Speaker Series with five free events about topics including babies, parenting, empathy, relationships, and art and civic engagement.

Achieved our strongest Annual Fund to date, raising \$1,111,585 from 1,160 donors—thank you!

Added two languages—Russian and Hindi—to our set of five language translations of in-Museum and at-home educational materials.

Hosted our inaugural artist-in-residence with artist Chanel Therivil, engaging more than 900 visitors in a community art project.

During its second full year online, our solar canopy generated 365,894 kW of energy, saving the equivalent of 18,174 gallons of gasoline, or the carbon sequestered by 162 acres of forest in a year. Sold 50% of the clean energy produced at a discount to 5 other nonprofits and 11 low-income homeowners.

Awarded four scholarships of \$1,500 each to high school students, our 3rd year of the Discovery Scholarship program.

Ended 2024 with 5,445 member families. Of those, 1,877 are free memberships for families, staff, and first-time parents.

Served 55,990 students in their classrooms in 119 towns—nearly every town in eastern MA!—with hands-on Traveling Science Workshops, and served another 10,169 students and their teachers and chaperones during Field Trips to the Museum.

Built connections with staff at emergency housing shelters in Acton, Concord, Bedford, Lexington, and Woburn.

Hosted our first STEM Career Night for teens with members of the Museum's Science and Technology Advisory Council.

Piloted two free events for foster families and families with an LGBTQ+ member.

413 volunteers donated their time and talent to the Museum, for a total of 2,700 volunteer hours.

Five Unique Ways to Help Discovery Museum

We know that you have a choice about where to donate your time, energy and funds, and we take your confidence in giving to us seriously. We endeavor to make the most of every gift and want to ensure that your giving works for you too!

Need some ideas for how you can help?

Do you own stocks or bonds that have appreciated in value?

Consider donating long-term appreciated assets. You generally don't have to pay capital gains, and you can take an income tax deduction for the full fair-market value.

Are you at least 70 ½ years old, and have a tax deferred IRA?

Donating your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) directly from your IRA removes those funds from your taxable income.

Want to make an big impact, but maintain your cash flow?

Naming Discovery Museum in your will or as a beneficiary of your insurance policy, retirement plan, or trust is an easy way to show your commitment without interrupting your current cash flow.

Do you have access to items that may be useful for the Museum or our annual online auction?

Donating items is a great way to reduce, re-use, and recycle. Whether it's laptops, supplies for da Vinci Workshop, or items for our auction, we can provide a gift-in-kind tax receipt for most items and they all help us reduce our expenses.

Interested in donating your time?

Volunteering is a wonderful way to make new connections, and we have a wide array of opportunities for both individuals and groups to be involved!



Support Our Future. Support Their Future.

Planned giving and legacy gifts are commitments made now and realized in the future. Including Discovery Museum in your estate plan with a bequest intention or as a life insurance beneficiary is simple, flexible—and impactful.

Help us uphold our commitment to kids and families into the future.



Did you know?

Discovery Museum relies on philanthropy to fund 33% of its operating budget.

For more information or to alert us about your plans, please contact:

Tobey Fossey, Senior Director of Development

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We acknowledge the many individuals and organizations who supported Discovery Museum in 2024, whether they contributed financially, donated their time and expertise, or provided material donations. All of these gestures of support, in combination, have made our work possible and our Museum strong. Just as we seek to be of service to all, we strive to be inclusive and equitable in our gratitude.

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Many companies offer matching gift programs for employees, retirees, and even their spouses. Check with your employer's Human Resources department to see how you can get your gift matched.

Thank you to these corporate partners for their investment and engagement, which helped advance our work in 2024.



Recordings of the 2024 Discovery Museum Speaker Series are available on our YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/@DiscoveryActon>.



Parenting in a Time of Insecurity

Dr. Khadijah Booth Watkins and Dr. Gene Beresin
The Clay Center for Young Healthy Minds at Massachusetts General Hospital



How To Have Brave Conversations that Build Empathetic Kids

Valora Washington, Ph.D.
CEO & President, The CAYL Institute



How Art Can Inspire Civic Engagement in Kids

Chanel Thervil
Artist + Educator; Inaugural Discovery Museum Artist in Residence



The Science of “Good Enough” Relationships: Trusting and Developing Our Capacity for Simple and Authentic Human Interactions

Junlei Li
Program Chair of Human Development and Education, Saul Zaentz Senior Lecturer in Early Childhood Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education



Does Parenting Have to Be This Hard? What Can Babies Teach Us

Dr. J. Kevin Nugent
Founder and Director Emeritus of the Brazelton Institute in the Division of Developmental Medicine at Boston Children’s Hospital

Discovery Gala 2024: Toasting Our Gold Medal Moment

Discovery Gala 2024 was a spectacular celebration of the Museum's 2024 National Medal for Museum Service and a grateful tribute to the power of our collective impact.

We hold tremendous pride for our National Medal recognition because it is awarded for service to the community. As CEO Marie Beam stated in her remarks, "What we do is critical, it is urgent, and it is transformative...We are encouraging and inspiring kids who believe they have what it takes to make a difference in this world."

In all, generous Gala supporters were moved to donate \$170,000 to further the Museum's mission on behalf of children and caregivers.



Save the Date for these upcoming events in 2025:

Bid For Kids Online Auction, May 5 – 14
Nature Play Festival, July 11
Discovery After Dark, July 24

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