



KOHL CHILDREN'S MUSEUM
OF GREATER CHICAGO



2008/09
ANNUAL
REPORT

2008/09 ANNUAL REPORT

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REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dear Friends,

We are pleased to send you this Annual Report as a friend and supporter of Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago, the region's leading informal learning resource for young children, their families, and educators.

Your generous support has made a number of significant milestones possible over the course of the last year, many of which are described elsewhere in this report, and I'd like to draw your attention to one in particular. In June 2009, the Museum completed the final phase of its 2-acre outdoor exhibit, *Habitat Park*, created just for young children and inspired by our belief that we, as a community of caring adults, must teach them to love the earth before we can ask them to save it – for themselves, for us, and for generations to come. **The Museum's ambitious transition from a neighborhood treasure to a regional resource, which began back in 2001, is now complete.**

This year, the Museum instituted a succession plan to ensure continuity of leadership at the Board of Trustees level. This began with the creation of the position of Vice Chair, which I assumed in September as a stepping stone to my current role as Chairman of the Board of Trustees. My predecessor, Rick Waddell, has left a distinguished legacy of tireless advocacy and steadfast leadership on behalf of children that I am honored to continue. With the support of Donna Sims Wilson, our new Vice Chair, I will work in concert with Rick in his new role as Chair Emeritus, to ensure that all children have access to quality early learning experiences, now and in the years to come.

As we usher in a new era of leadership, we share our thanks with several long time Trustees who have given their time, talents, and financial support over the years, namely Donna Greenberg, Anthony R. Licata, Diana Mendley Rauner, and Ann Sickon. We also bid farewell to Nancy Daigler, David A. Goldberg, Beth Kohl, John R. Landis, and Meggan Zabel, all of whom worked tirelessly on behalf the Museum. Their work will be continued by a new generation of Museum leaders that have joined us in the last year, including

Susanna Allshouse, Caroline Burns, Lee Callaway, Arthur J. Fogel, Jennifer Durham King, and Marcia Owens. A full list of our current Trustees can be found on page 15.

Like many non-profit organizations, the Museum has faced financial challenges due to the economic downturn. However, because of the stewardship of the Board of Trustees, the leadership of Sheridan Turner, and the hard work of the Museum's talented staff, we have been prepared. Careful fiscal management, which included reduction in expenses as well as increased engagement of

Trustees to reach out to new and existing donors, has enabled the Museum to remain strong. Still, we cannot relax in our efforts and need continued support as an investment in the futures of young children, their families, and educators, now more than ever.

At the heart of our work is a desire to light a spark in the heart, mind, and spirit of a young child and to nurture a love of learning that will last a lifetime.

Thank you for caring about children, for understanding the need for quality early learning experiences, and for trusting the Museum with your support.

—**W. Fritz Souder**, Chairman,
Board of Trustees



In June, we celebrated the re-opening of *Habitat Park* with new exhibits and playspaces that provide hands-on learning opportunities, all while sharing the wonder of the outdoors and instilling a commitment to preserve our natural resources for generations to come.





REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT & CEO

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the 2009 Annual Report of Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago! So much has been accomplished over the course of the last year that it is difficult to highlight any one Museum story. In the pages to come, you'll find photos and descriptions of our many programs, including our partnership with the University of Chicago Comer Children's Hospital, intergenerational programming with residents of Gidwitz Place, and images from everyday Museum activities that empower children, engage their parents and caregivers, and support teachers.

The Museum is many things to many people: a welcome oasis for parents of children with special needs, a supportive resource for teachers looking to strengthen learning opportunities in their classrooms, and a place for generations to share their experiences and skills with each other.

But above all else, we exist to offer a warm and nurturing environment where children and learning come first.

From the moment they enter the Museum, children instinctively know what lies ahead: from *Water Works* to *Dominick's*, *City on the Move* to *Habitat Park*, our exhibits promote children's engagement in complex play – play that involves physical, cognitive, and social/emotional learning. It is through complex play that they explore science, technology, engineering, and mathematical concepts, as well as literacy. They also learn how to interact with each other and develop physical skills. They celebrate who they are, at that very moment, and they do so with unmatched enthusiasm.

Every day at Kohl Children's Museum, children learn to love the feeling of discovering something new, mastering a skill, and then sharing their knowledge with others. To better articulate our purpose, we have adapted our mission and vision, which you'll find on page 7. While the words have changed, our commitment to young children, their parents, caregivers, and teachers has not.

We hope you'll enjoy seeing and learning more about the experiences that we offer every day, and in every way, to nurture a love of learning in young children. Thank you for **your** investment in **their** future.

—**Sheridan Turner**, President and CEO



▲ Our everyday activities invite children to explore a variety of subjects while developing life and social skills that set patterns for future learning.

▶ We partner with the University of Chicago Comer Children's Hospital to bring our activities to children who are undergoing lifesaving treatments, making their stay more comfortable and caring for the whole child.



◀ Our arts programs enable creativity and inspire new ideas.

▶ Generations of families share in their Museum experience together, learning from and with each other while making memories that will last a lifetime.





A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO RICK WADDELL

This year, we extend our deepest gratitude to Rick Waddell, who served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees for more than a decade. Prior to his Chairmanship, Rick had been a frequent visitor with his wife Cate and sons Frederick and Charlie and stepped up to form our Board of Governors, allowing emerging corporate leaders to become involved in our fundraising programs.

In 1999, he was elected Chairman of the Board of Trustees and quickly set in motion a plan to transform the Museum that can better serve a larger and more diverse audience. Children, most especially those in underserved communities, hold a special place in Rick's heart, and he instinctively knew that we needed a more convenient location and room to grow in order to serve them effectively.

Four years ago, when we opened our new home, Rick was here with us to welcome our newest friends. His wish for **all** children to have the opportunity to learn through the Museum has been fulfilled each and every day since that rainy Saturday back in October 2005. While we are fortunate to have Rick's continued involvement through his new role as Chair Emeritus, it is the children that he cares for so deeply that will ultimately benefit the most from his tireless support.

Thank you, Rick, for giving all children the opportunity to learn.

► On September 16, 2008, we welcomed Harper Murphy from Buffalo Grove and her grandfather as our 1 millionth visitor since we opened in Glenview three years ago. What an amazing accomplishment!



◀ Each year, we train more than 150 teachers and childcare providers in innovative classroom strategies that help close the achievement gap for children at risk of academic failure.

► Our Women's Board holds family-centered events each year to raise support for all areas of our operations, including our services to children who otherwise would not have the opportunity to experience our exhibits and programs.



◀ Traveling exhibits continue to engage our visitors and bring in new audiences. Here, John Landis, former Museum Trustee, Sheridan Turner, our President and CEO, Patrick Waldron of CN, and Myles Berman of Foley & Lardner celebrate the opening of *Let's Play Railway*, generously sponsored by CN.

NEW VISION, MISSION, AND KEY BELIEFS

In FY09, the Museum's key stakeholders – the Board of Trustees, staff, and close friends – gathered to reassess and redefine our greater purpose. Herewith, we are pleased to present our new vision, mission, and key beliefs, which were unanimously approved by the Board of Trustees on September 30, 2009:

VISION

Kohl Children's Museum nurtures a love of learning in young children.

MISSION

Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago provides engaging informal learning environments featuring interactive exhibits and programs that encourage young children ages birth to 8 to become effective learners through self-directed complex play.

KEY VALUES

- All Museum exhibits and programming are research-based to be challenging, educational, appealing and engaging to young children.
- Parents, caregivers and teachers play a crucial role in guiding children toward activities that promote effective learning, while allowing them to direct their own learning experiences.
- Complex play experiences involve a blend of physical, emotional, imaginative, cognitive, and social activities.
- Trained staff using best practices in early childhood education enhance effective complex play experiences for children.
- All Museum facilities, exhibits and programming are accessible by children in the same manner, regardless of differing levels of physical, auditory, visual, social-emotional, or cognitive ability.
- All Museum facilities and programming model strong stewardship of the environment.
- We embrace the opportunity for those with diverse backgrounds to interact and play together.
- We create opportunities for those in the Chicago area whose geographical or economic circumstances preclude direct Museum visitation can still participate through interactive outreach programming.
- Informal environments augment the more traditional, formal educational structure.
- We create a setting that brings all generations of family together to share the early childhood learning experience with one another.

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We would not be able to achieve our goals without the support of our generous funders. We thank the following donors for their investment in our work and in the futures of all children.

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We greatly appreciate all our donors, and regret any errors or omissions that may have occurred during the compilation of this list. If you have a correction, please contact our development office at (847) 832-6911.

► *Chagall for Children*, our renowned traveling exhibit, returned for a brief stay this year and introduced children and adults alike to the whimsy and wonder of Marc Chagall.



◀ Our universally designed facility continues to welcome children with all abilities, inviting them to play, learn, and master new skills.

► We hatched more than 200 baby chickens in our annual *Eggs to Chicks* exhibit and delivered key learnings in life cycles and conservation to our young visitors.



◀ *Color Play* invited children to explore the art and science of color while igniting imaginations during its 4 month run.

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR THE FUTURE

We extend our sincere thanks to the following donors to the Museum's capital campaign, Building Blocks for the Future, who made our new home possible and touch the lives of hundreds of thousands of children, families and educators through their generous support.

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▼ Jim O'Connor, a member of our Board of Trustees, and his wife Julie joined in the festivities.



▲ Our annual gala, An Evening to Imagine, was held in October to honor Diana Mendley Rauner, PhD, a longtime Museum Trustee and advocate for children everywhere. Pictured here are Janet Knupp and Estelle Walgreen, our event chairs, Diana Mendley Rauner, our honoree, and Sheridan Turner, our President and CEO.



▲ The décor set the mood for an evening of fun and imagination that raised a record \$785,000, including nearly \$165,000 for our Early Childhood Connections program.



◀ Our Board of Governors held its 12th annual Chip in For Children golf outing, raising awareness and unrestricted funds for our important work in early childhood education.

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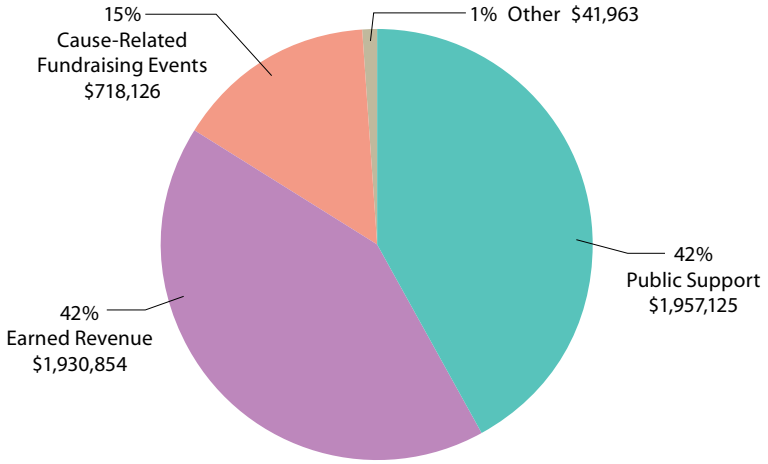
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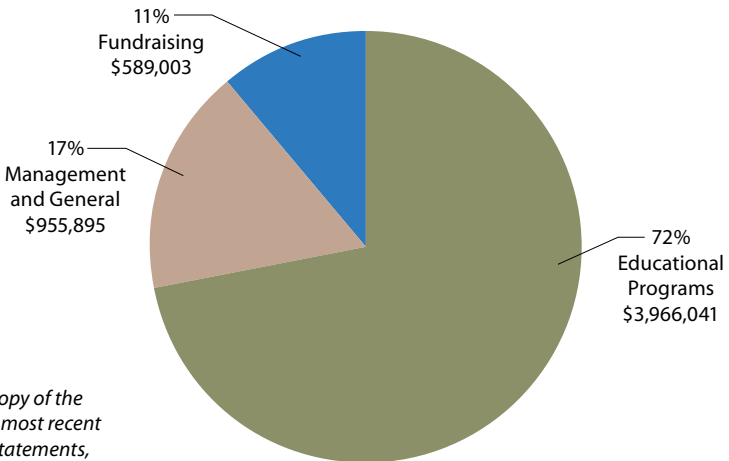
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REVENUES



EXPENSES



For a full copy of the Museum's most recent financial statements, please contact the development office at (847) 832-6911.

It's important for us to be good stewards of the environment in order to maintain a world that our children can enjoy for many years to come. As a silver-level LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified building, Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago is committed to using environmentally-friendly materials.



This brochure is printed with soy-based inks on Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certified, processed chlorine-free paper containing 100% post-consumer content made with biogas energy.

In doing so, we saved:

2 million BTUs of energy

the equivalent of 308 pounds of CO₂

933 gallons of wastewater

107 pounds of solid waste

Environmental impact estimates were made using the Environmental Defense Paper Calculator. We invite you to learn more at www.papercalculator.org.



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