



**KOHL CHILDREN'S  
MUSEUM**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2011–2012**



**KOHL CHILDREN'S MUSEUM  
OF GREATER CHICAGO**

# WELCOME



## OUR 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.

## OUR VISION

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

### **Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago, Inc.**

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Glenview, Illinois 60026

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

### **SUPPORT US**

If you would like more information about supporting Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago, please contact our development office at (847) 832-6895.

## Dear Friends,

The past year has presented both great challenges and great opportunities for Kohl Children's Museum. As we have grown, we have also made tremendous strides both with our outreach programs and our innovative approach to serving the needs of the children in our communities. We are very proud to have been ranked in the top ten children's museums in the country and are very grateful to our donors, volunteers and staff who have contributed to that success.

We understand that the complexities of serving children in at-risk communities start at an early age. Kohl Children's Museum is committed to *all* children and their families, with any level of physical, cognitive or social-emotional ability, and regardless of financial capacity or socio-economic status. Nearly twenty percent of our total operating budget is dedicated to those teachers, child care providers and families who otherwise would not have the benefit of enjoying our Museum.

The key to our success in connecting these communities is collaboration. We care about making investments in the future of our children. We recognize we are only as effective as those who partner with us and believe in our vision: *to nurture a love of learning in young children*. We seek advice, input and support from the brightest minds in early childhood education. We confer with experts, such as those at the Erikson Institute, to help us cultivate our professional development programs. We seek counsel from our business partners to create exhibits and programs that make science, math, literacy, music, and the arts accessible and fun through the power of play.

In the coming year, you will hear about many innovative projects and strategic initiatives that will strengthen our ability to connect communities in need to the gift of learning. We will broaden our reach, while respectfully utilizing our resources, through a variety of collaborative partnerships. We will provide programs for parents and teachers that help them educate and inspire the next generation. We will also ask all of you to help us rethink how we communicate to and advocate for the communities that we touch.

Thank you for your collaboration in support of the communities that we serve. We are humbled and honored by your dedication and investment in our children.

Sincerely,

*Donna Sims Wilson*  
Chairman of the Board

*Sheridan Turner*  
President and CEO



*Donna Sims Wilson*  
Chairman of the Board



*Sheridan Turner*  
President and CEO

# HIGHLIGHTS





Your generous gift DOES make a difference. Kohl Children's Museum takes very seriously your investment in the families and communities that we serve. Consider just a few examples of how we used contributions from many ardent supporters in the last year.

**Issue:** Children in low-income neighborhoods are at risk of academic failure in schools and childcare centers.



**Response:** Early Childhood Connections, Off-the-Street Club

Our flagship outreach program, Early Childhood Connections, provides teachers and childcare providers in underserved neighborhoods with professional development training, classroom resources, Museum focused field trips, and family celebrations in order to improve the quality of student learning environments and engage families in their children's education. This year, the program served 73 teachers and childcare

professionals, 1,780 children and their families and added an advanced Level 2 training to meet the growing demand for our services.



Founded in 1900, Off-the-Street Club is Chicago's oldest boys and girls club and serves more than 3,000 kids. Housed in a kid-friendly complex in West Garfield Park, Off-the-Street Club gives 4-to-18-year-old kids a home away from home. Kohl Children's Museum is proud to partner with Kraft Foods to bring these children "casual joy" through offering free weekend field trips to the group, as well as sending museum educators right to their location with interactive "Museum-in-a-Box" programming.

**Issue:** Schools are failing to provide adequate STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education.

**Response:** STEM-specific exhibits and programming designed to make learning fun

It is a proven fact that children learn best by doing. Through making and testing hypotheses through the scientific method, kids learn to conduct their own investigations and how to find solutions. Likewise, by conducting experiments with kids, adult facilitators demonstrate how to construct ideas, process those ideas, and then ask the correct questions in such a way that will lead them to the correct result.

One of our most exciting new collaborations this year has been with the CME Group Foundation and the Erikson





Institute. The Museum developed a pilot program called **Informal Math Explorations** which trains teachers to integrate Erikson's Eight "Big Ideas of Math" into informal learning environments like the Museum, and recognize teachable moments to engage their students. The Museum provided training and class field trips to Erikson graduates, plus developed a bilingual guide with suggestions for building Algebraic Thinking concepts into exhibit visits.

In 2011, in partnership with Abbott, Kohl Children's Museum created **Science + You**, a unique and challenging exhibit that gives children the opportunity to explore complex scientific theories through play. Designed as a child-sized laboratory, the exhibit teaches children the important role that scientists play in keeping people healthy, through scientific research and testing and determining elements of balanced lifestyles.

After its Kohl debut, the exhibit traveled to the San Francisco and Washington DC metro areas. During its DC stop, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (the Nation's Report Card) selected the exhibit as the backdrop for the media release of its Science in Action report evaluating the state of science education in America. Following its show in the nation's capital, **Science + You** embarked on an international tour, the first ever for a Kohl exhibit, with stops in Germany and Brazil.

As an enhancement to the exhibit during its run at Kohl, the Museum brought in Abbott scientists to facilitate experiments with the children. Building on the success of these appearances, Kohl Children's Museum began a dedicated science learning initiative called Science Fridays, in which a museum educator or a professional facilitator conducts interactive experiments with groups of visitors in a dedicated experimentation area within the Museum. Science Activity Cards are given to parents to replicate and expand the experiment in the home.



**Issue:** Children are failing to reach reading proficiency levels by third grade. According to [begintoread.com](http://begintoread.com), one in three children entering 4th grade read below a 4th grade level and 49% of those who lag are from low-income households. Two-thirds of students who cannot read proficiently by the end of the 4th grade will end up in jail or on welfare.

**Response:** Augmentation of already existing, robust literacy programs with literacy-themed exhibits, both permanent and temporary

In an environment rich with books, word/picture signage, and opportunities for strong vocabulary development, Kohl Children's Museum is focused on instilling a love of reading for its young guests. In 2012, plans were laid to ensure that the Museum's exhibits, both permanent and those selected for the traveling gallery, continue to spark an interest in the written word.



Two traveling exhibits were arranged to immerse guests in famous works of children's literature. **The Wonderful Wizard of Oz** exhibit, based on the book by L. Frank Baum, debuted in 2012, encouraging children to interact with the narrative arc of the childhood classic. **Storyland**, secured for the fall of 2013, allows children and adults to step into the pages of seven beloved children's classics, including Ezra Jack Keats' *The Snowy Day* and Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*.

At the same time, plans were unveiled to renovate the permanent **Play Library**, a Main Street fixture since the Museum's opening, into **Sheridan's Books and Crannies** in May 2013. The exhibit, modeled after a bookstore and café, will give families a chance to browse high-quality children's books and explore multi-lingual and Braille books in a cozy, inviting atmosphere.

**Issue:** There are insufficient venues for families with children with special needs to enjoy family time.

**Response:** Everyone at Play – private, quiet time for families in the Museum when it is closed to the public

Many parents who have children with special needs, including physical, cognitive, and social-emotional, have remarked on the Museum's inviting atmosphere and universal design that allows all children to learn at their own pace with full accessibility to the exhibit elements. A single drawback is that the popularity of the Museum environment may lead to crowded, overstimulating conditions for these children.





The **Everyone at Play** program, instituted just two years ago, opens the Museum for two hours exclusively for families with children with special needs, with attendant supplemental programming from partners such as Advocate Lutheran General Hospital and Rainbow Animal Assisted Therapy. The well-received program has grown from four morning events to a projected 8 in 2013, based on funding availability.

**Issue:** Childhood obesity becoming an epidemic, particularly in low-income neighborhoods, and in Hispanic households. One in three children is overweight and one in six is classified as obese. Rates are highest among Hispanic and African-American boys.

**Response:** *Fitness For All and Healthy Lifestyles* programming

With support from Kraft Foods, Kohl Children's Museum has created a series of physical activities and programming at the Museum, much of it based in the natural setting of the Museum's 2-acre outdoor **Habitat Park**. Kraft's support also allows the Museum to provide free field trips to selected Chicago and Lake County public schools to do focused field trips on nutrition and the importance of an active, healthy lifestyle.

The Museum has also worked in collaboration with Cardinal Health Foundation to provide training for child-care providers in Waukegan to instill physical activities and healthy nutrition lessons into their curriculum.



**Issue:** Developing and implementing world-class programs and exhibits requires a dedicated team of staff and experts, as well as time and materials to fulfill our mission.

**Response:** A robust donor base of individuals, foundations and corporations

All of the Museum's work is made possible only through the consistent support of our valued donors. They make every program, every exhibit, every activity, and every changed child's life possible. Their gifts to the Museum provide the fuel to our engine of learning, and make all of our successes possible.



A heartfelt thank you to all of our contributors whose belief in the power of play has helped the Museum make a difference in thousands of children's life. Their investments today will reap rich rewards tomorrow and in the future.



# 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CAMPAIGN SUPPORTERS

While celebrating its past achievements, the Museum stands at a critical juncture to address future challenges. Researchers point to numerous impending crises for young people: skyrocketing childhood obesity, eroding literacy rates, and poor STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education. Kohl Children's Museum is in a strong position to provide safe spaces for all children to develop critical skills for their future, with vibrant programming that incorporates the scientific process, the big ideas of math, language labeling, and healthy lifestyles. By supporting the Museum's 25th Anniversary Campaign,\* these donors support cutting-edge programming and exhibit development, outreach programs, research and our physical space, all critical ingredients to helping a child take the first steps to future success.

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(7/1/2011 – 6/30/2012)

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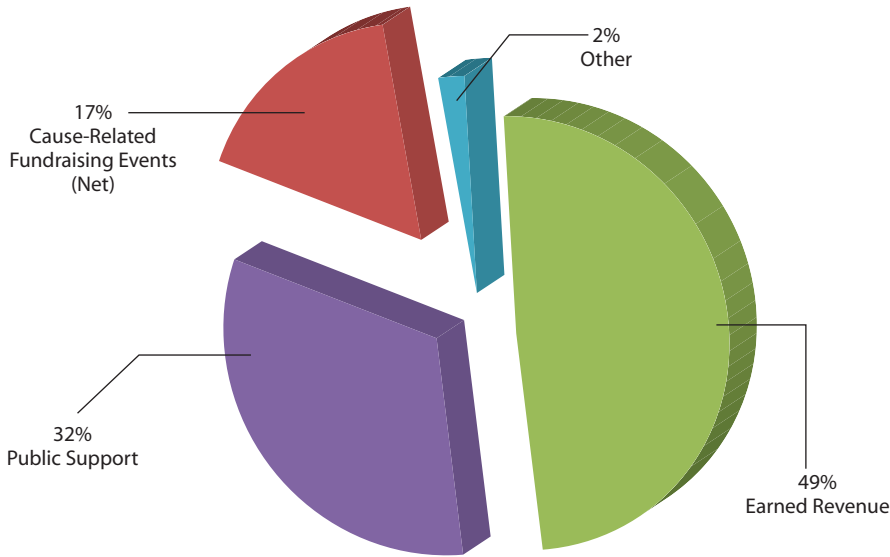
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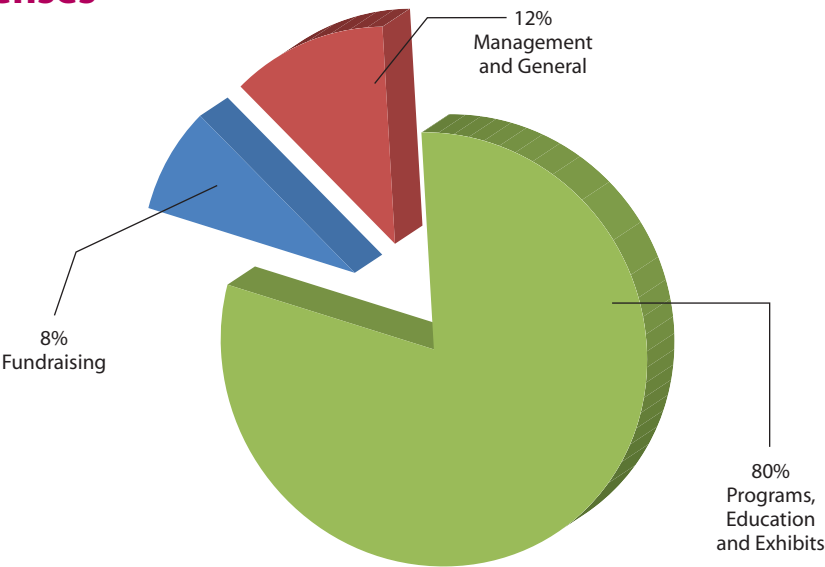
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*Principal Early Childhood Spe-  
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*Founder, Hispanically  
Speaking News*



## Board of Governors

*(as of October 2012)*

The Board of Governors of the Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago is committed to raising money to broaden the Museum's base of support through fundraising and events and raising awareness of the Museum's exhibits and outreach programs through corporate and business networking in Chicagoland.

Eran Cohen, *President*

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Douglas DuMars

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Chuck Gitles

Greg Hayward

Tristan Hoag

Elizabeth Lesner

Rusty Magner

Paul Melville

Michael Pitts

Jeffrey Ptak

Rob Roth

Robert Russell



*Board of Governors  
Chip In For Children Golf Outing*

## Women's Board

*(as of October 2012)*

The Women's Board of the Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago is committed to supporting and enhancing the Museum's commitment to children by extending the Museum's base of support to include individuals, families and philanthropic organizations and promoting and sustaining the development of exhibits and programs.

Emily Reynolds, *President*

Sarah Alshouse

Melissa Ackerman

Catherine Barton

Amanda Bonnell

Alison Borland

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Bethany Crocker

Carrie Diamond

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Katie Meehan

Kristen Novelline

Holly Patience

Alison Randall

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Kendra Wallace

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*Women's Board  
Touch-A-Truck Family Festival*

## Sustaining Members

Susanna Alshouse

Beth Beeler

Jennifer Grady

Julie Lipford

Adriane McKnight

Jennifer Rice

Kirby Richards

Meggan Zabel

## Program Advisory Committee

The Program Advisory Committee of Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago provides input on education issues to the Museum's education and exhibit departments, facilitates collaborations with schools and other community organizations, and evaluates the Museum programs, exhibits and educational services.

**Carolyn Henderson**

*Chair*, Curriculum and Instruction Specialist,  
Academy for Urban School Leadership

**Laura Anderson**

J.P. Morgan

**Jeff Belmonti**

Precision Plating Company Inc.

**Amy Booth**

Northwestern University

**Caryn Friedman**

The Joseph Sears School

**Erika Miller-Gray**

Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago

**Kathleen Hart**

Educational Consultant

**Heather Heavey**

Northern Suburban Special Education  
District, Lyon School

**Dr. Eboni Howard**

American Institutes for Research

**Jennifer Durham King**

Capital Markets Group

**Mady Lesnik**

Kemper Lesnik Communications

**Alice Moss**

DePaul University

**Kaney O'Neil**

Education Consultant

**Dr. Jan Perney**

National College of Education  
National-Louis University

**Gene Salvadalena**

Citizen Volunteer

**Sandy Shaferlich**

One and Only

**Luz Marie Solis**

Chicago Public Schools

**Liza Sullivan**

Through Play

**Mary Trieschmann**

Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago

**Sheridan Turner**

Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago

**Joyce Weiner**

Ounce of Prevention

**Lana Weiner**

Nielsen Child Care and Learning Center

**Molly Witten**

Erikson Institute



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*President and CEO*

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*Vice President of Business Affairs and CFO*

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**Dwayne Brown**  
*Accountant*

**Adam Cardoza**  
*Marketing and Communications Associate*

**Howard Fox**  
*Controller*

**Joseph Mampe**  
*Manager of Sales*

**Karen O'Malley**  
*Director of Human Resources*

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*Sales and Events Associate*

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*Vice President of Development*

**Anna Boltz**  
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**David Judy**  
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**Allison McCarthy**  
*Administrative Assistant*

**Lisa Narotsky**  
*Manager of Individual Giving*

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*Vice President of Programs*

**Sarah Downs**  
*Senior Exhibit Guide*

**Rudolfo Garcia**  
*Shop Supervisor/ Exhibit Technician*

### Education, Exhibits, & Public Programs ...continued

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*Director of Visitor Experience*

**Erika Gray**  
*Director of Education*

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*Education Specialist*

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**Alexander Waz**  
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**Christopher Weise**  
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*Vice President of Facilities and Operations*

**Timothy Francellino**  
*Lead Custodian*

**Beverly Hatchett**  
*Custodial Supervisor*





**KOHL CHILDREN'S  
MUSEUM**

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