

Engaging Curious Minds



Community Impact Report 2020-2021
THE PROMISE OF PLAY

Promise of Play



Dear Friends:

We are thrilled to share our 2021 Community Impact Report, celebrating Discovery Center's promise of play in our mission, vision, values... and our **Resilience**. As we reflect on the challenges and accomplishments of the last two years, several themes have emerged.

Our board of trustees and staff have shown extraordinary strength and **Commitment** to our organization during unprecedented times. The staff operated at half-capacity while responding to our community's needs with innovative and flexible programming. Newly awarded grants have enabled us to support underserved communities. The board worked diligently to produce a new strategic plan that will serve as our road map for the next five years. This plan includes three comprehensive goals: to deepen our impact among children, caregivers, and educators; to invest in and leverage our staff, board, and volunteers; and to build Discovery Center's brand as an essential, trusted, and memorable experience for Tennesseans.

This year's report and stories highlight our **Gratitude** for so many incredible people that believe in and prioritize the promise of play. We are fortunate to live in such a giving community with supporters like John Floyd and Ole South Properties, The Christy Houston Foundation and Franke, and hundreds of other donors and partners that allow Discovery Center to thrive. It is our hope that the stories of our volunteers and The Guild may motivate others to reflect on how they can serve our community, whether it be at Discovery Center or another organization in Rutherford County.

Finally, and most importantly, we hope you are inspired by the **Promise of Play**. During these increasingly complex times, Discovery Center has realized how simple our work really is. We provide an accessible, safe, and multi-sensory environment for children to have fun and learn by exploring. More than ever, all children need a space where they can express their curiosity by creating masterpieces in The STUDIO, collaborating at WaterWorks, compassionately sharing pretend fruit in the Farmer's Market, playing with purpose and joy in Tiny Town, or experiencing new adventures with one of our many temporary exhibits upstairs.

In recent studies highlighting play, the American Academy of Pediatrics has actually written prescriptions for play! They want parents and caregivers to build more play time into each day.

As Professor Karen Hutchison of Rowan University says,

"Play is actually the work of a child in which they are preparing themselves for adult roles and for society at large."

This is the **Promise of Play** - a foundation for life-long success. We are striving to make Discovery Center one of the nation's best, most resourceful, and relevant children's museums. *Thank you for playing a major part in our mission.*

Tara A. MacDougall
President & CEO



IMPACT

We are proud to share our tremendous progress in serving the Middle Tennessee community and the museum's pivot during the COVID pandemic with stories, facts and figures, and financial statements throughout this report. Here's a snapshot of our investment in the community and our impact over the last two years.



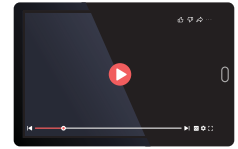
104,617

total kids, families, educators, & community members served



12,553

students served through school programs



5,000

virtual visitors



3,075

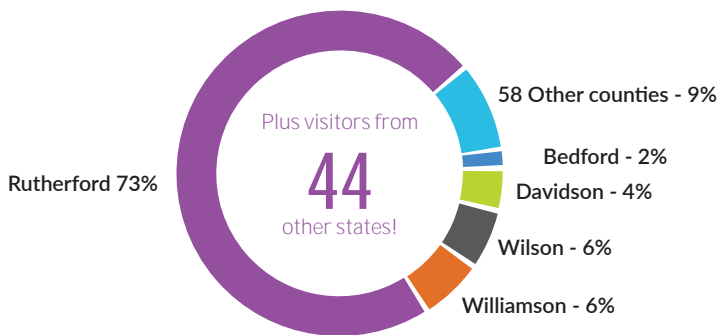
camper experiences during the summer

35

unique early-childhood lessons offered



VISITORS BY COUNTY



“I am so thankful we have the Discovery Center in our community. At least once a week, I bring in my three sons to play and explore. It is such a great mix of art and science and bringing real life to children in a fun way. “

-Amanda Johnson



1,710

students served through 40 mobile visits to schools



125

free visitors to the inaugural STEAM-a-Palooza



5,620

people attended Cultural Free Days



628

people attended free All Access events



A staple of the museum since 1987, free community cultural days are opportunities for families to join together and discover how joyous traditions of music, dance, food, and art can foster mutual understanding and connection.

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Mission

Engaging curious minds to fuel the future

Vision

To build a community with the courage to ask thoughtful questions, the drive to find creative solutions, and the confidence to implement positive changes.

Leadership Team

Tara MacDougall
President & CEO

Veronica Bosnak
CFO, Vice President of People & Culture

Dale McCreedy
Vice President of Audience & Community Engagement

Lindsey Jennings
Vice President of Philanthropy

Jennifer Uhl
Senior Director of Strategic Initiatives & Information Systems

Eric Talbot
Director of Facilities & Exhibits

Jeri Hasselbring
Museum Experience Analyst

Emmie Enochs
Education Coordinator

For questions about this publication, contact Jennifer Uhl (615) 890-2300 x236.



Letter from the Board Chairwoman

Dear Friends of the Discovery Center,

Congratulations and special thanks to the staff and leadership of the Discovery Center for their sacrifices, hard work, and perseverance over the past two years as we have weathered difficult times due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Amid these trials, the Discovery Center has emerged even stronger and continues to be a place of creative play, learning, and family enjoyment for children (and grown-ups!) in the Middle Tennessee area.

Numerous individuals, companies, and agencies have contributed to the success of the Discovery Center over the past 30+ years. From our tremendous community support that now spans generations as parents re-live their childhood experiences and visit the Center with their families, to the generosity of many businesses throughout Middle Tennessee, the Center is recognized as a valuable asset and contributor to the quality of life in our community. Additionally, we value the support from local, state, and federal agencies which is relied upon for special initiatives and operations.

I also recognize and thank the dedicated board that works with Tara's team to create a vision and deliver outstanding opportunities for our community. The diversity of the board is vital as we each bring our own talents and resources to the collective efforts of the group. Many of our board members work behind the scenes on fundraising, volunteering, and most importantly being an advocate of the Discovery Center's mission. I am excited to see what this board is going to accomplish in 2022.

If you have not had the opportunity to visit the Center, please take the time to drop by for a special event, education program, or to just play in the water table or slide down the slide. As a frequent patron over the years, previously with my son and now with his sons, I can attest – it will be a memorable experience.

Best regards,

Paula E. Harris



Board of Trustees 2022

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Family Health Associates

Rita Ash
Parks Realty

Garth Bentley
Pinnacle Bank

Madhavi Boorgu
Community Volunteer

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Secretary*

Tara MacDougall
President & CEO



Pivot

Our Response & Recovery to COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic complicated the work of cultural institutions across the board. Discovery Center faced the pandemic's challenges with determination, examining the museum's role, and adapting to the changing landscape. We closed on March 16, 2020, and from the beginning our goal was a slow and steady implementation of adjusted offerings and a reopening strategy.

The museum secured the first round of Payroll Protection Program and the Economic Injury Disaster Loan which allowed us to hold on to our staff for twelve weeks. This time allowed us to pivot and provide new virtual content such as: *SPARK! Live*, engaging kids 5 & under and their caregivers with weekly Facebook live videos; *Art with Abby*, a weekly art series with artist Abby Reish featured on YouTube; and *Virtual Field Trips* with local schools through ZOOM. We also increased outdoor programming and expanded homeschool labs and private facility rentals.

"Love this [SPARK! Live], hope you do more books. My 4 year old is missing the science center so much. We were in there pretty much every day before all this. She still asks everyday if we can go!" says Carrie Mayberry.

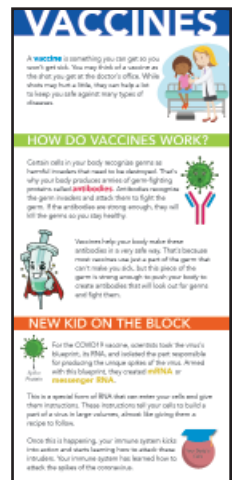


Reopening

We reopened adhering to our *Reopening Playbook* on July 1, 2020. Precautions included mask requirements, limited capacity, increased cleaning protocols, and facility upgrades. We are proud to have kept the doors of the museum open since. However, as the pandemic continued, **Discovery Center saw a 46% decrease in staffing and \$621,356 in lost program revenue for 2020.** To remain a critical partner in the communities we serve, we continue to find creative ways to leverage our location and strong programs to develop new initiatives including SPARK! in Your Neighborhood (*Page 7*), the Tennessee Rural Impact Project (*Page 7*), expansion of field trips for 3rd and 4th grade, and the ReDiscovering Hope Campaign (*Page 8*).

Addressing Misinformation

As the Delta variant emerged, Tennessee led the nation in COVID case rates and ranked as low as 45th for vaccination rates. We leveraged a high level of public trust to provide education on COVID-19 and fight misinformation about vaccines. In collaboration with the Science Alliance of Tennessee, Discovery Center led the creation and distribution of brochures about vaccines and the COVID-19 vaccine. The Science Alliance members include: Adventure Science Center; Creative Discovery Museum; Discovery Center; Hands-On Discovery Center; The Muse; Museum of Science & History.



Beyond Our Walls

SPARK! in Your Neighborhood & TN Rural Impact Project (TRIP)

With a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Discovery Center's taking SPARK!, our in-house program for early learners and their parents/caregivers, out into the community. **SPARK! in Your Neighborhood** is designed to encourage play and foster science skills and social-emotional learning. Discovery Center intends to reach families new to the museum by offering the program in local communities and enrich museum offerings by learning from the knowledge and experiences of the partnering families.

This project aligns with Discovery Center's commitment to offering quality early learning experiences in the museum and moving very intentionally outside the museum's walls. It will allow us to share exhibits and programs in new ways and with new audiences where they live and play. Partners include Read to Succeed and Murfreesboro City Schools. In our first free family night, families from Wee Care Daycare explored the museum, engaged in art activities, and received free books from Read to Succeed.

In the words of one kiddo:

"This place is THE BEST!"

Discovery Center is proud to lead the **Tennessee Rural Impact Project (TRIP)** in partnership with a statewide alliance of science centers and children's museums. TRIP addresses a critical need in our field - understanding and adequately supporting STEM-learning in rural under-resourced communities.

Over the course of three years, TRIP will provide a proof-of-concept of the ways in which informal education centers can engage with, learn from, and support rural students, K-2 teachers, families, and communities. From relationship building and asset mapping, to the collaborative integration and implementation of engaging resources, this project focuses on the cross section of community needs and available resources. TRIP is funded in part by a prestigious Institute of Museum and Library Services Leadership grant.

"This project allows us to illustrate the ways a museum alliance can learn from and support STEM and literacy learning together."

Dale McCreedy, Vice President of Audience & Community Engagement



TRIP Leadership Team Planning Retreat
Project partners include: Adventure Science Center; Creative Discovery Museum; Hands-On Discovery Center; The Muse; Museum of Science & History; East Tennessee State University.

ReDiscovering Hope

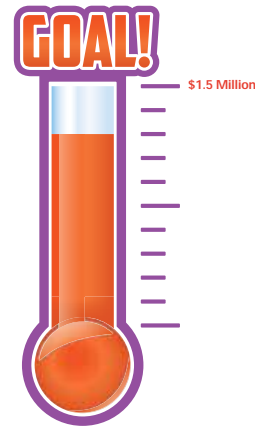
As with other non-profit organizations, the effects of COVID-19 had a significant impact on Discovery Center. With the cancellation of field trips across the state and daily visitation being much lower than where it was in 2019, our earned income suffered a significant decline. Our Board of Trustees and Development Committee worked tirelessly to develop creative new ways to fundraise including the launch of a Capital Campaign for COVID-19 recovery called [ReDiscovering Hope](#).



A Sustainability Campaign for Discovery Center

We have been overwhelmed by the outpouring of support from this community in response to this campaign. Discovery Center has supported children and their families for more than thirty years, and we owe much of this to YOU and each member who has served on our Board of Directors.

With a clear view of who we are, Discovery Center is confident that we can address the needs of our community and move our museum forward. Because of our supporters, Discovery Center will not only weather this storm but will THRIVE!



ReDiscovering Hope Campaign Donors (as of 04/12/2022)

\$100,000+

The Christy Houston Foundation
LaRoche Family Foundation

\$50,000 - \$99,999

Mr. & Mrs. Andy Adams
Adams Family Foundation
Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Burgess
John Floyd Charitable Foundation, Inc.
Ole South Properties, Inc.
Tennessee Valley Authority

\$10,000 - \$49,999

Cool Springs Financial
Hamilton-Ryker

Mr. and Mrs. Nick Lewis
Middle Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation
Pinnacle Financial Partners
Amy and Rick Sain
Lana Seivers & Matthew Wearwell

\$1,000 - \$9,999

Anonymous
Judge and Mrs. Don Ash
Veronica and Joe Bosnak
Bright Funds
Tom and Susie Campion
Dr. and Mrs. Scott Corlew

Dr. and Mrs. Frank Drowota
J.R. and Amanda Greene
Jeri Hasselbring
Thomas and Lindsey Jennings
Mr. and Mrs. Bill Jones
M.R. Metzger Family Foundation
Preston and Tara MacDougall
Murfreesboro Medical Clinic & SurgiCenter
National Health Foundation
James Nunnery
Mr. & Mrs. Fant Smith
Mr. and Mrs. Rick Swafford
Minh-Triet and Greg Tucker

New WaterWorks Exhibit Opening May 2022!



John Floyd

Donor Spotlight

When one thinks of Rutherford County's most philanthropic spirits, John Floyd is certainly top of mind. John has been a long-time supporter of Discovery Center events and programs. Through the John Floyd Charitable Foundation and his business, Ole South Properties, he has provided funding for exhibits such as the iconic slide in the center of the museum. John was also one of the first donors to provide a lead gift to the ReDiscovering Hope Campaign.

John believes that to whom much is given, much is expected, and this community has blessed him. It's his responsibility to give back. He encourages everyone to support the causes that are dear to them.

John and his wife, Gina, enjoy spending time with their children and grandchildren. They believe in supporting Discovery Center because it's an organization that is near and dear to their hearts.

"I appreciate how Discovery Center not only encourages children to learn and be curious from an early age, but to have fun while doing it! They're inspiring the next generation of scientists, artists, doctors, and home builders. Supporting our regional children's museum will reach more children and lead to a better life for all."

We at Discovery Center are so grateful for John and all he does to make our community a better place.

John poses with Ruby Fournier at her favorite exhibit, the Discovery Center slide, which he funded.



Supporting Play for All



At a time when so many in our country have experienced injustice and disparity, the Discovery Center staff and other community leaders have united to bridge the gap and be a resource for families by establishing the *Discovery Guild*.

The Guild is a network for families, caregivers, and community leaders to connect, engage, and embrace the museum's vision. The Guild strengthens ties between communities who gather and learn at Discovery Center, provides opportunities to grow for all ages, and builds the foundations to propel curious minds to fuel the future.

Activities include social networking and fundraising opportunities. The Guild's signature events are: Bubbles and Beakers, a free annual membership wine and cheese; and Discover Rutherford, a cultural food festival making its debut on September 24, 2022.

Discovery Guild memberships are \$35/year which provides members access to Guild activities and museum insider news. Funds raised through the Guild's memberships and fundraising efforts will provide free access for under-served families in Rutherford County.

Joy of Philanthropy



Discovery Center is excited about a new partnership with two area Rutherford County non-profits in an effort to provide wealth management and estate planning professionals a tool for their clients when considering philanthropic giving.

Together with Rutherford County Area Habitat for Humanity and NOURISH Food Bank, we're addressing the educational, shelter, and food needs of our community through transformative philanthropy. We aim to be a resource to these professionals and their clients when discussing how they'd like to leave their legacy or impact their community.

By supporting these three entities, donors will improve the lives and give our community the building blocks we all need for a good life: an education that leads to a steady job and access to basic necessities of life such as food and shelter.

For more information on the Joy of Philanthropy, please contact Lindsey Jennings at ljennings@exploredc.org.



Volunteer Spotlight

Johnathan Warner

Johnathan Warner is a Discovery Center Counselor-in-Training. Needing volunteer hours for his school and enjoying working with kids, Discovery Center was a great option. Johnathan is a 16-year-old sophomore at Central Magnet School. In his spare time, he enjoys archery, chess, band, and reading. He is also a soccer coach for kids with disabilities.

His favorite activity was going into the spring with the campers all wearing rubber boots to explore the creek. Being a Counselor-in-Training allows him to learn how to talk with kids and how to get on their level. He finds that talking to kids can be harder than talking with adults, and Campology gives him an opportunity to connect with kids from all different backgrounds and ages.

"I feel valued as a volunteer. The Discovery Center staff and campers get to know me and my interests," says Johnathan.

Johnathan plans to go to Middle Tennessee State University to study Mechanical Engineering. "We're excited to see him grow into a camp counselor if he does study at MTSU," says Camp Coordinator Emmie Enochs. Enochs says Johnathan is a very consistent and reliable volunteer. He instantly helps with camp projects without having to be asked. What a joy it is to have this smart, passionate, and fun volunteer on our team!



Corporate Spotlight

Franke

For over 100 years, Switzerland-based Franke Group has thrived on innovative engineering and outstanding design. The global headquarters of the Group's Foodservice Systems division is located at a large campus in Symrna that includes offices, R&D labs and a distribution center. Around the world, Franke outfits the kitchens for global quick-service restaurant chains, and then supports them each day with replacements for equipment and utensils.

Franke believes everything it does should be unique – from the products it develops to the way it deal with customers, partners, and employees. Discovery Center is grateful that Franke is bringing this passion into a redesign of our museum kitchen. This generous gift will bring our kitchen into the 21st century and expand our capacity to better serve our visitors.

"We want [our employees and families] to know Franke is committed not only to a great workplace, but also to giving back to our community in ways that make life for children and families better. We are excited to help the Discovery Center add even more hands-on education opportunities to its offering," says Peter Revesz, CEO of the Americas business unit.



TENNESSEE STEAM! FESTIVAL

CELEBRATING 5 YEARS!

Tennessee STEAM Festival is establishing itself as one of Tennessee's best bets when it comes to bringing STEAM to life and gaining a reputation for unique events that tie the everyday to Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math. After a virtual year due to COVID in 2020, Discovery Center is thrilled that so many organizations and businesses stepped up in 2021 to help safely reengage the community in STEAM exploration. 2021 also marked the inaugural *STEAM-a-Palooza*, a free outdoor event at the museum that featured local artists, scientists and engineers for all-ages, hands-on fun. For the Festival's fifth anniversary, we take a photographic look back at the many partners and visitors who have experienced brilliance during the festival.

2017



2018



2019



2020



2021
STEAM-A-
PALOOZA





Employee Spotlight

Eric Talbot

A man of many talents, Eric Talbot began working at the Discovery Center in June of 2012. He started as a Visitor Service Specialist, moved up to Weekend Supervisor, and then to Community Outreach Coordinator. Next, he transitioned to the exhibits department as the Exhibits & Building Maintenance Coordinator. He has been the Director of Exhibits & Facilities since 2019. An MTSU graduate, Eric is also a percussionist, welder, woodworker, husband to Ashley, and superdad to Lucas. Get to know Eric Talbot!

What has been your favorite project at Discovery Center?

Protractor Putt Putt in the MathRox exhibit

What are you most excited about at Discovery Center?

The New WaterWorks exhibit

What advice do you have for parents who bring their kids to the Discovery Center?

Letting your children explore and discover on their own is important, being an active part of their discovery is not only beneficial for the child but also for you.

What's your favorite indoor/outdoor activity?

Anything with my family. I am a sucker for backpacking.

If you could meet anyone, alive or dead, who would it be?

John Bonham

If you could be a fictional character, who would you be?

Jack Sparrow or Ryder from Paw Patrol.

What would you name the autobiography of your life?

Many wrong turns sometimes make a right.

What would you most like to tell yourself at age 13?

It's going to get pretty ugly after high school, particularly 2007 and 2008. Don't give up and keep going. Nothing will pan out like you think it will and that's actually ok.

Ten years ago, where did you think you would be now?

Touring with Blue Man Group - I'm actually too tall (6'8") to be a blue man, but I could be in the band!

What is an experience that made you a stronger person?

I have never and probably will never consider myself a "strong person." I doubt myself often and struggle with this concept. However, when my son was born I found myself having certainty that if nothing else, I am an allstar dad.



Partner Spotlight

National Girls Collaborative Project

The National Girls Collaborative Project (NGCP) is a network of networks bringing together organizations committed to informing and encouraging girls to pursue careers in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). With a mission to connect, create, and collaborate to transform STEM for all youth, NGCP supports and creates STEM experiences that are as diverse as the world we live in.

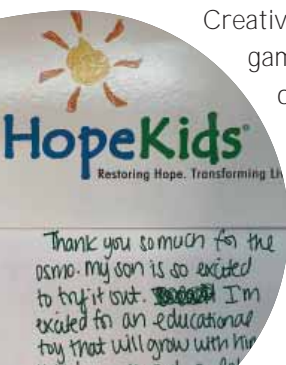
NGCP has a total of **33 Collaboratives, serving 41 states.** Through collaboration across **42,500 organizations,** the network **serves 20.2 million girls and 10 million boys.** Networks are also active in Australia and Canada and operate on a global basis as the Global Girls Collaborative.



Discovery Center serves as the convening agency for Tennessee's Collaborative; a reflection of our commitment to STEM learning and equity. In addition, Discovery Center is a proud partner in the following NCGP-supported initiatives:

NGCP, Mercedes-Benz USA, and Mattel teamed up to show that girls have no limits! Mercedes-Benz gave away die-cast Matchbox replicas of the Mercedes-Benz 220SE commemorating Ewy Rosqvist's historic Argentinian Grand Prix performance. Discovery Center was proud to be able to help distribute over 4,500 cars across the region to such organizations as Nourish Food Bank, Boys and Girls Club, Linebaugh Library, Lipscomb University, Murfreesboro City Schools, and Metro Nashville Public Schools.

As a result of a national partnership between NGCP and Osmo and in celebration of Women's History Month, Tennessee benefitted from a generous donation of Osmo Creative Kits. Osmo makes hands-on learning games in which students utilize real-world objects and virtual tools to create an immersive physical-digital educational experience. Discovery Center distributed 243 Osmo Kits to libraries, schools, special needs classrooms, and community organizations.



The IF/THEN® Initiative from Lyda Hill Philanthropies is designed to activate a culture shift among young girls to open their eyes to STEM careers. With support from NGCP and the Association of Science & Technology Centers, we created a pop-up exhibit with accompanying activities, distributed over 114 IF/THEN® poster packs, and developed games and resources featuring ambassadors of the IF/THEN® Collection.



Leap into Science is a national program that integrates open-ended science activities with children's books for children ages 3-10 and their families. This partnership allows Discovery Center to provide training and resources for adults to facilitate Leap into Science. The program empowers educators to offer programs in community settings like libraries, museums, and out-of-school time programs that engage under-served audiences in accessible and familiar settings. The initiative is led by The Franklin Institute, NGCP, the Institute for Learning Innovation, with support from the National Science Foundation.

And last but not least, NGCP provides materials support for the national implementation of GSK Science in the Summer™. Administered by The Franklin Institute, this a free, inquiry-based science education program that helps elementary school children grow to love science. Discovery Center is one of 27 sites implementing the program across the nation.



"NGCP is pleased to partner with the Discovery Center to support their efforts to serve young people in Tennessee. Thanks to their leadership, we have a strong partner as we work together to help to spark STEM interest in all youth."
Karen Peterson, CEO and Founder

Member Spotlight

The Taylor Family

Jacquelyn (Jackie) Taylor has been a member of the Discovery Center since 2019 when her granddaughter, Ava, was 4 months old. As she looked for interactive ways to involve Ava with other children, she remembered taking her own children to the old Discovery House.

When recalling their first visit, Jackie says "Ava was very shy, but she got over that quickly. She wanted to go there every day!" Jackie purchased a Grandparent Membership after their first week of visits.

"Ava wants to go there constantly. She's now four with a one-year-old brother. Her other grandmother, Kay VanHooser, is also a member and brings her cousin. We truly enjoy watching them play in a safe, welcoming environment."

Jackie appreciates the helpful and friendly staff at Discovery Center. "Once I had a safety concern in the Great Outdoors, and the staff took care of it immediately placing safety caps over the bolts," says Jackie. When Ava got brave recently and wanted to go down the slide alone,

staff member Madden Purcell stayed with her at the top to encourage her while grandma went below. She was so proud of herself when she made it down. Ava also looks forward to seeing Kendall Jobe, Education & SPARK! Specialist, every time they visit.

Not only a member, Jackie is also an amazing advocate for Discovery Center. She encourages others to come to the museum and watch their children bloom. "When speaking with other grandparents and mothers, I always mention SPARK as a way to get children involved," says Jackie. "Although I think I overdid it! Recently I went to enroll the kids for a class and it was already full!"

Jackie is nurturing her grandkids' love for learning and teaching the value of the Powers of Play — creativity, critical thinking, confidence, collaboration, and coordination. These are crucial skills that come in handy no matter how old we get. Someday, children like Ava who visit the Discovery Center will grow up and help run the world!

The Discovery Center is so grateful for Ms. Taylor and all our museum members for playing a key role in supporting our mission.



Board Members of the



Tom Campion, 2018



Paula Harris, 2019

Tom Campion came to the Nashville area in 1997 when Franke Foodservice Systems moved from Philadelphia to Middle Tennessee. As a Rutherford County employer, Franke has many employees that live locally with young families, so getting involved with a place where kids can be introduced to STEAM in their own backyard was a natural fit! Tom has been married for 45 years, has two kids, and welcomed his first grandson during the pandemic.

What motivates you to stay involved?

Discovery Center is defined by the people it serves and the people who are committed to making sure it can be the best it can be. The leadership, staff, and volunteers are all in. Any way I can support such commitment, I will stay involved.

What do you wish other people knew about Discovery Center?

That it's for everyone. Yes it's kids first, but all visitors including parents and caregivers get a first-hand look at what learning looks like while having fun.

What do you hope Discovery Center will achieve in the future?

Continued growth and reach to begin that early fostering of STEAM principles. We need these next generations to develop skills that make our world a better place.

Do you have an anecdote about the Discovery Center that really moved you?

It was impressive how quickly Discovery Center leadership worked up a plan to survive the pandemic without putting this institution at risk. It was a selfless and bold plan that conserved resources to come out OK on the other end. Dedication!

Paula Harris grew up on a dairy farm in Triune, TN. She is an Executive Vice President for Barge Design Solutions, Inc., an architect and engineering consulting firm. Paula is married to David M. Harris, DVM, and they have one son Will, who owns Harris Riding Academy in Murfreesboro. She is also a grandmother to Rhett and Grayson.

What motivates you to stay involved?

The Discovery Center and all of the programs it supports are so important to our children. I really appreciate the all inclusive mission of the organization. Just seeing Rhett and Grayson have fun and learn in a safe environment is all I need to be committed.

What do you wish other people knew about Discovery Center?

The Discovery Center is more than a children's museum. The outreach and programming are amazing. We are much more than the exhibits in this building.

What do you hope Discovery Center will achieve in the future?

I hope that we continue to serve our families throughout Middle Tennessee. We can't do that without the community's support from individuals, to businesses and government funding. As this region grows, we need to continue to be at the forefront of impacting the education of our children. We need to continue to be recognized as a critical part of education.

Do you have an anecdote about the Discovery Center that really moved you?

I just remember how much fun Will had every time we visited. I do miss the airplane. We were always willing to wait patiently for our turn.

Year 2018-2021



Madhavi Boorgu is a Radiation Control Health Physicist that has served in the public sector at both the State and Federal levels as well as a physics consultant for a private firm. She was first introduced to Discovery Center after the birth of her daughters.

What attracted you to Discovery Center?

I chaperoned a kindergarten field trip for my daughter's class and saw children's pure delight at the museum. They were so obviously taken with everything they saw and heard as soon as they stepped through the door. I wanted to be a part of it all.

What do you wish other people knew about Discovery Center?

I wish everyone knew that optimal learning occurs best through play and that this magical combination of discovery, learning, and play happens easily for children when they enter the Discovery Center.

What do you hope Discovery Center will achieve in the future?

I look forward to the Discovery Center's expansion into Williamson County extending learning opportunities to more counties in Tennessee.

Do you have a favorite anecdote about the Discovery Center?

My favorite is what one of our daughters stated after her father asked about her first visit to the museum. She said, "Daddy, it was the best, most funnest place ever!"

Rick Sain was born and raised on a farm in Bell Buckle, TN. After receiving a Pre-Pharmacy degree from MTSU, he graduated from the University of Tennessee with a Doctor of Pharmacy, and has lived and worked in Murfreesboro for over 30 years as an independent pharmacist.

Why did you decide to get involved with Discovery Center?

I have always loved math and science, and as a pharmacist, I know how important it is to have children engaged at an early age with hands-on STEM experiences.

What motivates you to stay involved?

It's easy to stay motivated when you see such a motivated staff, great leadership, and a great board to work with. I really do mean that! Having a special needs child of my own, it also means a lot to me that Discovery Center gives free access to special needs families with ALL ACCESS nights.

What do you wish other people knew about the museum?

Growing up in a rural area, I think it is pretty cool that Discovery Center reaches rural Tennessee counties through mobile programs. This gives access to even more kids that might not otherwise have the same opportunity.

Do you have an anecdote about the Discovery Center that really moved you?

I have been amazed with the passion, energy, creativity and dedication the staff at Discovery Center has shown since I have been on the board. You see this when you attend as a member or visitor, but you really see it from a board member standpoint. It is easy to get behind something when you see this and see everyone working as a team.

Financial Snapshot 2020



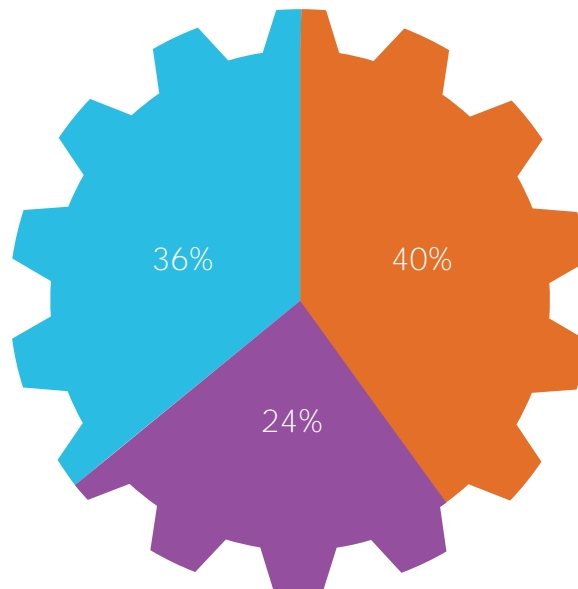
Following public health guidelines, we made the painful decision to close our doors in March of 2020, and remained closed a little over three months before re-opening in July 2020 with limited capacity. We remained at limited capacity well into 2021. Since then our visitation has slowly risen, but still remained well below normal levels throughout 2021. This closure and below normal visitation resulted in a loss of critical earned revenue. In 2020 our earned revenue was 33% of budget; a devastating blow to the museum. We are grateful for our donors, governmental grants, and two PPP loans for seeing us through this significant loss of revenue.

A complete copy of our 2020 audited financial statements and 990 may be found at [Givingmatters.com](https://givingmatters.com).

Total revenue for 2020: \$1,296,625
Total expenses for 2020: \$1,308,854

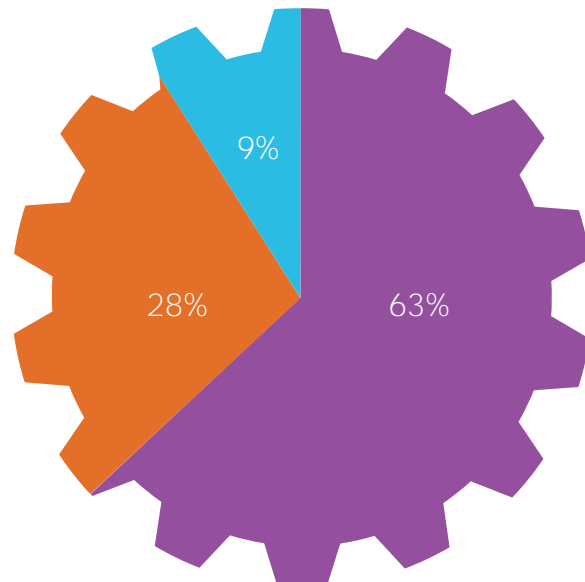
Where it comes from

- Private
- Public
- Program



Where it goes

- Admin
- Program
- Fundraising



Thank you to our donors for making play happen!

The following *cumulative contributions* were made through generous support of the Discovery Center's Annual Fund between **January 1, 2020 - December 31, 2021**. This underwriting is critical to enhance and improve our programs and exhibits and to continue offering high-quality, informal STEAM learning opportunities to the community.

\$100,000+

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State of Tennessee

\$25,000 - \$99,999

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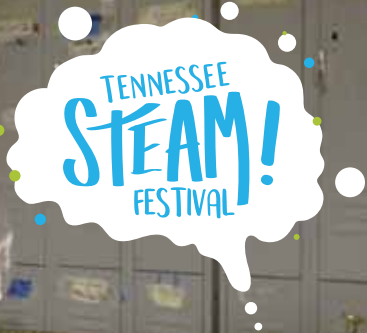
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