

Discovery Center Museum

Sparking New Curiosity

2017 Annual Report



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Discovery Center Museum was founded by volunteers, and volunteers remain vital to the museum. In 2017, 657 volunteers, both youth and adult, contributed over 5,100 hours of service to the Museum.



Thermo Fisher volunteers



Summer/Art Intern mentoring Y.E.S. volunteers



Associated Bank volunteers

- **Board of Directors:** 24 members contributing over 680 hours of their time and expertise
- **Community partners:** 32 businesses and school groups totaling over 2,300 hours
- **Individuals:** 41 adults
- **Teens:** 138 active Youth Experiencing Science (Y.E.S.)
- **Auxiliary Committee:** 150 hours for *Discover the Spirits* fundraiser
- **Early Childhood Advisory Committee:** 5 community volunteers





New Permanent/Traveling Exhibits and Events

- ☀️ Discovery Center purchased an exhibit, *Comets, Asteroids, and Meteors: Great Balls of Fire!*, which took families and school groups on an astronomical adventure through outer space. Rockford Public School District and Harlem School District 3rd graders visited the exhibit free through a grant.
- ☀️ With the help of numerous local business professionals, we developed informational *Career Kiosks* for children and parents to explore diverse careers in our community.
- ☀️ The Early Childhood Advisory Committee worked with the Museum's staff for many hours of thoughtful planning to create the *OSF HealthCare Children's Hospital* role play exhibit in the Tot Spot gallery. Children took rides in an ambulance, completed an exam in a patient room, checked x-rays, put on a cast and took care of newborns.
- ☀️ New spaces were created in the Outdoor Science Park. The *Mott Spot* playspace was designed for preschool-age children to experiment with water and create art. We planted a *garden greenspace* with raised beds of vegetables and herbs. Children observed, touched, smelled and tasted all throughout the growing season.
- ☀️ Visitors enjoyed the temporary traveling exhibit *Hello from Japan!* which transported families to present-day Tokyo to explore Japanese culture and traditions.
- ☀️ Over 1,000 people learned about eclipses and experienced a rare viewing of the *Solar Eclipse* during a two-day event at Discovery Center.

Classes and Camps


- Discovery Center offered a comprehensive variety of classes for children and their families ranging from *Family Classes* and *Tot Spot Classes* to *Home School Classes*.
- *Summer Camps* provided toddlers through 6th graders a summer full of science, technology, engineering, art and math to spark curiosity and engage minds.
- ☀️ Our *Baby and Me* class, a drop-in program for children birth to 18 months, was very popular with parents and grandparents and their little ones.
- ☀️ Children ages 12 months to 24 months attended our new *Toddler Time*. They sang songs, listened to stories, explored interesting materials, and met new friends.



So Much ☀️ New ☀️ to explore!

☀️ denotes new in 2017

Community Outreach

- Special **Mornings of Fun** invited children with special needs to explore multi-sensory exhibits in the museum at a pace comfortable to them before the museum opened to the general public.
- 52 **Family Free Days** occurred in 2017 providing museum access for 4,458 visitors free of charge.
- Discovery Center provided **enrichment programs** for the “at risk” students in the after school program at three elementary schools in the Rockford Public School District, providing homework assistance, help with math and reading skills, a nutrition education program and other education and recreation activities. This program is funded in part by  LIVE UNITED United Way of Rock River Valley.
- In 2017, almost 22,000 students came to Discovery Center on **field trips**. Of that, 2,600 pre-school aged children were in Rockford Public District’s Early Childhood program and 550 children were from the City of Rockford’s Head Start program.
- We are part of the national **Blue Star Museum** program and provided 797 active duty military personnel and family members free admission to the museum.



- Our **Agency Pass Program** offered social service agencies complimentary museum memberships providing unlimited free visits for their clients.
- Discovery Center worked with Rockford Public School District’s Prevention Initiative (0-3) Program, Early Head Start and Easter Seals Teen Parenting Program. Our **parent-child interaction program** offered developmentally appropriate activities focusing on literacy, social emotional development, and other approaches to learning geared toward school readiness.
- **Field Fastener Family Nights** provided children in Rockford Public School District’s Early Childhood program four free nights to explore and enjoy time in the museum with their parents while learning.

National and Local Recognition

- Over the years, Discovery Center has been voted Best Child-Friendly Place in Rockford Register Star’s Annual “What Rocks” contest. We were honored to be awarded this recognition once again in 2017.
- Since 2014, Discovery Center has earned the TripAdvisor’s Certificate of Excellence each year.



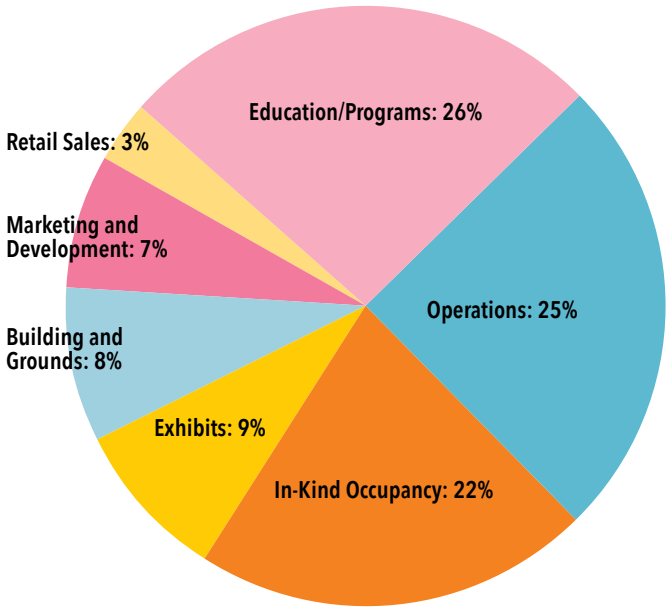
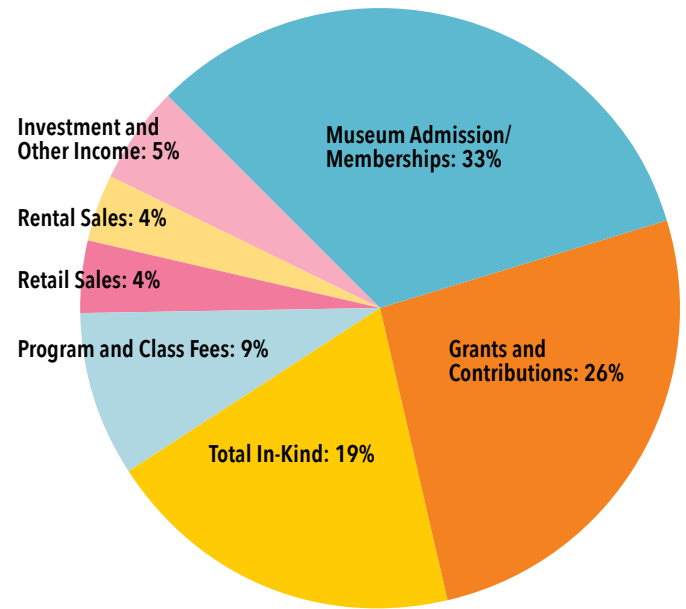
Discovery Center is a perfect and affordable science museum for kids of all ages—babies to pre-teens. Plenty to do all day! I loved it as a child, and now my own son is having a blast there too!

Marianna L Peterson

By the Numbers

Income

Museum Admission/Memberships .	\$763,566
Grants and Contributions	\$603,665
Total In-Kind	\$452,820
Program and Class Fees	\$202,661
Retail Sales	\$89,232
Rental Sales	\$85,227
Investment and Other Income	\$120,690
TOTAL INCOME	\$2,317,861



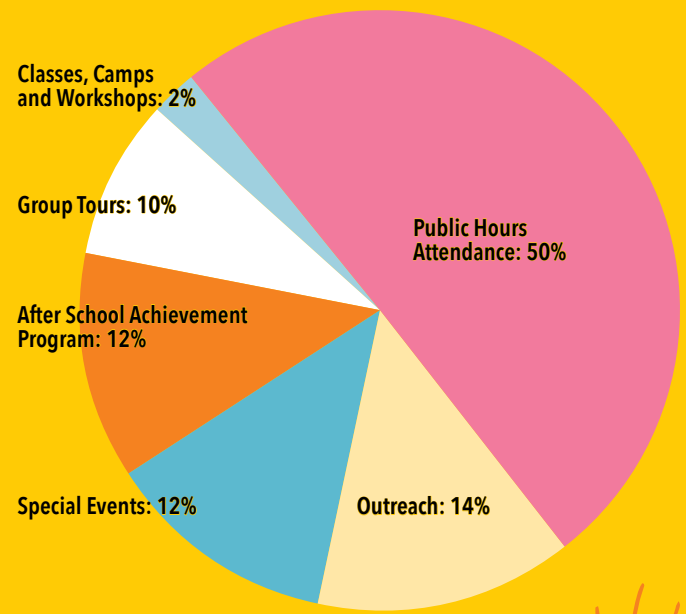
Expenses

Education/Programs	\$537,293
Operations	\$511,598
In-Kind Occupancy	\$435,700
Exhibits	\$177,346
Building and Grounds	\$171,487
Marketing and Development	\$149,252
Retail Sales	\$63,716
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$2,046,392

People Served

- During 2017, Discovery Center served a total of **264,506** people from all 50 states and several foreign countries.
- Membership growth topped **3,300**, contributing to **55,183** fun visits!

Public Hours Attendance	133,443
Outreach	36,585
Special Events	32,822
After School Achievement Program	32,522
Group Tours	23,183
Classes, Camps and Workshops . . .	5,951
TOTAL SERVED	264,506



Strong Support

We thank our many corporate and individual supporters for the opportunities your gifts provided in 2017.



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Our 4th grade class just returned from a field trip to the museum. They had an amazing time! Thank you for a great experience. The staff was super friendly and it was the most organized field trip I've ever been a part of. I'm hoping to be back next year!

Leggee Elementary - Huntley, IL



One of the better learning centers in the country. Great for kids and adults alike.
Many things to see, do and touch.

Visitor review from Bengaluru, India

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While we strive to keep accurate records, if a name does not appear on the list
as it should, please contact our Development Director at 815-972-2834.



We were thrilled with our experience at Discovery Center and our students had a great time, while learning a lot! We most definitely plan on returning next year! Thank you for such a truly impressive experience!

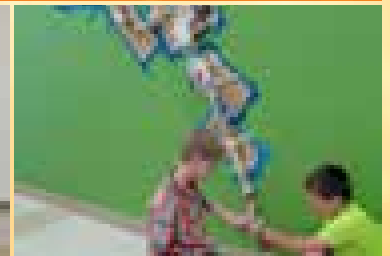
*Lincoln Prairie Elementary School -
Lake in the Hills, IL*

I absolutely loved the Discovery Center! The price is great for everything there is for kids to do! I took my 9 year old and 2 year old and we spent 5 hours there and we could have stayed longer! I love all the hands on learning and fun for the kids!

Chaley Lamb



An absolute MUST for families with toddlers and grade school-age kids! Nationally-ranked in the Top Five and always adding some exciting new experience! This is deservedly Rockford's pride and joy.



Mission

Create opportunities for joyful learning and discovery through hands-on experiences in the sciences and arts.