



## A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This year gave us the opportunity to pause, reflect, and be intentional about where The Iowa Children's Museum is headed. It was a year of strengthening our foundation while keeping our focus firmly on the children and families we serve.

Inside the museum, we celebrated 25 years at Coral Ridge Mall with a special installation that highlighted the serious work of play for children across the globe. We made major updates to *Lights Out!* and *ImaginAcre*s, along with dozens of smaller improvements throughout the museum—thoughtful changes that make a big difference in how kids experience our space. We continue to expand accessibility and inclusive supports, working to make sure more children and families feel welcome here.

Another meaningful achievement was re-crafting our organizational values—putting words to what has always mattered and using them to guide how we make decisions in the future. We also began the first phase of our strategic plan by connecting with our community. Through a survey and focus groups, we invited families, educators, and partners to share what they love about the museum, where they see room to grow, and what they hope we'll become. Their feedback is already helping shape our next steps.

This work is only possible because of the people who believe in it. Thank you to our donors, members, partners, volunteers, and staff for your trust, care, and commitment to the power of play. I'm incredibly proud of what we accomplished together this year and excited for what's ahead.

With gratitude,

Jeff Capps  
 Executive Director  
 jcapps@theicm.org



## MISSION

The mission of The Iowa Children's Museum is to inspire every child to imagine, create, discover, and explore through the Power of Play

## VISION

An inclusive, collaborative community where children are valued, their right to play is championed, and their future is nurtured

## VALUES

Actively **invite**  
 Authentically **engage**  
 Meaningfully **connect**  
 Joyfully **play**

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

as of 12/31/2025

- Celeste Yoder, Chair
- Jason Wilfgang, Treasurer
- Chace Ramey, Secretary
- Kathleen Finley
- Emily Hagedorn
- Carolina Kaufman
- Maneesh Kumar
- Megan Lorenz
- Nick Mahon
- Ellie Moore
- Monica Nieves Hirsch
- Brooke Noack
- Ben Russell
- Bri Swope
- Jamie Venzon
- James Wachendorf
- Ryan West
- Nicole White

# IN THE MUSEUM

Our museum is where children explore, families connect, and learning happens through play. After more than 25 years of play in our current location, we're proud of the ways we improved our space this year to better serve kids and caregivers every time they walk through our doors.

"When our child was going through cancer treatment, this was one of the few places we felt safe to go."



**161,510**  
MUSEUM ADMISSIONS

**222**  
PROGRAM  
PARTICIPANTS

**8,152**  
FIELD TRIP VISITORS

**2,924**  
MEMBER FAMILIES

**42,197**  
FREE OR REDUCED  
MUSEUM ADMISSIONS

That's more than 25% of all museum visits!



## EXHIBIT ENHANCEMENTS

Hosted **Potential Space**, a temporary art installation featuring global perspectives on creativity, imagination, and childhood.

Renovated **Lights Out!**, a space cave-inspired exhibit that encourages children to experiment with cause and effect, investigate how light travels, and create their own glowing stories.

Refreshed **ImaginAcre**s with raised garden beds, a pumpkin patch, and many other updated elements to support role-play and imagination.

Relocated the **Post Office** and refreshed the space with new interactive elements as we prepare for future updates to our music exhibit.

Introduced additional **light and sound** features across exhibits to create more immersive environments, turned a **water fountain nook** into an exploration of the importance of water, expanded local resources available to visiting families, and made ongoing **accessibility improvements** to support inclusive, welcoming play for children of all abilities.



"We come nearly every Saturday morning. It's become a favorite family tradition."



# BEYOND OUR WALLS

Play doesn't stop at the museum doors. Through outreach events, programs, and community partnerships, The Iowa Children's Museum brings hands-on learning to families across our region—wherever they are.

From large-scale favorites like **Move It! Dig It! Do It!** and **Jack Splat** to ongoing efforts like **ICM2Go**, **Storytime STEM**, and offering family-friendly activities at **community events**, our team met families in parks, schools, libraries, and public spaces to provide meaningful fun.



*"There is nothing like spending an afternoon watching your little one's imagination and curiosity grow."*

## NEW EVENT: PLAYING IN THE PARK

Created in partnership with the Coralville Public Library and many other community partners, this free, family-friendly festival celebrated music, books, and nature. More than 700 individuals joined us for an afternoon of movement, creativity, and community.



# 19,016

## PEOPLE SERVED AT OUTREACH EVENTS & COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

### 6,500

MUSEUM PASSES  
DONATED TO SUMMER  
READING PROGRAMS

### 434

FAMILY DAY PASSES  
DONATED TO  
CHARITABLE CAUSES

### 65

FREE OPPORTUNITIES  
TO PLAY PROVIDED IN  
THE COMMUNITY

# SUSTAINING OUR MISSION

## CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

As a key part of our strategic plan, we reached out to families, educators, and community partners through a survey and focus groups to better understand what's working, what's missing, and what matters most to them.

459

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

50

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

This feedback has already been invaluable, and will continue to guide how we invest our resources, strengthen our programs, and ensure the museum continues to meet the needs of the community we serve.

## EVENTS THAT POWER OUR WORK

Support from the **Celebrate Play Gala** and the **Iowa Children's Open** plays a critical role in sustaining our mission. These events generate essential funding that supports museum operations, educational programs, and community outreach.

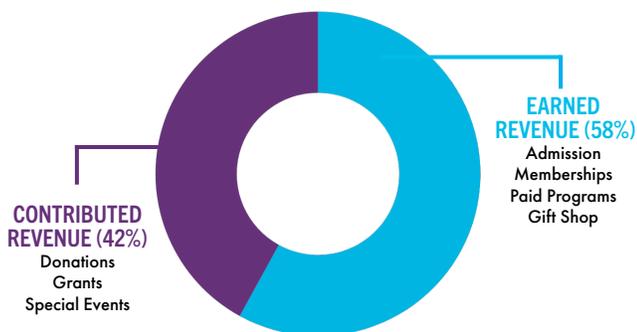
In FY25 alone, these two events engaged 500 community members and generated \$150,000 to help power our kid-focused mission. Their success helps ensure the long-term strength and accessibility of the museum.

## FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Our work is made possible by a community that believes play matters. Families, donors, sponsors, and partners all play a role in sustaining this work and helping us create meaningful experiences for children every day. Your support allows us to invest in programs, care for our space, and expand access so more children can benefit from hands-on learning.

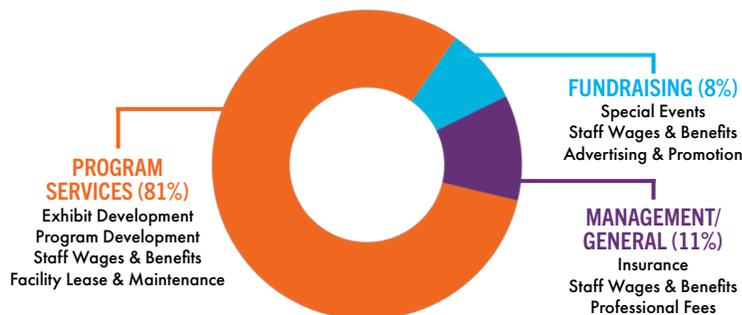
### HOW WE SUPPORT THE WORK

- FY25 Income -



### HOW WE DO THE WORK

- FY25 Expenses -



You can help sustain this work. Whether you choose to give, sponsor an event, or volunteer your time, your involvement helps keep play accessible for children and families in our community. Visit [theicm.org](http://theicm.org) to get involved!

