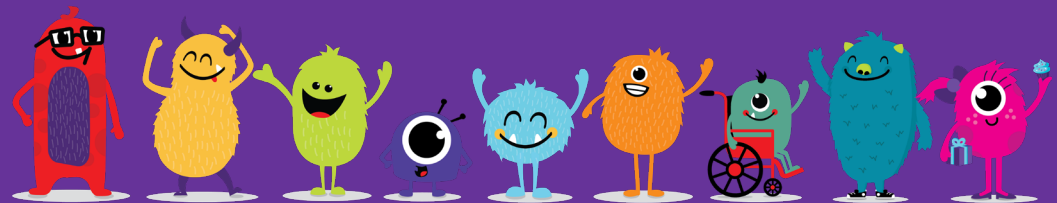




Annual Report 2025

AKRON CHILDREN'S
MUSEUM

Released: May 2026





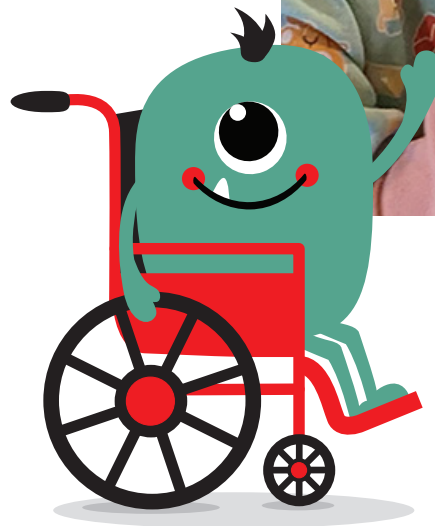
Vision:

ACM envisions a community shaped by lifelong learners, who provide innovative leadership inspired by creativity and diverse perspectives.



Mission:

To be a vibrant gathering place for all ages, where play inspires exploration, discovery, and problem solving.



Impact By The Numbers

Visitors
Welcomed Into
Museum:

47,734

Field Trips:

169

with 3,615
Students Served

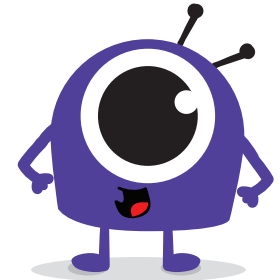
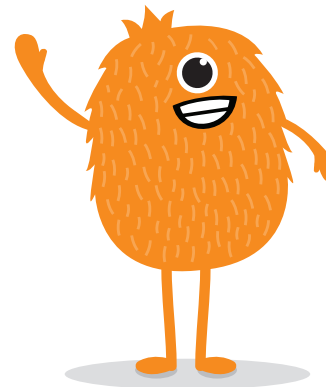
Birthday Parties:

193

with 5,946 in
Attendance

Memberships
Purchased:

812



Numbers at a Glance



Akron Public Schools (APS) Essential Experience
1546 Kindergarten students served

Field Trips

Non-APS: **2069** students served from
94 different classes.

Museum in a Box

935 students in **40** classrooms in every
Head Start in Summit County

Steam Team Saturday

32 workshops facilitated by educators at ACM

Delight Nights

43 Thursday evening activities facilitated
by ACM educations

Spend, Save, Share, STEAM!

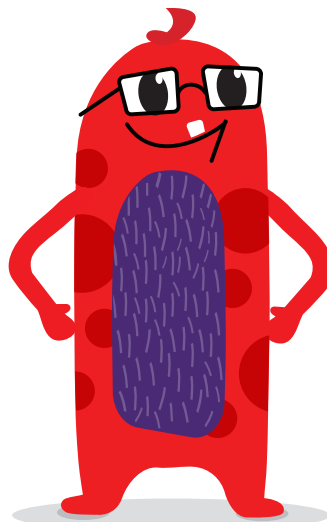
14 Financial Literacy Workshops

Education Programs



Association of Children's Museums Annual Conference

In 2025, Akron Children's Museum attended the Association of Children's Museums' Annual Conference, a valuable opportunity to connect with peers, share ideas, and gain fresh perspectives across the field. Manager of Education Kat Dunlap presented the breakout session "Juggling With Finesse," and staff returned energized with new insights that continue to inform creative problem-solving and strengthen our work with children and families.



Explore Galore with Monsters and More APS Essential Experiences SM

Since 2019, Essential Experiences SM, an ACM collaboration between the GAR Foundation and Akron Public Schools, has provided PreK-5 scholars with opportunities to visit one of seven Greater Akron arts and culture organizations through custom-designed learning experiences connected to classroom instruction. As the provider of the Kindergarten Essential Experience, **Akron Children's Museum served 1,546 APS kindergarten students in 2025** through Explore Galore with Monsters and More—a playful, hands-on program featuring an on-site field experience and wraparound curriculum designed to support APS learning goals while fostering curiosity, creativity, early skill development, and confidence in learning.



Museum in a Box

Museum in a Box, supported by the Akron Community Foundation, delivers hands-on, interactive learning to **935 students in 40 Head Start classrooms** across Summit County, featuring a loaned mini museum exhibit at each site, supplemented by themed activities that extend and deepen hands-on play. Aligned with SEI's Cradle to Career Continuum, the program supports kindergarten readiness by sparking curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking.



STEAM Team Saturdays

Our STEAM Team Saturday programming took place across **32 Saturdays** and offered structured, educator-led experiences at the intersection of artful play and scientific investigation, inviting families to explore science, engineering, art, and math through intentional, hands-on activities.



Delight Nights

Through our Delight Nights programming, we provided an alternative time frame for families to engage in museum learning during the evening hours. Through **43 Thursday night programs** facilitated by Akron Children's Museum educators, families were invited to drop in during extended hours to explore hands-on STEM activities in the Maker Space, making high-quality, playful learning more accessible to working caregivers and busy schedules.



Spend, Save, Share, STEAM!

ACM launched a **brand new financial literacy program** in April of this year called "Spend, Save, Share, STEAM!" Made possible with support from our friends at Huntington Bank, this program encourages young learners to explore money management through games and interactive STEM challenges.



Special Events



Attendance:
240

Grown Up Play Date

This fundraiser is a highly anticipated yearly favorite of ACM's expanding community of supporters and a pivotal element in the nonprofit organization's financial progress. **Net proceeds from Grown Up Play Date benefit the museum's All Access Kids' Fund and Museums For All Fund.** These funds allow ACM to provide low-income children with play-based learning experiences through fresh new exhibits and more than 110 educational programs annually as well as execute its Mobile Museum, reaching over 1,500 children in the past year.



All Aboard the Akron Express

This **interactive, hands-on event** features local experts and train enthusiasts exhibiting their model trains and sharing their knowledge! Visitors are able to view model train exhibits, take the controls of ACM's own Akron Express, design a train car with Lego bricks, and little ones can even construct a wooden track of their own!



Attendance:
563

Celebrate HER!

This fun night was planned for the ladies and included a glass of champagne from the "Living" wall, Journal Design Studio, Clay Jewelry Creation Station, Cash Bar, DJ and Dancing, Chair Massage, and a relaxing Serenity Room—all tailored to provide the ladies with a well-deserved break and an **opportunity to connect with other amazing moms.**



Attendance:
59



Attendance:
234

Hands-On Halloween

No fright, all delight! Hands-On Halloween is a great opportunity to put your child's favorite costume on and bring them to the Akron Children's Museum to have a fun-filled day with good music, Spooky Science stations, a delicious candy station, face painting, pumpkin and cookie decorating, countless activities, and free-play throughout the museum.



Attendance:
456

Make Believe Midnight

Party hats, dazzling decorations, colorful confetti, and the suspense of the ball drop! Why should kids have to miss out on all the fun of New Year's Eve? Make Believe Midnight is a celebration just for kids! Bring your little one, and your big ones too, for a magical day where we'll prepare the monsters and the museum for a marvelous midday celebration.

Hands-On Holidays & Hotcakes

Hands-On Holidays is our early December event to share in some winter cheer. Families are able to visit with characters from the North Pole among others and enjoy some performances. They also get to explore many stations of fun and learning and engage in STEM-based activities.



Attendance:
370

Member November

A celebration of all the people who love Akron Children's Museum the most! For 2 Thursday evenings throughout the month of November, the museum had free pizza, themed activities, and extra fun!

Attendance:
108



Our Board & Staff

Executive Board Members

Angie Rogers - President
Allyson Boyd - Vice President
Susan Burnoski - Treasurer
Ciera Preer - Secretary
Betsy Hartschuh - Lifetime Trustee and Museum Co-Founder
Ryan Hartschuh - Lifetime Trustee and Museum Co-Founder
Benjamin Tegel - Lifetime Trustee

Board of Directors

Amber Genet Barkoukis - Embracing Futures
Stephanie Bencin - FirstEnergy Service Company
Zach Berger - SeibertKeck Insurance Partners
Sean Blasko - Oatey Co
Allyson Boyd - Akron Zoo
Susan Burnoski - Soapbox Derby
Sarah Dave - Parisleaf
Byron Delpinal - Branding Brand
Betsy Hartschuh - Witschey, Witschey, and Firestone, Co., LPA
Ryan Hartschuh - The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company
April Marx - FirstEnergy Service Company
Travis Monty-Bromer - Cleveland Orchestra
Ciera Preer - VapoTherm
Trista Powers - Tri-C Cuyahoga Community College
Angelique Rogers - Pease CPAs
Diontae Smith - PNC
Kerri Stephen - Cleveland Clinic Foundation
Benjamin Tegel - Farther Finance

Our Staff

Traci J Buckner - Executive Director
Tessa Tegel - Manager of Operations
Kat Dunlap - Manager of Education
Victoria Schmidt - Community Engagement and Volunteer Manager
Susan Lindeman - Birthday Party Coordinator
Joy Edwards - Special Events Coordinator
Emily Carpenter - Assistant to the Executive Director
Paige Koenig - Visitor Experience and Facilities Lead

Education Team

Brock Sandrock
Kat Harden
Andrea Carmer
Jazaiah Curtis
Mary Ellen Nyszczy
Danielle Pavlovich

Visitor Experience Team

Cambria Barkley
Jazaiah Curtis
Nica Delgado
Toni Harper
Chanel Jackson
Gayle Montalto
Moss Peterson
Nina Robinson
Isabella Stoll



Outreach

Community Outreach is an integral part of spreading our mission! The Akron Children's Museum has traveled all over our community!

Family Reading Festival

Parent Par-Tea

Black Family Wellness Expo

Baby Fest

Tuesday Musical's Akron
Bicentennial Concert

Cuyahoga Falls City School District
All City Art Walk

BEI (Brain Enrichment Initiative)

State of the City

Kaulig Companies Championship

Honey Market

Better Kenmore 1st Friday

Richfield Community Days

SPARK Graduation

Porch Rokr

Props and Pistons

Mason CLC Back to School Bash

3rd Annual Copley Fire & Rescue
Food Truck Festival



City Employee Picnic

Blue Heron Homecoming

Summit Fresh Mobile Market

Rumpke Gingerbread House Party
and Clothing Drive

Community Collaborations



Essential ExperiencesSM **Spotlight Video**

ACM partnered with GAR Foundation and Akron Public Schools to film a short video that explores the ways in which the Essential Experience Initiative provides students with real world lessons utilizing the community as a classroom.

“Essential ExperiencesSM - Inspiring curiosity and the joy of learning in Akron, Ohio” was released in September of 2025. In addition to this work, the museum also created a Partner Spotlight video which allowed us to share our story with our community.

Which highlighted the unique, engaging experiences provided by this program.

Downtown Akron Partnership

The Akron Children’s Museum participated in 4 of Downtown Akron Partnership’s large community events! Each event brings up to 5,500 people to the Downtown Area and allows our museum to truly serve the community in which we reside.

- **Lunar New Year 2025**
- **Sakura Festival 2025**
- **Latin Fest 2025**
- **Fall Fest 2025**





Zoo Collaborations

Backpack Adventure at the Zoo

Both the Akron Zoo and the Akron Children's Museum are large supporters of Akron Public Schools. This year ACM continued its yearly tradition of participating in the Zoo's Backpack Adventure: an experience for Akron Public School families to enjoy the Zoo, visit with many community initiatives scattered throughout the space, and receive a free backpack and school supplies. The Akron Children's Museum was excited to bring our new Super Space Tiles, as well as hand out some extra fun stickers and museum themed goodies.



Monster Mission Course and Member Swap

The Museum sets up the Monster Mission Course at the Zoo 2-3 times a year. During these exciting, month-long installations of this indoor obstacle course, Zoo members can enjoy a special Buy One, Get One Free offer for Museum visits. Additionally, Museum members receive complimentary access to the Zoo during these special periods.



Polymer Palooza

Polymer Palooza 2025 was a highly successful free, family-friendly event held on June 7th at the Akron Children's Museum and Lock 3, designed to engage the community in the exciting world of polymers through hands-on experiments, interactive STEM activities, and live demonstrations. Hosted by the Greater Akron Chamber Polymer Industry Cluster and ConxusNEO, in partnership with Akron Children's Museum and Lock 3, the event effectively showcased how polymers impact everyday life while highlighting career opportunities in this growing field. Families from across the region enjoyed science experiments, games, and educational exhibits while discovering Akron's rich history and innovation in polymers.



Jobs for Ohio Graduates (aka JOG)

The Akron Children's Museum was honored to host 2 amazing students through the Jobs for Ohio Graduates Summer Program. JOG funds and places hundreds of high school students at local businesses to learn hands-on job skills and professional development through summer jobs. Beyond the summer program, ACM was honored to continue to work with the museum throughout the school year.



PNC Collaboration

The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. has supported Akron Children's Museum in multitudes! In 2025 PNC volunteers served over 200 hours assisting with programming, special events, general museum maintenance, and so much more.



Fun Run with the Akron Marathon

The Akron Children's Museum proudly partners with the Akron Marathon each year to enhance the Kids Fun Run experience. All participants are invited to enjoy FREE admission to the museum by simply presenting their race bib. The museum provides special hours on the evening of the race. Families are able to meet their runner at the finish line, then head to the museum for a fun and accessible adventure for all young runners.



Soccer Shots

The Akron Children's Museum continues to host Soccer Shots: a children's soccer program with a focus on character development. Programmed for kids as young as 2, Soccer Shots offers programs with a focus on making a positive introduction to sports and activity while also making a lasting impact on kids and their families.

Volunteer Experiences

I Promise Volunteering

The I Promise Program, which serves students across the Akron Public Schools district under The Lebron James Family Foundation, encourages students to get involved with their communities by volunteering. The Akron Children's Museum had the opportunity to present our volunteer needs to new students and talk about what our museum needs most. Volunteers from I Promise came to over half of ACM's events in the year of 2025 and made an incredible impact.



North High School College and Career Academy - Early Childhood Education Partner

Akron Children's Museum serves as an Early Childhood Education (ECE) career pathway partner for Akron Public Schools – North High School, participating as an active member of the North High Advisory Board throughout the school year. The Museum supports students through career exploration and workforce development by contributing to the Career Day Expo, offering work-based learning experiences ranging from job shadowing to internships, and providing a guest speaker focused on careers in museum education within the ECE field.

Goodyear Week of Volunteering

During Goodyear's Global Week of Volunteering, over 80 Goodyear employees kept our museum sparkling! From preparing programming, to cleaning blocks, Goodyear employees spent hours engaging in community building while working alongside their teams.



In-Museum Programming

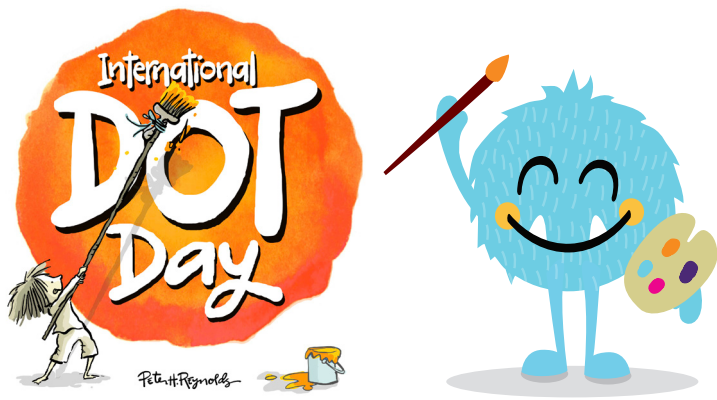


Performance by Rellee

The Akron Children's Museum was honored to host the first performance by local artist Durrell LeGrair, aka Rellee! Durrell, a talented Akron native and passionate music educator, shared selections from his multi-genre children's album. With his vibrant personality and heartfelt mission to uplift youth, Durrell's music delivers messages of love, confidence, and care. This interactive listening party brought kids together to sing, dance, and celebrate their uniqueness in a safe and joyful environment.

Ballet Excel Ohio: Dancer Day at the Museum

For the 3rd year, Girl Scouts in NorthEast Ohio came to the museum for play and a mini dance lesson by experienced teachers from Ballet Excel Ohio to earn their Dancer Badge. Afterwards, they attended a performance of Peter Pan by Ballet Excel Ohio at the Civic Theater.



International Dot Day

Throughout the week of September 15th the Akron Children's Museum celebrated International Dot Day, based on the book *The Dot* by Peter H Reynolds, encourages kids to express themselves through the creation of dots; large, small, colorful, 3D, or anything possible. The Museum shared an online and in-person gallery of kids' dot creations, either created in our exhibits or submitted from across the country. Our monsters joined in on the fun too as each monster had their own dot matching their personality.

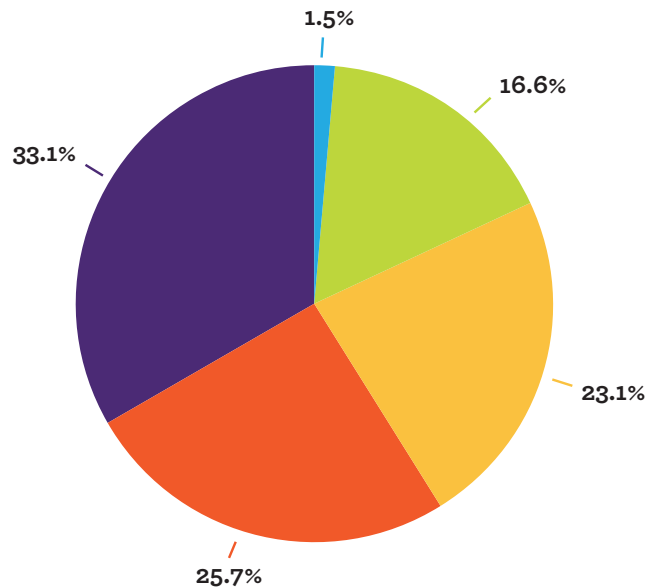


Bicentennial Night

A celebration of all things Akron: past, present and future, the Akron Children's Museum honored Akron's 200 years with a night of play! Guests created their own Time Capsules, added their favorite toys to our Nostalgia Wall, made marbles, and played with toys that were made in Akron. The Akron Children's Museum also hosted Rubber Dream: Akro Duck an interactive digital installation by Ebrahim Poustinchi. Rubber Dream: Akro-Duck is an interactive installation using real-time AI/Video-Art to observe Akron through the lens of a custom-made 3D-printed rubber toy/sculpture and its rubber visual memories of Akron. Guests could see a 'rubberized' version of themselves and celebrate Akron's history as the Rubber City.

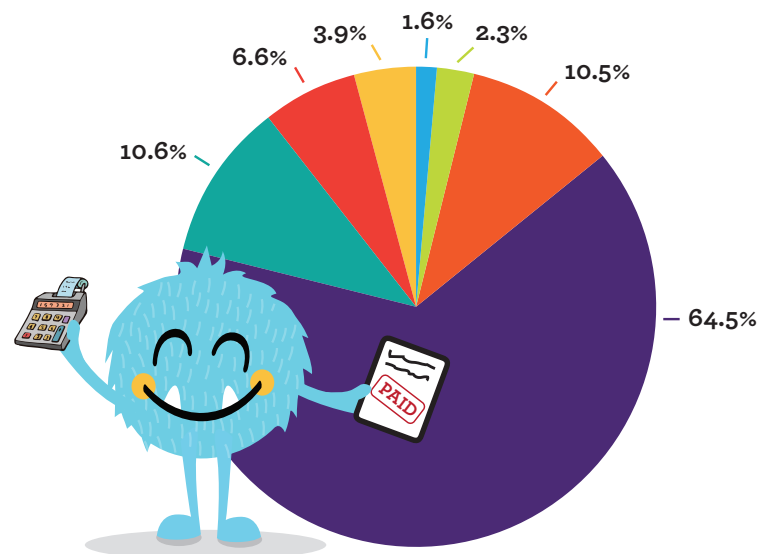


Year In Numbers



Income

\$13,828	Retail Shop
\$149,604	Capital Campaign (Water Table)
\$209,269	Admissions & Memberships
\$232,189	Donations & Grants
\$299,121	Programs & Events
.....	
\$904,011	Total Income



Expenses

\$14,343	Exhibit Maintenance & Supplies
\$19,751	Community Outreach
\$92,092	Programs & Events
\$563,643	Personnel & Human Capital
\$92,630	Professional Services & Governance
\$57,550	Operations & Administrative
\$33,969	Facilities & Maintenance
.....	
\$873,978	Total Expenses