It has been an extraordinary year that can best be summed up into two words: Thriving and Reviving. We started out financially strong, meeting and exceeding our revenue goals — in every way thriving. Then in January 2015, the ‘Great Flood’ caused us to close the Museum doors for the remainder of the fiscal year, and the reviving began without delay.

We couldn’t have anticipated facing a more challenging situation than what we have faced the last half of this past year. But from every challenge presented, a new opportunity and bright spot emerged.

Days after the flood, we identified key staff and formed ‘Team Recovery: a multidisciplinary task force comprised of DuPage Children Museum (DCM) staff, Board of Directors, donors, industry professionals, and volunteers who went to work immediately to revive the Museum. In dealing with the challenges this crisis presented, true leaders emerged.

As a result of the flood, one of the exceptional opportunities that emerged was DCM@The Mall. Here, staff transformed a retail space into a mini-museum. Located in Westfield Fox Valley Mall, we were given the opportunity to reach a new audience, many of whom had never experienced a children’s museum. Perhaps the greatest challenge we faced was the re-imagination of the Museum, and once again, the challenge presented an opportunity for us to think differently about how we serve our families now and well into the future. This was an unprecedented time and opportunity to reopen better and stronger than ever. We have established a new strategic direction, re-rooting our financial stability, committing to building on our successful history serving the Chicagoland region, and establishing the platform for a re-imagined museum to grow.

I am extremely grateful to our hundreds of member families and other residents who sent in contributions and encouraging notes; our Board of Directors and donors; and the enormous group of volunteers, business and media partners, school and community partners, and government officials across the region — and especially the City of Naperville — for all of their incredible support.

We really did make lemons into lemonade. While closing the Museum doors could have been the beginning of a catastrophic tale, it was actually the beginning of an amazing story that led us back to thriving when we reopened as DuPage Children’s Museum Re-Imagined.
NEW EXHIBIT

XOXO, An Exhibit About Love & Forgiveness, developed by the Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh in 2014 with support from The Fetzer Institute, was on display from October 2014 through January 2015*. Through facial expressions, words, movement, art making, and other hands-on activities, XOXO provided children and caregivers the opportunity to think about and explore feelings through a variety of activities designed to help them understand, appreciate, and express their emotions.

MUSEUM PROGRAMS

ENHANCING THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Families were able to experience live performances and special activities through Family Fun Friday Night events, Tiny Great Performances™, Creativity Classes, and special events focused around new exhibit openings. Museum programming is designed to foster a love for learning, introduce children to the arts, and help the important adults in children’s lives support their growth and development.

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STAYING PRESENT IN THE COMMUNITY

DCM@The Mall

While at our temporary location, DCM@The Mall, DCM engaged new audiences in Aurora and the far western suburbs to help spread the Museum’s mission. Weekly drop-in programs featured hands-on art experiences, story telling for families, and an interactive musical program.

School Programs

While the building was temporarily closed due to the Great Flood, planned field trips were converted into learning labs held in the schools. Despite the challenges presented, School Programs were able to exceed their goals.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional Development workshops offer opportunities for Pre-K and Elementary Professional Development. Funding, donations, foundation and corporate grants, and sponsorships support these programs. PNC Foundation, McCormick Foundation, and Motorola Solutions Foundation were sponsors that helped underwrite FY15 Professional Development, allowing DCM to develop 5 new workshops:

° STREAM for Preschoolers
° Playful Learning: Focus on Play
° STEM for Preschoolers
° Playful Learning: Focus on Science
° Up, Up, and Away, the Science of Flight

In FY15, DCM became an authorized entity with INCCRRA (IL Network Childcare Resource and Referral Agencies) so attendees can receive Continuing Education Units (CEUs). In FY15, 501 teachers received Professional Development impacting 10,020 children/students.

REACH & IMPACT:

14,524 preschool and school-age students, 1,959 of their parents, and 1,099 educators in over 149 schools in 36 districts
SPARK... A Collaborative Partnership

SPARK combines my passion for helping the Aurora Community with the importance of providing access and equity to all children. “SPARK” stands for Strong, Prepared, And Ready for Kindergarten and I have been with the organization since 2012. We are the City of Aurora’s Early Childhood Collaboration and Education Initiative of Fox Valley United Way, in partnership with the City of Aurora, four of the school districts that serve Aurora; District 129, 131, 308, and 204; and many other organizations serving Aurora.

Originally SPARK and DCM were able to write a grant to bring the Play to Learn program to Aurora residents at the Aurora Public Library. We held a total of nine workshops and culminated with an opportunity to host a night at DCM for Aurora families, most of whom had not previously visited the Museum.

The community of Aurora got a taste of the Museum with DCM@The Mall. Families that had never heard of DCM learned of this hidden gem sitting right in their backyard. I think having DCM@The Mall brought awareness of the importance of being able to communicate with many different cultures. Together, DCM and I worked really hard to make sure that everything was translated into Spanish and that staff correctly pronounced key phrases conveying the mission of DCM. This was a truly unique opportunity to serve many new faces from my community.

Professionally, the impact of my work with DCM has been enriching and eye-opening for SPARK and Aurora families, but personally, I am a huge advocate of DCM’s mission and first-hand can see the learning enrichment for children and parents. I am grateful for this partnership because it will help children be Strong, Prepared, And Ready for Kindergarten.

In January 2015, halfway through our fiscal year, DuPage Children’s Museum experienced a major flood that damaged most of its 50,000 sq. ft. facility and exhibits, causing the Museum to temporarily close. Over $3 million in damages and lost admissions revenue had to be replaced from insurance coverage, fundraising, exact budgeting — and most importantly, a new strategic plan.

Consistent with its reputation for innovation and creativity, DCM turned its three levels of flood damage into an unprecedented opportunity to re-imagine and redevelop many of its most popular custom-designed exhibits. “Team Recovery,” a multi-disciplinary task force comprised of DCM staff, board of directors, donors, industry professionals, and volunteers, went to work immediately.

Special thanks are due to Peter and Sharon Exley, President and partner of Architecture is Fun. The Exleys were the original architects for DCM when the Naperville location was opened in 2001. Peter and Sharon were hired for a second time to take DCM’s vision and bring it to life again throughout a re-imagined Museum. Together, with the support and guidance of an exceptional exhibit and operation team, the plans were underway to build a creative, beautiful, and contemporary learning environment. During FY15 a great deal of effort went into research, planning, creating, re-imagining, and securing financial support.

The Museum was under construction for the remainder of the fiscal year.
BENEFIT BALL RAISES MORE THAN $380,000

Hosted by DuPage Children’s Museum on April 11, 2015, the event is a top fundraiser for the Museum. DCM depends on donations and grants to cover a large portion of its operating budget. Emcee Judy Hsu, ABC News Anchor, led the evening’s festivities. The black tie optional benefit was an electrifying evening of live entertainment, silent and live auctions, and special honorees. Scott Swanson, President of PNC Illinois, presented the Great Friend to Kids Award to Chris Crane, President and CEO of Exelon. A special paddle raise took place to raise money to support DCM Family Access Memberships (FAM), a program that allows families to purchase deeply discounted family memberships. Thank you to our 2015 Benefit Ball Lead Sponsors: Exelon, Grosvenor, Macy’s, and PNC.

NEXT GEN BOARD

Comprised of young professionals and community leaders who believe in the Museum’s Mission, DCM’s Next Gen Board launched with the goal of strengthening the leadership core and broadening support for the Museum. The Next Gen Board’s Party With a Purpose: From Lemons to Lemon Drops event raised a total of $6,525. The Daniel and Genevieve Ratner Foundation provided the matching funds through Public Good of $3,002.89.

Michael and Denise Mikula both agree that there is no other organization in the area quite like DuPage Children’s Museum. “What makes the Museum unique is the emphasis it places on interpersonal experiences children and adults have with one another,” stated Michael in an interview he and Denise had with DCM. With six children and 15 grandchildren, they place a high value on an environment where children at a very young age can be nurtured to be creative and use their critical thinking skills – like DCM.

The Mikulas have resided in DuPage County for more than 30 years. Denise is Controller for Excel Displays & Packaging and volunteers on the Board of Directors at DuPage Children’s Museum. Michael started Excel Displays & Packaging in 1989. Excel continues to be an industry leader by combining shopper marketing and retailer expertise with innovative and industry pace-setting manufacturing capabilities.

All six of the Mikula’s children are hands on with their own children. The education of children by exposing them to a variety of experiences is critical. Denise explained, “To see our children as engaged with their own children as we were when they were young tells us that spending quality family time together makes a difference and has far and long-lasting implications.” For this reason, Michael and Denise saw DCM as a great place to give back. They both remarked, “Philanthropy is an important part of our family – DCM is definitely one of those unique places where we know our investment will have far greater impact in the future if we support it today.”

Shane and Betty Mikula are both members of the Next Gen Board at DuPage Children’s Museum. They have two children who love spending time at the Museum. Shane and Betty are son and daughter-in-law to Michael and Denise. The importance of math and science was greatly stressed in both Shane’s and Betty’s childhoods. Shane went on to study finance, and Betty went on to study accounting. Keeping math and science a top priority for their children is the educational standpoint they have decided to take, and they agree, making it fun is the most important thing they can do. Betty explained, “The Museum is the best of both worlds – you can learn about math and science in a social setting. This is so important later in life because we are always working in group settings.”

When they were choosing where to give their time and financial resources, DCM was a perfect fit. “The Museum is a great vehicle for us to be able to give back to the community. And the thing we really like about it is that it is a community center where all children are welcome. It’s one thing to have our children be able to enjoy it, but for the outreach that allows all children to enjoy it, regardless of financial, physical, and social barriers – that’s huge for us.”
Whether interacting with visitors or working behind the scenes, DCM individual and corporate volunteers have a tremendous, lasting impact on the lives of children.

Corporations and Groups that volunteered:
- C.H. Robinson
- COD Cares
- Crowe Horwath
- DeVry Education Group
- Grace Methodist Church
- Midwestern University
- North Central College students
- NCC Urban Scholars
- PNC Bank
- Wilton Brands

Dave Dumford is a long-time resident of Naperville, married 52 years to Sue, with three grown children and five grandchildren. Dave is a retired engineer who has been a volunteer with the Museum for more than 13 years, spending his service time developing and building new exhibits and improving existing ones.

Dave became involved with DuPage Children’s Museum in 2001 after visiting with his family. His grandchildren were all so entertained by the bold colors and interactive exhibits that he knew it would be a good place to put his skills to work. Dave says, “When I’m not fishing or spending time with Sue, the Museum is a wonderful place to be. The work keeps me active and I know it helps maintain a fun and educational space for the community. The exhibits and programs that the staff and volunteers develop and produce here are top-notch and I am honored to be a part of the continuing work.”

As a volunteer, Dave’s time at DCM is always busy and interesting. He will often observe how the children and parents interact with the exhibits to determine how to continuously improve with the next challenge. Plus, Dave adds, “It’s rewarding to plan, design, and build displays that are enjoyed by so many.”

Dave and Sue Dumford have supported DCM with donations for several years and plan to continue their contributions in the future.*

As part of the Legacy Circle, they have included the Museum in their Estate Planning.

PNC Grow Up Great, a 10-year, $100 million early childhood education initiative, was founded by The PNC Financial Services Group. Through Grow Up Great, PNC encourages employee involvement that permits 40 hours a year of paid time off for volunteerism. DCM has 115 loyal PNC volunteers, and this mutually beneficial partnership aligns with both organizations’ missions. Thank you to our incredibly generous and gifted volunteers.

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FINANCIAL DATA
FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2015

TOTAL REVENUE $3,946,624
OTHER NON-RECURRING GAIN $728,434
TOTAL INCOME $4,675,058
TOTAL EXPENSES $3,855,399
INCREASE IN NET ASSETS $819,659

REACH & IMPACT:

627 volunteers gave 15,428 volunteer hours between July 1, 2014 and January 8, 2015.

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* Building a Legacy

** Corporate Spotlight

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DCM’s FIRST TECHNOLOGY ROUNDTABLE

In response to the questions and concerns surrounding the potential incorporation of digital technologies onto the Museum floor, the Museum convened its first Technology Roundtable in January 2015. The Roundtable brought together experts in the fields of early childhood, museums, libraries, art, and digital technology along with parents, family day care providers, Museum Board members, general Museum members, community representatives, and staff to discuss the pros and cons of technology in a children’s museum and best practices for the future.

The Keynote speakers were led by Dr. Chip Donohue, Dean of Distance Learning and Continuing Education and Director of the Technology in Early Childhood Center at Erikson Institute. Dr. Donohue was joined by Dr. Sylvia R. Cadenia Smith, consultant in instructional technology for many area schools, and by Kelly Watson, Youth Services Coordinator for the Bensenville Community Public Library and adjunct faculty at College of DuPage.

The Technology Roundtable was the first step in a process that will include continuing to listen to the concerns and inspirations of members, visitors, research, and experts surrounding technology and its incorporation into early learning.

STRATEGIC PLAN VISION 20/20

Early in 2015, DCM’s leadership and Board of Directors began working on a three-year comprehensive strategic plan called Vision 20/20, a road map that will lead the Museum organization solidly into the next decade and beyond in a rapidly changing environment. The plan includes a new mission, vision, and cultural statements with special emphasis on each business area of operation with key initiatives targeted for 2016 and 2017.

DCM LEARNING INSTITUTE

FORMERLY THE CENTER FOR LEARNING

Consistent with DCM’s mission, and to meet the increasing demand for its early learning expertise, Museum leadership began the process of developing DCM Learning Institute. It will share its decades of experience in creating playful learning environments for children — along with current research to inform adults (parents, caregivers, and childcare and education professionals) of best practices in integrating hands-on learning experiences in science, math, and art.

Funding this initiative includes generous gifts from Joseph & Bessie Feinberg Foundation, Dr. Andrew T. and Alice O. Kopan, and Alben F. and Clara G. Bates Foundation. In response to the questions and concerns surrounding the potential incorporation of digital technologies onto the Museum floor, the Museum convened its first Technology Roundtable in January 2015. The Roundtable brought together experts in the fields of early childhood, museums, libraries, art, and digital technology along with parents, family day care providers, Museum Board members, general Museum members, community representatives, and staff to discuss the pros and cons of technology in a children’s museum and best practices for the future.

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AWESOME ENERGY

A BRIGHT FUTURE AHEAD

AWESOME ENERGY is a massive $1.5 million permanent exhibit and education initiative that will cover one-quarter of DuPage Children’s Museum’s 17,000 sq. ft. exhibit space.

AWESOME ENERGY creates an immersive, interactive experience in three integrated sections: AIR, WATER, and ELECTRICITY. As children explore in a hands-on environment, discovering the scientific forces that power our world, they build creativity, critical thinking, and problem solving skills that launch them into a bright future.

AWESOME ENERGY represents years of research and testing with a team of educators, scientists, business leaders, parents, and children.

With a foundation of more than three years of research and development, AWESOME ENERGY will define the Museum for the next decade, becoming an important centerpiece for the early learning community.

The Timeline

AWESOME ELECTRICITY opened in June 2012.
Because of the significant damage from the flood, AWESOME AIR and AWESOME WATER opening dates have been revised:
AWESOME AIR opens December 2015
AWESOME WATER opens 2016

AWESOME ENERGY DONORS

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Institute of Museum & Library Services
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Tellabs Foundation
Open Road Alliance, an advised fund of Silicon Valley Community Fund
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Services
($50,000 + )
McCormick Math at Museums project.
grant for early learning programs including a
Foundation in a letter dated May 14, 2015, that
We received notification from McCormick
importance of learning through play.
in a child’s development and the
see the valuable role museums play
and helping parents and caregivers
effort, making sure that the museum
combat poverty in Illinois is by investing
”
President and CEO of the
Motorola Solutions Foundation
Molex Incorporated
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Frenchie M.
Garth and Lisa Carter
Ju and Tony Castellano
Alice Chin and Michael Jan
Steve and Julie Chinico
Susan and Chris Coble
Cross Creek Moms & Tots Co-op

Our Supporters
McCormick Foundation
We received notification from McCormick Foundation in a letter dated May 14, 2015, that DCM was approved to receive a $250,000 grant for early learning programs including a McCormick Math at Museums project.

We believe one of the best ways to combat poverty in Illinois is by investing in our youngest children. DuPage Children’s Museum is a leader in this effort, making sure that the museum experience is accessible to every child, and helping parents and caregivers see the valuable roles museums play in a child’s development and the importance of learning through play.”

— David Hillier, President and CEO of the Robert R. McCormick Foundation

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($5,000 + )

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Exelon Foundation
Institute of Museum & Library Services
John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
Ronald J. D. McDaniel Foundation
Open Road Alliance, an advised fund of Silicon Valley Community Foundation
Barbara R. Parsons
PNC Financial Services Group
PNC Foundation
Robert R. McCormick Foundation
The Brinon Foundation
City of Naperville
DuPage Foundation
Exelon Corporation
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John B. and Nessa Feinberg Foundation
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Mr. and Mrs. Steve Rychy

Mr. and Mrs. Jeff K. Swallow

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MISSION STATEMENT
The mission of DuPage Children’s Museum is to stimulate curiosity, creativity, thinking, and problem solving in young children through:
- Self-directed, open-ended experiences
- Integration of the arts, science, and math
- The child-adult learning partnership

CORE BELIEFS
- Respect for all children and their ability to learn
- The power of play as a basis for constructing knowledge
- The importance of the child-adult learning partnership

VISION
DuPage Children’s Museum will transform the learning landscape for young children and the important adults in their lives.