

# Community Engagement Report.

*Be curious.* | GRAND  
RAPIDS  
PUBLIC  
MUSEUM



2018

## Vision

To inspire passionate curiosity and a deeper understanding of the world around us.

## Mission

We exist to be a living monument of artifacts, ideas and stories told through exhibitions, events and educational programming designed to inspire, motivate and celebrate our human bond.

We enrich the life of our community through experiences of the wider world in a uniquely Grand Rapids context.



## Thanks to Your Sustaining Support, 2018 Was an Incredible Year for the Grand Rapids Public Museum!

All inquiry, discovery, learning and achievement starts with curiosity, which makes it a powerful human attribute - no matter how young or old we are. Thanks to your sustaining support, the Grand Rapids Public Museum has been able to stimulate the curiosity of thousands of visitors this past year and also plan for significant opportunities that lie ahead.

Every day, in everything we do, the Grand Rapids Public Museum exists to inspire visitors to become more curious about the world we share. How well we're able to achieve this aspiration depends integrally on the support of our community, including the 10-year millage approved by Kent County voters in November 2016, as well as gifts and donations from numerous companies, foundations and individuals. It's gratifying and inspiring to know that so many in our community believe in our mission and vision, and choose to actively participate in it. We can't thank you enough.

As a direct benefit of the millage and our curiosity-inspiring programming, we significantly increased the number of Kent County visitors to the Museum this year, including Kent County children age 17 and younger who now have free general admission. Adults and seniors also enjoyed reduced general admission, which has contributed to our significantly increased attendance.

Within this report you can learn more about the many exciting exhibits, programs and improvements the Museum was able to accomplish this past year, thanks to your support. From dinosaurs to toys, microbes to mermaids, and educational programs to labs, we have worked diligently to provide an abundance of curiosity-inspiring experiences for all who visit.

Thanks to our shared belief in the power of curiosity, we are excited about what the future holds, and I thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

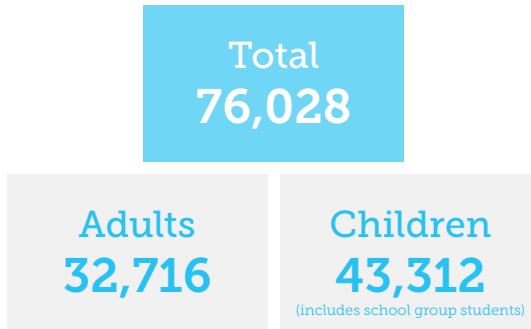


Dale A. Robertson  
President & CEO

# 2018: The Year in Numbers

As a direct result of the millage passed in 2016, Kent County resident children 17 and under have free general admission into the Museum, while adults and seniors enjoy reduced general admission.

## Kent County Visitors



## Visitors' Countries



In 2018, the Museum welcomed visitors from 49 states and 11 other countries around the globe.

*Countries include: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany, India, Japan, Mexico, The Netherlands, New Zealand, South Korea, United Kingdom*

## 2018 Attendance

Overall visitors:  
**355,927**

Traveling exhibit attendance:  
**125,300+**

Spring break 2018 attendance:  
**20,309**

Planetarium attendance:  
**70,265**

School group attendance:  
**29,817**

Kent County school group attendance:  
**21,621**

Number of Kent County schools:  
**174**

Museum members:  
**6,927**

*Fiscal year, July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018*



## Facilities Updates

Thanks to the voter-approved 2016 millage along with private donations and grants, the Museum was able to make investments that provide enhanced, safer experiences for visitors and improve the efficiency and sustainability of Museum operations.

- **Installed new audiovisual technology in the Meijer Theater**
- **Completed repairs and upgrades on exterior brickwork**
- **Improved interior and exterior electrical systems, including LED changeovers**
- **Improved Demo Lab classroom functionality with a new projector and furniture**
- **Installed new flooring in the cafe**
- **Resealed the parking ramp**
- **Updated front lawn landscaping, added additional bike racks to the property**
- **Replaced drinking fountains with water chillers and bottle-refill stations**
- **Installed water-conserving devices in restrooms**
- **Added The Quiet Room for baby care, nursing mothers and sensory respite**

Purchases made from vendors within Kent County, totaling nearly \$5 million and ranging from lightbulbs to café food to moving and storage, keep the Museum running smoothly. The Museum strives to do 5% or more of its business with minority and women or veteran owned businesses.

We look forward to continued improvements in 2019 to assure positive experiences for all visitors.



## Community Engagement & Partners

The GRPM's close partnerships with local educational institutions, organizations and governmental agencies provide the community with significant enrichment opportunities and educational events.

### The Mounds Stewardship

In partnership with the City of Grand Rapids Community Relations Commission, regional Native American leaders and the West Michigan Community, the GRPM has begun engagement to enhance stewardship of Norton Indian Mounds, a National Historic Landmark under the Museum's care.

### Riverfront Opportunity Site

As one of seven identified opportunity sites in the Grand Rapids "River for All" project, the Museum participated in the development of design concepts and guidelines for the public spaces near the river. Through an 11-month process and interaction with more than 1,700 community stakeholders, significant input was gathered on how the riverfront might be transformed into a more engaging public space.



TOYS! exhibition

## Craft Brewing with the GRCC Secchia Institute for Culinary Education

Local college students worked with local brewers to produce programming for a Beer Explorers class series, which connected the science and art of making beer to processes used at local breweries such as ELK Brewing and Brewery Vivant. Cheers!

## TOYS! Community Partners

While developing the TOYS! exhibit, the GRPM worked with more than 150 community partners to brainstorm and evaluate ideas, collect artifacts and ensure the exhibit was compelling and accessible to all visitors. From middle school students to collectors, from inclusion and diversity specialists to occupational therapists, a wide variety of viewpoints and life experiences was essential to creating this interactive, multi-generation exhibition.

## Giving Back

The Museum donates tickets annually to various Kent County non-profits and schools for fundraisers.

**\$7,560+ in ticket donations**

As a service to the community, artifacts were loaned from the GRPM Collections to museums, schools and other organizations.

**112 artifacts on loan to  
13 organizations in 2018**



West Michigan Habitats exhibition

## Partnership with Ferris State University

Talented students in the Product Design Engineering Technology class partnered with staff to design enhancements to the interactive component of our *Subatomic: Detecting the Unseen* planetarium show. Using an iterative design process, participants tackled the challenge of building hands-on demonstrations that can withstand visitor use that typically occurs in the Museum.



*Immerse students participating in a guided education program*

## School Impact

As a committed vital educational resource, the Museum offers learners opportunities to stimulate their curiosity through hands-on activities, access to 250,000+ artifacts and guided explorations.

### Schools



**174**

Kent County K-12

Visited the Museum

### Students



**16,000**

Kent County

**18,664**

Total

Participated in guided education programs

### Access to Museum Collections

**31**

onsite tours  
of the Archives  
for students

**9,000**

people accessed the  
Collections online at  
[grpmcollections.org](http://grpmcollections.org)

## Guided Education Programs

In 2018, the Museum launched an innovative new series of 19 programs for kindergarten through 12th grade students. Delivered by dedicated volunteer and staff educators, these diverse offerings provide opportunities to discover and learn through tours, hands-on activities and guided explorations that are unique to the Museum and our community. To extend and enrich the learning, teacher resource guides were developed to show alignment to educational objectives.

## The Immerse Program

This year marked the sixth anniversary of this week-long learning experience at the Museum for students from West Michigan schools. Co-curated by Museum educators and classroom teachers, the program leverages the interpretive exhibition spaces and artifacts, plus various Museum-created programs. Immerse is intended to help students dive deep into science, culture and history as a way to develop and excel as problem solvers, innovators, storytellers and contributors to society. This year the program grew to serve 1,264 students from 52 classrooms in 20 Kent County schools.

## Grand Rapids Public Museum School

A fishhook, a scarab beetle, a Carnegie Hall theater seat or any of the other 250,000+ items in the Museum's Collections – all have a story waiting to be told. To uncover more of these stories and provide a unique learning experience, *The Vault*, a multi-year, cross-curricular project that encourages students to become experts on any item they choose from the Collections, was co-launched with the Museum School. Based on its success, the next step is to showcase this project as a successful learning model for other schools to consider.

*The Museum School is an ongoing educational collaboration between the Grand Rapids Public Museum, Grand Rapids Public Schools, Kendall College of Art and Design of Ferris State University, Grand Valley State University, the City of Grand Rapids and Downtown Grand Rapids, Inc. Middle school and high school students are enrolled.*



Prototypes of the TOYS! exhibition



Collecting A-Z exhibition



Immerse program

## New & Enhanced Programs & Exhibits

Through the generosity of donors and support from our community including the millage, the Museum was able to explore new worlds, spark curiosity and bring exhibits to life with our 2018 programming. Some highlights include:

### Saturday Curiosity Labs

Open to the public on Saturdays during the school year and included with general admission, these fun learning experiences use the Watershed Laboratory to explore concepts ranging from physics to ecology.

*Sponsored by the Brookby Foundation.*

### Special and Traveling Exhibits 2018

*Expedition: Dinosaur, TOYS!, Water's Extreme Journey, Zoo in You: Microbes, Be the Astronaut and Dragons, Unicorns & Mermaids*

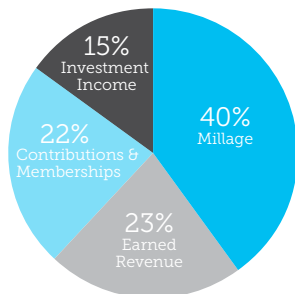
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## 2018 Museum Budget

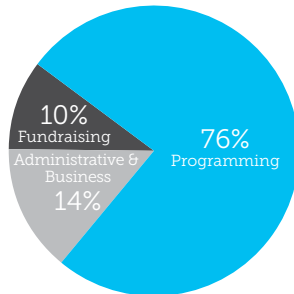
The Museum is grateful to the voters of Kent County for the millage that covers core operational costs including caring for 250,000+ community artifacts, allowing for facility improvements and previously deferred maintenance, and enhancing educational programs and exhibits.

*Total net assets of \$44.3 million*

### Revenue



### Expenses



## After-School Programs

### Ferris State & Burton Middle School Partnership

In partnership with Ferris State University and Grand Rapids Public Schools, students from Burton Middle School engaged in a monthly hands-on, laboratory-based program designed to provide advanced knowledge and skills in science and engineering. Inquiry-based investigations, such as water-quality testing, encouraged students to notice science in everyday life.

### Young Women in Science Program

In its pilot year, 18 students from four participating middle schools - Riverside, Harrison Park, Alger and Westwood - explored themes connected to the science and engineering of creating a sustainable future for Grand Rapids, with a strong emphasis on energy. The program provides career-related exploration and introduces participants to women working locally in science-related professions who serve as role models for achievement.

*Sponsored by DTE Foundation.*



*Young Women in Science Program*

# Thank you to the following individuals and corporations who have made contributions to the Museum in 2018.

## \$100,000+

City of Grand Rapids  
The Wege Foundation

## \$50,000+

The Meijer Foundation  
Michigan Council For Arts & Cultural Affairs  
Sebastian Foundation  
The Steve & Amy Van Andel Foundation

## \$25,000+

13 ON YOUR SIDE  
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## How to Donate

Online at [grpm.org/donate](http://grpm.org/donate) or  
by calling 616.929.1754

## Accreditation

The GRPM was the first public museum to be accredited  
by the American Alliance of Museums. [www.aam-us.org](http://www.aam-us.org)

## Contact Info & Hours

Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Saturday & Sunday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
616.929.1700 | [info@grpm.org](mailto:info@grpm.org)



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