Dear Friend of The Museums,

As we report to you on another very successful year, we are struck by how much we owe our success to the incredible support we receive from our community. Any nonprofit—a regional museum such as ours in particular—exists to serve the community but also thrives and grows thanks to the visitors, donors, members, advisers, partners, and volunteers who give us so much.

Our community is fairly extensive. Last year we had visitors from more than 160 cities and towns in eastern and central Massachusetts. Our members came from nearly as many different towns, with a few scattered in other parts of the country. We had financial support from 15 or more local cultural councils representing the arts and cultural interests of their communities. More than 400 donors made a gift, contributed to our auction, came to a fundraising event, or in others ways financially supported our efforts. We are very proud that every one of the regional community foundations that touch the areas we serve supported The Discovery Museums last year. Corporations and other businesses in our community supported us at record levels.

We like to think that we held up our end of the bargain as well. We did our best to make sure that anyone could have a Discovery Museums experience: more than 35,000 people benefited from our Open Door Connections program of free or heavily subsidized access. We welcomed school groups from 60 towns and visited schools in 98 towns with Traveling Science Workshops. We supported the efforts of 335 other nonprofits serving our communities with donations of memberships and admission passes for their fundraising events. Our Free Friday Night Fun program welcomed thousands of first time visitors and took in donations for the local food pantry.

One critical way in which The Discovery Museums partner with the community is through the incredible support we receive from volunteers. As you will read in this report, volunteers and the museums have a mutually beneficial relationship. We get important work accomplished—ranging from painting or grounds maintenance, to the delivery of public programs, to behind-the-scenes office work. For the volunteers, the benefits range from satisfaction in supporting an organization they are passionate about, to the development of some meaningful employment experiences and skills, to receiving joy from working with children and learning something that changes their life. We could not operate without volunteers. In 2011 we logged more than 3,000 volunteer service hours from more than 100 volunteers, a 50% increase from 2010. The stories you’ll read inside about Shilpa and Elizabeth highlight just two of our treasured volunteers.

Leadership from the community makes our Board of Directors successful. This year, as you will read in the report, we sadly said goodbye to long-time Board member Davida Fox-Melanson. At the same time we welcomed four new members to our board: Patricia J. Chisholm, Middlesex Savings Bank; Wendy E. Baker, Enterprise Bank and Trust; Donald MacKenzie, Acton Town Moderator; and Russell Layton, Hologic, Inc. We look forward to all of their contributions to our work.

As The Discovery Museums complete our 29th year as a part of this community, we are incredibly proud of all we have accomplished together with our community for children and families. This is our Annual Report of that work to you.

Sincerely,

Neil H. Gordon, CEO
Lees Stuntz, Chair, Board of Directors
Financial Year in Review

2011 Notable Achievements

- Opened two new exhibits: Dream Green, which explores green design, energy conservation and sustainability, and SoundLab, where children explore the science of vibration and the art of making music.
- Held more than 400 special hands-on science, art, music and engineering programs, serving 10,000+ participants, free with admission.
- Served more than 35,000 people for free or deeply reduced cost, 10,000 more than in 2010. Our Open Door Connections program provided opportunities for those who face a variety of barriers—financial, geographic, developmental, or cultural—to experience the Museums.
- Received the Leaders in Innovation Award from the New England Museum Association for our Especially for Me series, which provides free museum access for children on the Autism spectrum and children with hearing loss.
- Deepened our partnership with Acre Family Child Care in Lowell to provide hands-on learning opportunities for childcare providers and children, many from immigrant families. Received a prestigious federal IMLS grant to grow and support the program and partnership.
- Received Gold for Best Museum and Bronze for Best Place for Family Entertainment in the Wicked Local Readers Choice Awards.
- 2011 was a successful year in which attendance increased 17% and museums membership increased 30%. More than 4 million people have walked through our doors since we opened in 1982.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operating Support and Revenue</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admissions</td>
<td>$510,496</td>
<td>$534,718</td>
<td>$553,913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts and Grants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educational Programs</td>
<td>$169,243</td>
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<td>$170,352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memberships</td>
<td>$104,125</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rental Income</td>
<td>$24,776</td>
<td>$30,160</td>
<td>$33,087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum Store</td>
<td>$20,743</td>
<td>$24,652</td>
<td>$30,512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Income</td>
<td>$4,808</td>
<td>$2,305</td>
<td>$5,935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,065,112</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,225,158</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,439,785</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operating Expenses not including Depreciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management and General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising and Public Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Change in Net Assets from Operations Prior to Depreciation | $32,227 | $67,675 | $161,812 |

*Preliminary unaudited results
Volunteers are the heart and soul of The Discovery Museums. They support all aspects of the Museums’ operation: from working on the floor with visitors to data maintenance to spring cleaning of the grounds. In 2011, we recorded more than 3,000 volunteer hours, 1,000 more than in 2010. Nine of our volunteers accumulated more than 100 hours each last year, compared to two volunteers the year before. And, each month of 2011 saw an average of 11.5 more active volunteers compared to last year.

We would like to recognize and thank all of our volunteers; you will find a list of them on page 11. Here, we’ve included the stories of two of the many who support us. Thank you to Shilpa and Elizabeth, and to all who give their time, energy and passion to The Discovery Museums.

Giving So Much, and Receiving In Return

Several years ago, Shilpa Kulkarni brought her high school–aged daughter to The Discovery Museums because a friend said it was a great place for students to fulfill their school volunteer requirements. As it turned out, both Shilpa and her daughter began volunteering at the Museums in the summer of 2009. Her daughter had a wonderful experience and has since moved on to other pursuits. But Shilpa has no interest in leaving. “It’s like a second home to me now,” she explains. “I can’t imagine life without the Museums.”

“It’s like a second home to me now,” she explains. “I can’t imagine life without the Museums.”

And the staff feels the same way. “I honestly don’t know what I would do without her,” says Amy Spencer, Director of Early Childhood Education and Parent Resources. Shilpa volunteers for Amy two days per week, doing data input, analyzing survey data and preparing materials for upcoming children’s programs. She also assists during free evenings for families with children on the autism spectrum, conducts FETCH!™ Lab programming onsite and at Barefoot Books in Concord, and helps with early learning workshops provided to family childcare providers in Lowell.

In addition to all that, Shilpa also volunteers for the Director of Visitor Experiences and the Director of Finance and Business Administration at the museums.

“I started out doing computer work, because I was comfortable with that,” explains Shilpa. “But the staff was so supportive, and really encouraged me to work with kids—and I love it. So much joy and happiness comes from them, they give you new ways to look at life.”

Shilpa’s volunteer work during the Museums’ autism evenings had an impact on her. “I see parents trying to cope, and it can be hard for them. I want to do something to try to help,” she says. She plans to enroll in a certification program to study early intervention support when their children are young.

A lifelong student, Shilpa studied Computer Programming and Psychology in her native India, and has also completed some post-graduate work in Psychology. She is currently studying Sanskrit through a correspondence course, and will take her degree exams next time she returns to India. She is also writing a paper on early-age children’s museums, which she would like to have published in India.

Despite all that Shilpa gives to the Museums, she believes she receives more. “This is such a wonderful experience—I get back much more than I give. I’ve learned so much from the staff—they are so supportive and encouraging—and the kids are excellent teachers! I am very happy to be here.”

And so are we!
A Passion to Learn, Explore and Grow

Last fall, Elizabeth Durham had a single, immediate-term goal: acceptance at Wellesley College. Below is one of two essays she submitted with her early-admission application.

A Tale of Treasures by Elizabeth Durham

“Can you help me?”

I looked down from my towering height of 6’2” to a little, curly haired girl, less than four years old. In her pudgy hands she grasped a familiar tiger costume, pilled and faded. She motioned at the dangling ties, expressing her minute frustration at their lack of cooperation. As I crouched down to the well-traveled carpet of grass, my face leveled to hers. I could see her eyes now, their small pupils reflecting the sunlight from above. Her cheeks were a soft apple red, flushed from her wild chase around the perimeter of the rickety picket fence. She broke our eye contact, eager to rejoin the action. Little kids are not ones to wait.

I smiled, knowingly, remembering my years as a child. Less than thirteen years ago, I was her age, romping around in the fields and ponds, turning over slimy rocks, satisfying my curiosity about the wide world around me. No pebble, stone or boulder would go untouched by the newest Christopher Columbus. The unknown beckoned, tempted me with the possibility of hidden treasure, treasure which usually consisted of salamanders, newts, snakes and toads. Nature was my playground, my laboratory.

Suddenly, my nostalgic thoughts were fragmented by her grubby hand, thrust into my surprised palm. I glanced down to her radiant face, returning her childish grin. Her gleaming white baby teeth were smaller than the tip of my pinky finger. My teeth used to be like that before I lost them to the tooth fairy who secretly slipped green dollar bills underneath the pillow into my waiting hand. I wondered if this little child had lost her first baby tooth yet, if she had experienced the nerve wracking excitement of losing a part of yourself. And then, the pain of a foreign object, invading, sprouting, growing. For now, though, this child’s eyes were vibrant and expectant, yearning for the next moment in time. As I tied the string on her tiger costume, she roared playfully, tugging me over to brave the jungle of her imagination. Moments like these are why I cherish my job as a guide at The Discovery Museums, where I spend my days among the curious, the non-judgmental, the blossoming. These unblemished minds are my companions, growing and helping me grow as well. In this small yellow house, with a plethora of adventures, there are no worries of chemistry tests or of oboe concerts. Instead, I am allowed to appreciate the simple treasures of life, whether it is a shy grin from a toddler or the earned trust from a hesitant child. My soul, weightless and free, is allowed to fly with the clouds, like an escaped balloon. When I return, though, to waiting reality, I am refreshed and invigorated. The curiosity of my childhood follows me to the ground, bringing light into mundane activities. In a way, I have experienced a reverse Mary Poppins’ story. These children have helped me, giving, “just a spoonful of sugar to help the medicine go down.” Although life may present with challenges, and it can be difficult to keep sight of what really matters, I am continually reminded of my passion to learn, explore, and grow during the time I spend at the museum, passion which will remain with me through the adventures ahead. And for this treasure in life, I am eternally thankful.

–Submitted to Wellesley College, September 2011

Elizabeth first came to the Museums with her mother and younger sister when she was 12—and immediately offered to volunteer. “I was too young! I had fallen in love with the place, but had to wait until I was older to volunteer.” In 8th grade she was finally old enough, and in the summer of 2008 Elizabeth volunteered to work one session of summer camp—but ended up doing all three sessions. She has been with the Museums ever since: first as a camp volunteer, later as an Explorer, and eventually Elizabeth staffed the admissions desk and managed birthday parties.
We gratefully acknowledge the individuals, corporations, foundations, organizations, and government agencies whose generous financial contributions and in-kind giving provided critical support for The Discovery Museums throughout 2011. We are pleased to recognize our leading contributors and express our gratitude as well to our more than 2,000 member families. To all, our deepest thanks.

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**Visionary $7,500 and above**
- Harvey M. Eisenberg
- Mary Dockray-Miller and Michael Miller

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- Scott Wilhelm
- William and Sally Williams
- Martha Gilpatrick Wolf
- Ann D. Woodward
- Nadine R. Yates

**Contributor Up to $99**
- Anonymous
- Anne Becklean
- Carole Bernstein
- Jarod and Mindy Bloom
While working for 13 years as superintendent of schools for the town of Carlisle, Davida Fox-Melanson was only peripherally aware of The Discovery Museums, having raised her children on the South Shore. But upon retirement from that position, she jumped in with both feet—and ultimately her heart. “I joined the board as an educator, because the Museums seemed congruent with the things I cared about: discovery learning and creativity. While our schools do an amazing job at literacy, we don’t do as well with science. The Museums bring science to kids, and I wanted to help bring more of it to kids in underserved communities.”

Within a year of joining the Board, Davida became a grandmother and gained a completely new perspective. “When I became a consumer of the Museums as a grandparent, my commitment changed from head-based to heart-based. I gained a deep passion for our mission. What we do here is what true, meaningful learning often looks like: it is time-consuming, messy, fun and engaging. There is real joy in watching kids learn through discovery.”

So began an 8-year relationship marked by vision, commitment and passion. Davida joined the Board in 2004, filled the void left by the retiring Executive Director in 2008, and was Vice Chair from 2005-2011. She retired from the Board this past January. “Davida is a champion of education and a model board member,” says Neil Gordon, CEO. “She left her mark on the vision for our future, and brought in many new friends to the Museums. We will greatly miss her insight and determination.”

Earlier this year, Davida’s brother Harvey Eisenberg surprised her with a new exhibit at the Science Discovery Museum. SoundLab—where families explore the science of vibration and the art of making music in a mixing studio, recording booth, instrument lab and more—was dedicated in Davida’s honor in a late-September ceremony. “It was a complete surprise, thrill and affirmation,” says Davida. “All credit goes to my brother, who is unselfish and giving, not just of his money but of himself.”

Asked to reflect upon her time here, Davida remarks, “It has been a unique opportunity to work with the Board and staff. The people here care so deeply, and are incredibly competent. I am in awe of the things they do. This experience has meant a great deal to me.”
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Bringing Hands-on Science to the Classroom

We are fortunate to have MathWorks as the premier sponsor of our Traveling Science Workshop program. MathWorks is committed to acting responsibly as a global corporate citizen and generously supports programs that inspire learning and advance education in engineering, science, and math. MathWorks’ generosity in 2011 allowed us to bring science to life right in the classroom for 25,000 schoolchildren with our fun, hands-on, minds-on programming that engages all ages, abilities, and learning styles and also fits Massachusetts curriculum frameworks. Thank you, MathWorks!
In-Kind Gifts

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Paul Zermani
Bruce Zetter
Mary Zoll
Zoo New England

Volunteers Making a Difference

Seven years ago, we had our first meeting with Peg Lovett, Community Relations Program Manager at Cisco Systems, Inc., to discuss ways we could collaborate with our new neighbor in Boxborough. It took only one meeting to know we were about to embark on a great relationship. Since that time, scores of Cisco employees have helped us with raking, cleaning, painting, and whatever needs to be done. Not only do these employees give generously of their time but Cisco matches every volunteer hour with a contribution. While we appreciate the generosity of their time, talents, and contributions, working side by side with Cisco employees in work boots and gloves also enriches us and gives us better perspective.
In 2011, we held our 2nd Annual On-Line Auction and increased gross revenue 56% from the previous year to $15,847. We thank our Auction Committee, its Chair, Caren McVicker, and the many generous individuals and businesses who donated items. We are extremely grateful to the following individuals for participating in our auction.

Wendy Abetz
Joan and Samuel Appleton
Patricia Ash
Kate and Gordon Baty
Thomas and Cheryl Beaudoin
Larry Bigelow
Pamela Blair
Karen and Stuart Bodager
Jeanette Brady
Mark and Jan Bramhall
Tonia Brown
Elizabeth Butler and James Grumbach
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Sydney Craig and Ann Eakin
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Hannah Fingerle
Lisa Fiore
Davida Fox-Melanson and Leo Melanson
Ed Frackiewicz
Mark Fried and Josie Guerin
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Jane Hardy
Susan Hawk
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Steve and Ann Hogan
Kathleen Horigan
Jim and Pam Hunt
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Ilda King
L. Brian Koss
Winifred Krogman
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Ginny and Marc Lamere
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Denise and Denis LeBlanc
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Lees and Stephen Stuntz
Eileen Sullivan
Joy Olaea Surprenant
Martha Svatik
Madge and Langdon Wait
Julie Warner
Lisa Weil
Robert Williams
Wendy and Matt Wood
Mei Yin and Anlu Yan
Kitty Yue

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Tributes
The following individuals made tribute gifts.

In Memory of Bessie Katin
The Board of Directors of The Discovery Museums
The Staff of Scheier & Katin
Davida Fox-Melanson and Leo G. Melanson
Nancy Sherman
Claudia and Andy Veitch

In Honor of Davida Fox-Melanson
Arthur and Elaine Eisenberg
Harvey M. Eisenberg
Annette and John Ekberg
Cathleen Hardisty
Lenore and Peter Henry
Ronald and Audrey Seyffert
Judith and Harvey Tabachnick

In Honor of Judith Tabachnick and Ellen Collins
Davida Fox-Melanson and Leo G. Melanson

In Honor of D.S.
Danielle Qi
Our Volunteers

Vrinda Agarwal  
Shipra Arjun  
Peter Ashton  
Wendy Baker  
Monica Baum  
Shilpa Bhat  
Jack Bierwagen  
Jarod Bloom  
Chelsea Borg  
Julie Bradley  
Duffy Brent  
Rachel Briones  
Nancy Capalbo  
Amartya Chakraborty  
Stephanie Chan  
Anagha Chandra  
Vineet Chandra  
Annette Chen  
Jennifer Chen  
Cisco Systems Employee Teams  
Terrell Clark  
Stone Cleven  
Maria Conley  
John Cox  
Christopher Cratsley  
Charles Denault  
Anthony DiBona  
Jason Dimen  
Richard Ding  
Zvonimir Dogic  
Ryan Donahue  
Peter Doyle  
Susan Erickson  
Al Feldman  
Cindy Fitzgibbon  
Ali Ganss  
Eric Geng  
Susan Giulietti  
Jeffrey Glidden  
Emily Goodwin  
Katie Gordon  
Ann Gordon  
Ryan Gumbart  
Molly Gundlach  
Myrna Gutfreund  
Danielle Harris  
Devin Harris  
Karen Herther  
Hannah Hong  
Nate Hubbard  
Jim Hunt  
William Huss  
Jane Imai  
Radhika Jangi  
Emily Jia  

Susannah Johnson  
Lori Johnson  
Zachary Kihne  
Sue Kim  
Jimmy Kim  
Janet Kinmonth  
Rebecca Kipling  
Melissa Kosinski-Collins  
Shilpa Kulkarni  
Julia Larson  
Gabby Ledoux  
Colin Lee  
Joohee Lee  
Patricia Leete  
Joe Lester  
Edward Li  
Daric Lim  
Ashley Lin  
Embert Lin  
Tess Little  
Mark Liu  
Christine Macdonald  
Andrew Magee  
Nick Malo  
Ashwini Manjunatha  
Charles Martin  
Joseph Martinez  
Mathworks Employee Teams  
Shannon McMillan  
Caren McVicker  
Frank Meehan  
Leah Middleton  
Nick Miller  
William Mullin  
Namrita Murali  
Dana Musto  
Larissa Naidoo  
Chirantan Neogy  
Ken Nesbitt  
Eleni Neyland  
Pendred Noyce  
Kate Nussenbaum  
David O’Leary  
Olin College Engineering Discovery Team  
Isabella Pershouse  
Carol Pikcillingis  
Nicole Power  
Nishant Raj  
Naveen Ram  
Nivedha Ram  
Sid Ramakrishnan  
Kathy Reticker  
Dale Rossbach  
Robert Sackstein  
Susan Seger  
Cheryl Serpe  

We got mail!

A Note from 100+ Hour Volunteer James Yu

We sent James a Thank You note after he topped 100 hours of service, and here’s what we got in return:

“Thank you guys so much!!! I really love working at the museums and all I’ve learned there. I love the kids and working with them, especially when they find science really cool and find their own way to enjoy the world. Wow, it even surprises me that I’ve worked that much. Time sure does fly when you’re having fun! My mum always asks if I’m tired after I come home and, strangely enough, I feel more energized, if anything. This is truly a great place to work and thank you guys so much!! You guys make it so much more enjoyable and fun!

Well, I think that’s enough words, thanks, and exclamation points (wait, three more!!!). I’ll definitely be seeing you guys around and thanks again!”

-James
Our Board & Staff

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