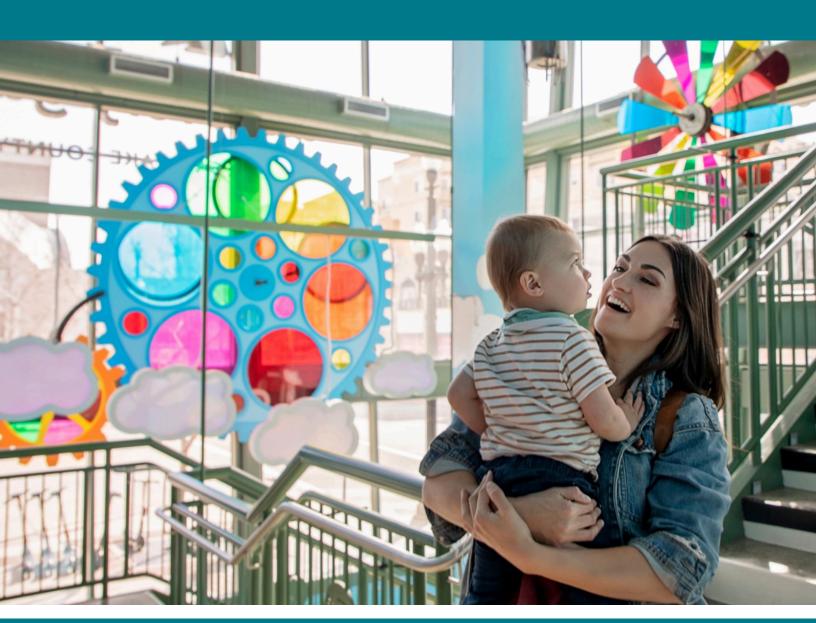


# Annual Report FY25





# Who We Are

#### Mission

To inspire children of all ages and abilities to imagine, discover, and connect with their world to make a difference.

#### **Vision**

To be the most trusted and preferred family discovery center and child-centered educational resource in Utah.

#### **DGCM Core Values**

# Pride • I have fu • I do my ju • I do what • I am dire

#### How I Show Up

- I have fun in my work to inspire children
- · I do my job and something extra every day
- I do what I say I am going to do
- I am direct and honest with my fellow team
- I treat others like I want to be treated
- I always assume good intentions from others
- · I ask questions to understand

# We

Respect

#### Communicate

**Innovate** 

Serve

#### **How We Treat Each Other**

- · Go to my supervisor with ideas or concerns
- We speak positively and spread optimism
- We respectfully share new ideas at the right time
- We are open to trying new things
- We make others feel welcomed and appreciated
- We go above the ask to make it awesome

#### **DGCM**

#### **Efficiency**

Discipline

Excellence

#### **How DGCM Succeeds**

- We embrace simplicity
- We are frugal and use our resources wisely
- We play by the rules because it creates fairness
- We receive instruction or redirection graciously
- We strive to be the best children's museum
- · We make this a great place to work

# **Our Philosophy**



Discovery Gateway Children's Museum (DGCM) provides a fun, hands-on learning space for families. With over 60,000 square feet of exhibition space, DGCM is a community resource that inspires creativity and fosters lifelong learning.

Science and arts educators lead in-house programs that deepen learning and support parent-child interaction. Our educators also travel throughout Utah to visit schools and engage children in exciting science experiments.

Cultural programs and partnerships with community groups and artists create a diverse and inclusive environment. DGCM welcomes everyone in the community.

With new exhibits added to the third floor that appeal to both children and adults, DGCM remains on the cutting edge of innovation in children's museums nationally.

# FY25 Highlights

It is such an honor to lead the children's museum through another great year! Thanks to our donors, we've been able to create new exhibitions and educational activities, keeping us at the forefront of the children's museum sector. We are now four years ahead of a ten-year plan to renovate our entire museum. Our revenue has been strong, providing a solid financial situation. We've handed out more than a dozen promotions this year because we believe in our team. The cherry on top? Watching kids learn through play in our interactive exhibits every day!



Kathleen Bodenlos
CEO & Executive
Director

#### **Financial Stability**

- Earned revenue totaled \$1,731,733.47, an increase from last year which was \$1,718,471.
- Contributed revenue totaled \$2,128,249 which exceeded the goal of \$1,457,200 by \$671,049.
- The innovative Red Balloon Toy Store partnership was renewed for the next three years. We receive 20% of all sales in our store.
- Field Trips continue to grow, resulting in earnings of \$102,594, which surpasses our budgeted target of \$55,000 by \$47,594.
- The museum benefited from over \$4 million in in-kind support from our generous partners, including Salt Lake County's building agreement, Delta Airlines flight credits, additional fossils to add to our collections, and an exquisite train exhibit, which is the largest in the Intermountain West.

#### **New Exhibits**

- We have been opening a new exhibit every six months since 2021.
- Our museum will be completely renovated by the end of 2026, which
  is 4 years ahead of a 10-year plan and fully funded through
  contributions from our generous corporate partnerships.
- In January of 2025, we opened a new 3,000-square-foot train exhibit valued at \$2.5M, featuring a light show and thousands of handcrafted trees and buildings.
- Each new exhibit continues our expansion of the third floor, featuring exhibits that appeal to both children and adults. This innovation positions us on the cutting edge of children's museums nationally.

# FY25 Highlights

 In May of 2025, we opened the new Associated Food Stores Truck Exhibit, featuring a 17-foot-long semi-truck that kids can drive and unload. This was an expansion of our Macy's Grocery Store and our partnership with Associated Foods.

#### **STEAM**

- Our outreach education team visited every district in the state, teaching science to over 61,583 students and 3,976 teachers.
- Our afterschool program with five Title 1 Salt Lake City district schools was visited 1,324 times

#### **Awards:**

- Visit Salt Lake Salt Awards nominee in 5 categories
- Our CEO was selected to be one of three judges for Utah Business CEO of the Year 2025, having won this award in 2024.

#### **Articles:**

- ABC 4 Utah, "World Connections Day: Celebrate culture at Discovery Gateway Children's Museum"
- KUTV Fresh Living, "Utah children's museum unveils massive train exhibit after 15 years in the making"
- FM100.3, "New Exhibits Engage Kid's Curiosity at Discovery Gateway Children's Museum"
- National Geographic, "10 family-friendly U.S. vacations, from the mountains to the beach"
- Redfin, "Your Salt Lake City, UT Bucket List: 16 Activities to Add to Your Itinerary"
- Fox13 Good Day Utah, "Discovery Gateway's Newest Edition"
- Small Lake City Podcast, "Discovery Gateway Children's Museum, CEO, Kathleen Bodenlos"
- NPR Avanza Radio 88.3, "Discovery Gateway: Learning Through Play For All Children"



# **Financial Stability**

Through innovation and best practices, DGCM has built upon its success to create a sustainable financial model. DGCM's financial model is comprised of both earned and contributed revenue. DGCM continues to grow revenue by increasing attendance, securing new revenue streams through partnership opportunities, obtaining grants, and developing individual giving campaigns. In addition, DGCM continues to create new offerings to keep its exhibits relevant and desirable to our visitors and members to increase visitation.

#### **Earned Revenue**

The children's museum remains committed to maintaining a balanced revenue structure of both earned and contributed revenue. Earned revenue reached \$1,731,733.47 in FY25 and the museum secured \$2,128,249 in contributed revenue finishing the year with a net increase of \$1,745 after expenses.

#### **Admissions**

DGCM earned \$1,248,728 in admission related revenue throughout the year, nearly reaching the goal of \$1,268,000. With an increased focus on customer service, exhibit maintenance, and an exciting portfolio of new exhibit offerings coming soon, DGCM intends to exceed the upcoming year's admission's revenue goal.



Family at the Mark Miller Subaru Express Exhibit

#### **Memberships**

Memberships accounted for \$250,029 in revenue, coming in just below the revenue expectation of \$275,000

#### **Birthday Parties**

The museum continues to bolster a strong birthday party program with FY25 revenues reaching \$37,392.

#### **Investments**

DGCM continues to benefit from the strategic management of the organization's investment portfolio. As a result, the museum concluded FY25 with \$73,153 worth of investment income, which was just shy of the goal of \$85,500.

### **Earned Revenue**

#### **Facility Rentals**

Facility rentals earned \$12,989, which was 65% of the projected \$20,000 goal for FY25. Improving facility rental revenues is among the top priorities for the museum, and with the addition of the new Garden Exhibit, it will only continue to grow as a revenue stream.

#### **Field Trips**

The museum's field trip program surpassed the budgeted target of \$55,000 by 86.5%, resulting in total earnings of \$102,594. This was due to enhanced management of this program and improved marketing strategies.

#### **Special Programs/Events**

The museum continues to bolster strong attendance numbers for various special program offerings throughout the year. This year, the museum also created adult-only After Dark Programming. These successes resulted in a total of \$53,991 in program revenue.



Museum employees assisting children with art projects

#### **Contributed Revenue**

Throughout the year, the museum achieved success in its fundraising endeavors, raising a total of \$2,128,249. This exceeded the initial expectations of \$1,457,200, demonstrating the museum's ability to secure strong financial support and ensure its continued growth and success in fulfilling its mission and objectives.

#### **Corporate Contributors & Foundations**

Thanks to the generosity of corporate sponsors and foundations, the museum raised \$540,341, exceeding our \$420,000 goal by more than 14%. Key partners included:

Intermountain Healthcare, SCHEELS, Mark Miller Subaru, Associated Foods, Staker Parson, Marathon Petroleum, Fidelity Investments, PNC Foundation, Marriner S. Eccles Foundation, George S. and Dolores Eccles Foundation, Sorenson Legacy Foundation, Simmons Family Foundation, The Lawrence T. & Janet T. Dee Foundation, First Utah Bank, UTA, and RubySnap.

#### **Grants**

Grant contributions exceeded the objective of \$1,047,460 by 14.3%, earning \$1,197,926.02. Contributors included the iSEE (Informal Science Education Enhancement) Program, Salt Lake City Arts Council, Utah Division of Arts and Museums, and Salt Lake City Ace Fund (Arts, Culture, an Events).



In addition to the generous support of dedicated foundations and grantors, The Children's Museum is grateful to Salt Lake County residents **YOU**  $\mathbf{Q}$  for their support of the Zoo, Arts, and Parks (ZAP) program which provided \$320,973 of critical support to our organization.



A young boy wearing an apron, interacting with a caregiver at the Museum's Ruby **Snap Cookie Shop Exhibition** 

#### **Individual Contributions**

Individual donor contributions totaled \$41,392 this year, exceeding our \$25,000 goal by 66%. The Philanthropy team is implementing new strategies to deepen donor engagement and continue expanding individual contributions. FY25 Annual Report | Financial Stability

#### **Contributed Revenue**

#### **Medallion Partners**

The Medallion Program, supported by the Museum Inclusion Fund, remains a vital initiative at The Children's Museum. Through this program, the museum provides tickets and access to cultural celebrations to trusted nonprofit partners, who then distribute them to the underserved families they serve. This effort is powered by the generosity of corporations, foundations, individual donors, and families who believe in the importance of museum access for all children.

At the close of FY25, \$46,814 in dedicated funds remained, ensuring continued opportunities for families to experience the museum in the year ahead. We are grateful to collaborate with nonprofit partners who make the Medallion Program a success, including Head Start, International Rescue Committee, Neighborhood House, Odyssey House, Primary Children's Hospital, The Road Home, Ronald McDonald House, The Children's Center, and Utah Youth Village. This year, we were proud to welcome new partners: Project Connection, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Best Seat in the House, and Friends of Utah Children.



I Dig Dinos Exhibit Featuring Real Fossils

#### **Exhibits**

The Lawrence T. & Janet T. Dee Foundation generously funded two major murals at the museum (\$20,000), creating opportunities for underrepresented artists while highlighting native plants and animals. Their support has allowed us to celebrate local culture and ecology in a way that is both inspiring and inclusive.

In November 2024, we hosted a special unveiling and celebration honoring paleontologist Joe Debalko, whose remarkable fossil, gem, and mineral collection was generously donated to the museum. His contribution expanded our iDig Dinos exhibit, making real fossils accessible to children and families while preserving Joe's legacy for future generations.

Additional exhibits added this year include the Stillson River Railroad Exhibit, which opened in January 2025 as the largest model train exhibit in the Intermountain West. In May 2025, we also expanded the Macey's Grocery Store exhibit with the addition of a 17-foot-long Associated Food Stores supply truck that kids can drive, sort, and unload into the attached store.



Ribbon Cutting for the Associated Food Stores Tuck Exhibit



## **STEAM Education**

For over 40 years, Discovery Gateway Children's Museum has been serving the needs of our community through exhibits, educational programming, and outreach. By maintaining a focus on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) it has kept its exhibits and programming relevant and engaging. Building on this history, it will continue to expand its offerings through new exhibits, in-house programming, and outreach education as well as offering fee-based and grantfunded programming.

Young children and their families represent the museum's core audience. As new exhibits and programs are added, DGCM's goal will be to offer a clear STEAM focus to provide layers of rich content. DGCM will serve its core audience, and also strategically expand its offerings to include older children. This strategy enables the museum to serve larger families with multiple-age children and expand its demographic to achieve attendance growth while still serving its core audience.

#### **Education Outreach Goals**

The education department has made DGCM an integral part of the community by visiting every school district within the state, facilitating on-site programs, and presenting at community events, bringing science to tens of thousands of children.

#### **Outreach Programs**

With the help of the Informal Science Education Enhancement (iSEE) funding, DGCM is able to bring engaging science experiences to Utah's public and charter school classrooms through its fifth-grade chemistry outreach program, Reaction Time, and kindergarten physics outreach program, Potential Energy. Throughout the year DGCM was able to visit 945 schools across 41 districts, reaching 61,583 children and 3,976 teachers . All outreach programs work in collaboration with the iSEE group, which is comprised of 11 educational organizations and the USBE. Outreach funding was provided by iSEE (\$715,600).

#### **Community Outreach Events**

This year, DGCM also strengthened ties to the educational community by participating in the Weber STEM Olympiad, Granite STEM Fair, Legislative Open Houses at The Leonardo and Clark Planetarium, Backman Elementary's College and Career Fair in Salt Lake District, and numerous STEM and Family Nights for local schools including attending programs at Copperview, Granger, Jordan Ridge, New Bridge, Northlake, Stewart, Westland, and Whittier Elementary Schools. Outreach educators participated in community outreach events at STEM Action Center's Utah STEM Fair, Brighton Days, Craft Lake City DIY Festival, Urban Arts Festival, Hispanic Heritage Fest, Salt Lake County's Summer Reading Kick off, and West Valley City's Spring Fest.



#### **Education Outreach Goals**

#### **Teacher Professional Development**

The outreach staff offered professional development workshops for fifth-grade teachers and kindergarten teachers through two programs, Chain Reaction and Energy Transfer, that complement the programs taught in schools. In total, five workshops were offered, with 70 teachers from 36 schools and 12 districts in attendance.

#### **Afterschool Program**

DGCM provides an afterschool program with five Title I Salt Lake City district schools. The afterschool manager visited with the same classes week after week, facilitating 1,324 interactions throughout the school year. Children participating in the program came to the museum for a field trip, furthering their access to STEAM education.

#### **Field Trips**

During the 2024-2025 school year, DGCM hosted 324 field trips, providing corebased program for 19,931 students in 24 districts. Of these, 266 were free trips provided to public and charter school groups in Utah and funded through our ISEE Program.

#### **Summer Camps**

The museum hosted 8 STEAM-focused Summer Camps, serving children ages 5-10 serving approximately 128 children. Of this, 10 children joined the program utilizing \$2,230 worth of scholarships funded by donations to the Museum Inclusion Fund.



Discovery Gateway's Summer Camp Program



# Research & Evaluation

DGCM has made intentional efforts this past year to research and collect data on its programming, outreach, and in-house offerings. The data yielded from these efforts have been vital in refining marketing efforts, fundraising initiatives, and community collaborations with the end goal of always improving visitor experiences.

DGCM is excited to bring real art and artifacts into an immersive and hands-on children's museum environment through our paleontology exhibit and art murals dispersed throughout the museum. According to our research, DGCM is pioneering the pursuit to combine interactive learning coupled with artifacts and art. The ultimate goal is to create the next generation of museum visitors, by offering a fun and playful gateway to offerings typically found in other museums such as Natural History Museums, Art Museums, and Science Museums.



### Research & Evaluation

#### **Focus Groups**

Focus groups were conducted for various projects and programs throughout the museum.

- The Director of Philanthropy conducted a focus group on enhancing donations
- The PR Manager conducted a focus group on brand identify

#### **Surveys**

Visitor surveys were developed and implemented for use through iPads and QR codes, to better understand visitor's perspectives on programming, outreach experiences, and exhibits. This information will help the museum to continue to make incremental improvements in our offerings. Information and demographics collected will be used to seek additional funding from grants.

Under the leadership of the DEIA Task Force, surveys were implemented to obtain information on the demographics of the board, employees, and visitors.



# Multicultural Inclusion

DGCM's strategic planning session clearly showed that its staff and board members remain committed to the children's museum being an inclusive and diverse community resource. The executive team strives to ensure that its board, staff, and programming reflect the community's diversity and that its culture feels welcoming and inclusive.

DGCM will continue developing relationships with partners representing the diverse communities in Salt Lake City. DGCM also recognizes barriers that may prevent visitation and seeks to create greater equitable access to the museum.

DGCM will analyze the demographic data from its board of directors, staff, and visitors, to acquire a statistical baseline of the key players involved in the museum so that it can create accurate reports based on real data.

DGCM will continue to celebrate its diverse community through various celebrations during the year. A minimum of 90% of its events will be developed in collaboration with our community partners.

#### Multicultural Inclusion

#### Diversification

DGCM strives to represent the community and has made strides in diversifying its board members. The current board is comprised of **65% women** and **15%** of its members are from culturally diverse backgrounds. The museum staff is **70% female**, **and 25%** of the team is from culturally diverse backgrounds.

#### Partnerships & Events

Partnered with three additional organizations, including Best Seat in the House, Project Connection, and Big Brothers Big Sister's, to expand our reach through the Medallion Program and bring more families into the museum at no cost.



#### Partnerships & Events

DGCM held four Medallion Days sponsored by generous donations to the Museum Inclusion Fund. Families from the twelve Medallion Partner organizations were invited to the event and were given free admissions and free parking. 1,328 guests attended and enjoyed performances along with free pizza donated by Sizzling Platter's Lend-A-Hand Program.

The museum held the annual World Connections Festival, celebrating the diverse cultures from around the world that are part of the community within Utah. Partner organizations were invited to participate and showcase their talents, including Robb Little Owl Martin, Ngoma y'Africa Cultural Center, Ballet Folklórico Sabor Latino, and Kenshin Taiko.

The museum continues to represent the community by increasing access to children of all backgrounds and abilities. DGCM received a donation from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Foundation (\$10,000), funding Sensory Inclusive Afternoons. For the past three years, the museum has had Sensory Inclusive Sessions during Monday afternoons and Sunday mornings, where we turn the music off, lower the lighting, and offer sensory kits to ensure a comfortable and welcoming environment for individuals with sensory needs. Throughout the year, 1,275 individuals registered and participated in these events. Finally, through generous grants from SLC Community Grant Program and the Lawrence T. Dee & Janet T. Dee Foundation.



