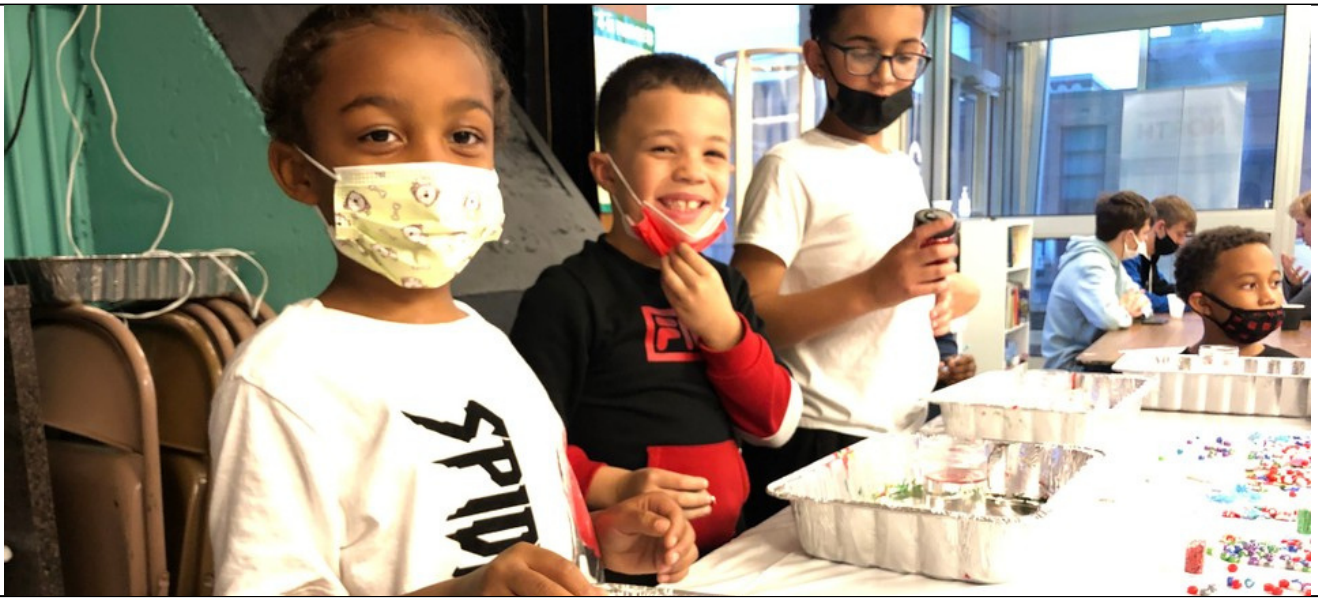


# Impact Report

2020

2021

Neighborhood North Museum of Play



# Table of Contents

01	<i>Our story so far</i>	p 03
02	<i>A Year in Review</i>	p 04
03	<i>Some of Our Projects</i>	p 05
04	<i>Looking Forward</i>	p 06
05	<i>Leadership</i>	p 07
06	<i>Acknowledgements</i>	p 08



# Our Story So Far

Dear Neighborhood North Community,

What a couple of years it has been!

A changing world meant changing expectations for museums everywhere. As a new museum, we feel grateful that we have been able to adapt and innovate our path along with the changing needs of our community.

When the pandemic kept us from opening to the public in 2020, we found other ways to support local students and families. Neighborhood North partnered with our local school district and OST provider to offer a Community Summer Learning Program to local families and later provided Learning Pods for our district's distance learners.

We've created a Playful Learning Initiative and have begun a Teaching Artist initiative in Beaver County.

We hired staff, launched a new website, and finally opened to the public amidst a successful Giving Tuesday campaign.

We are so excited with how far we have come and are ready to continue creating a unique space for all to explore, create, learn, and play together.

## Our Mission

Neighborhood North Museum of Play is a children's museum dedicated to inspiring children, strengthening families, and creating a vibrant community where all children are enabled to become the next generation of innovative and creative thinkers. Bridging the school and home environments, the child- and family-centered play of a children's museum positively influences language, critical thinking, and socio-emotional skills, impacting children's ability to learn in all areas for years to come.

**"I appreciate the time and effort that was given to (my children) while at the Learning Pods. They really loved it and the staff."**

**-Kristina Hauser,  
parent.**

# A Year in Review

This year was filled with a lot of big changes and, as we worked through it all, we heard from many in our community that a children's museum is needed more than ever. Here are some of the highlights of 2020-21.



## 1 Neighborhood North served over 350 children

Through our Neighborhood Learning Pods- which served 187 students, 98% of which were African-American or biracial- to our Reading Labs and Afterschool Program throughout the 2020-21 academic year and the 25 Creative Workshops offered to local daycares, Head Starts, and OST providers during the summer of 2021, we served over 350 low-income children. The Neighborhood Learning Pods were 1 of 15 learning pods selected to be part of a national Center on Reinventing Public Education/RAND Study. The study will be published in April 2022.

## 2 Increased Giving

In our first full year as a non-profit organization, we raised over \$50,000, tripling contributions and grants from 2019. In 2020, we received funding from Children and Youth Services in addition to ongoing support from the Grable Foundation and private/corporate donors which allowed us to increase our contributions by a third in 2020. This year, we held an incredibly successful Giving Tuesday Campaign, raising over \$75,000 in one day thanks to the generosity of two matching donors. In addition to this campaign, we received two large grants in 2021, which allowed us to triple our giving from 2020. Thank you!

## 3 We opened the museum and welcomed 2294 children and grown-ups

We opened the doors to the first children's museum in Beaver County on November 30, 2021 and have **welcomed 2294 children and caregivers** through the doors for Open Play, programming, field trips, or event rentals. Our Preview Space has 8 installed exhibits and a Maker Space as well as an outdoor Pollinator Garden with outdoor exhibits. Our Executive Director transitioned into a full-time role at the end of 2021, and we hired 3 part-time staff, including a Resident Teaching Artist. Although still very much a young organization, we are poised and ready for continued growth!



# Some of our Projects

Beaver County has some of the highest performing school districts in the State and also some of the lowest. Aliquippa, Ambridge, Big Beaver, and Rochester Area School Districts, for example, have high percentages of students scoring "below basic" on PSSA exams. And in many schools, those who are "historically underperforming" do not do as well in school as their counterparts. These communities have significantly more African-American and biracial individuals. In Beaver Falls, those groups total 26.5% of the population compared to 8% in the County as a whole. Poverty is also high. In Beaver Falls, 32.5% live in poverty and have no college education, compared to 19.6% in the County. African-American students and learners in poverty face systemic barriers not only in education, but also in every aspect of their lives. As noted in a recent report from Johns Hopkins Center for Research and Reform in Education, "the data clearly shows that the school and district performance clearly correlates with family income." Neighborhood North is committed to helping families overcome these educational inequities.

Neighborhood North's work over the past two years has deepened our understanding of the local needs, and for these reasons, we work with intention to foster a creative learning ecosystem through the following projects and initiatives:

Projects	Details	Outcome
Playful Learning Initiative	Received a \$100,000 grant from PACE/New Sun Rising to expand museum learning to everyday spaces like parks, bus stops, laundromats as a way to rethink how and where children learn competencies, especially as children spend 80% of their time outside of school.	We are working with Temple University & Playful Learning Action Network. Local artists designed 3 PLLs and are working with school and community to install.
Teaching Artist Initiative	We advocate for arts integrated education and desire that more teachers and organizations will engage Teaching Arts to augment their curriculum with creative activities that celebrate a diversity of voices and cultures.	We host Professional Development workshops for Teaching Artists/Educators and college students, connect the Cultural Trust with our local school Administration, and connect our Resident Teaching Artist with local public schools.
Afterschool Program	We host an afterschool program every Tuesday for K-5 students enrolled in Trails Ministries. This program focuses on homework help and incorporates an hour of arts programming each week by a teaching artist.	This program allows our local community to feel ownership of the museum and to have a voice in programming and exhibit development.



# Looking Forward

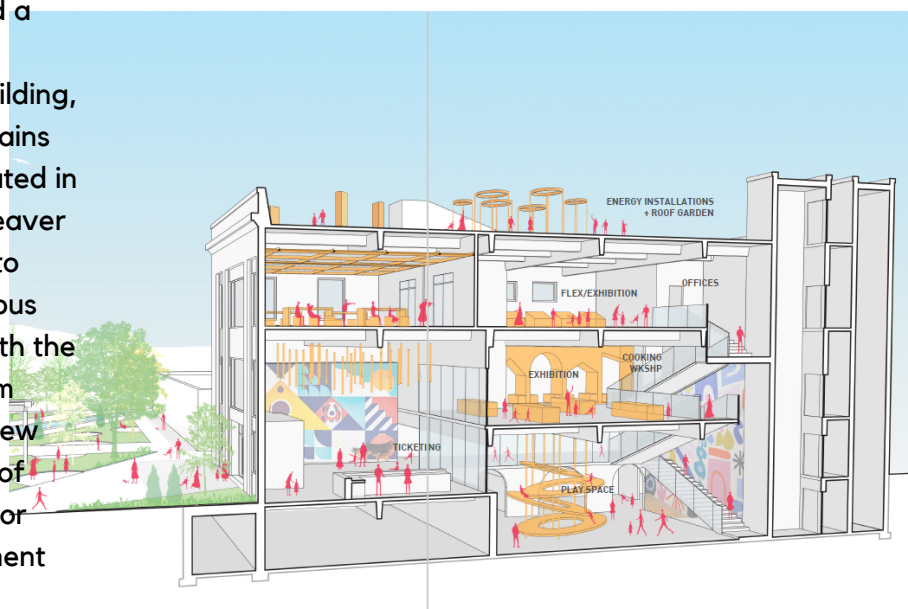
## Neighborhood North @ the TRIB

We believe that children thrive when their family, school, and neighborhoods partner together, and an overwhelming body of evidence points to play as the best way to equip children with a broad set of flexible competencies and support their socioemotional development (Brookings Institute, 2021). In an increasingly complex world, children's museums provide a place where kids and their families can experience learning and playing together.

To those ends, Neighborhood North began working in partnership with the Beaver Falls Community Development Corporation and a committee of people interested in the restoration of the iconic News Tribune Building, a 15,000 square foot building, which contains decades of memories and is centrally located in the core business district of downtown Beaver Falls. The goal of Neighborhood North is to create a community museum/library campus that will link the Carnegie Free Library with the Tribune Building via the outdoor classroom space of the newly designed park. This new educational campus will serve as a place of community connection and as a catalyst for creative learning and economic development and innovation, right in the heart of the business district.

## Capital Campaign

Additionally, Neighborhood North is working cooperatively with the City of Beaver Falls and sister projects in what is known as the Innovation Corridor to intentionally advance creative and economic development in our city and region.





# Leadership

## Board of Directors

Christine Kroger, Founder/Executive Director

Diana Rice, PhD, President, Professor of Psychology, Geneva College

Michele Renz, CPA, Treasurer, Owner/Partner, Martin & Associates, LLC

Andrew Frey, Chair, Marketing & Development Committee, Campaign Manager, Geneva College

Katie Pagan, CPA, Secretary, Audit Manager, Martin & Associates, LLC

Michelle O'Leary, Co-Chair, Education Committee, Preschool Teacher, Preschool @ First

Mark Schellar, Chair, Facilities Committee, Principle, Eckles Architecture & Engineering

Nate DiBenedetto, Assistant Controller, WD Wright Contracting, Inc

Kirsten Bestor, Finance, Banking Center Manager, WesBanco

Cassie Brkich, Marketing Owner, Brkich Design Group

Sanna Clark, Salesperson, AT&T

Kolbe Cole, Education, Community Youth Coordinator, Trails Ministries

Trey Collier, Educator, Big Beaver Falls School District; Founder, VIBE Community Outreach

Heather Harmon Kennedy, Esq., Marketing, Harmon Kennedy PC Attorneys at Law

Dr. Donna Nugent, Education Superintendent, Beaver Falls School District

Ian Oldaker Owner & Operator, Visitor Experience Solutions, LLC



# Acknowledgements

**Thank you to our corporate and foundation donors for your continued support:**

The Grable Foundation

Grantmakers of Western PA

Remake Learning

Pittsburgh Foundation Wish Book

Program to Aid Citizen Enterprise (PACE)

New Sun Rising-Arts Equity Reimagined

Charlotte Frey Foundation

Hillman Foundation

US Charitable Gift Trust

Nursing ABC, Inc./Portage Learning

Spanos Group (Raymond James)

Farmer's Insurance-Stephanie Sye

Stone Creative Productions

PA Cyber

Children and Youth Services of Beaver County

T-Mobile Community Grant

Duquesne Light Community Impact Grant

Beaver Falls Rotary Club

Beaver County Foundation

---

*Thank you to all of the many, many individuals who have shared both time and resources to help spread the gift of curiosity throughout our region! You are so greatly appreciated!*

## Contact

**Neighborhood North Museum of Play**

**PO Box 137, Beaver Falls, PA 15010**

724.601.5686

[www.neighborhoodnorth.com](http://www.neighborhoodnorth.com)

[hello@neighborhoodnorth.com](mailto:hello@neighborhoodnorth.com)

[@neighborhoodnorth](https://www.instagram.com/neighborhoodnorth)

