



news release

media contacts

Gavon Morris
The New Children's Museum
619 795 1766
gmorris@thinkplaycreate.org

Sara Wilensky Napoli
858 335 7633
swnapoli@gmail.com

AGAINST THE CURRENT, THE NEW CHILDREN'S MUSEUM SAILS TO SUCCESS

Museum completes Community Matching Challenge; \$27 million raised.

July 15, 2010 — San Diego, California — While the worst downturn in 75 years took hold of San Diego and slowed the activities of most nonprofit organizations, [The New Children's Museum](#) (NCM) reinvented itself, constructed a landmark green building, and raised tens of millions of dollars. Today NCM announced the completion of its \$10 million Community Matching Challenge begun in May 2008, and a total of \$27 million in donations raised for the newly reinvented Museum.

These counter-trend accomplishments could not have come at a more critical time for San Diego's children. While state and local budgets contracted, leaving public schools without arts programs, NCM expanded to provide arts education to 377,000 visitors including 34,500 school children.

Leading the counter-trend charge is a [counter-trend board](#). Traditionally, cultural institutions attract individuals in their late 50's and 60's to serve on their boards. The young people on NCM's board — some of them in their 30's and many in their 40's and early 50's — represent the fresh new face of philanthropy in San Diego. True to their generation's character, these board members are highly-engaged leaders, interested in taking on pro bono jobs with accountability for results. They write big checks, but check-writing is just one way they express their philanthropy. They are involved in the museum as individuals, with their families, and with their companies. And they are effective.

Bob Kelly, president and CEO of The San Diego Foundation put it this way, "What The New Children's Museum board has achieved is an incredible success story." He went on to tell NCM leaders, "You have become one of the leading boards in San Diego and are now a role model in what it means to take the responsibility of board leadership seriously."

Epitomizing this new face of philanthropy is the current board president, [Patsy Marino](#). "A child's visit to a museum used to be a quiet experience," states Marino. "Told to keep their voices down and not to touch anything, children often viewed art from a distance, and in silence. The opposite is true at The New Children's Museum, where peals of laughter ring through the multi-level building every hour it is open."

The success of its fundraising is an endorsement of NCM's focus on a new way to engage children in the artistic process. "Here children are encouraged to put their hands in the paint, talk about what they are seeing and doing, and interact with art and artists as they create art of their own," says executive director Rachel Teagle. "Ours is a new model of engagement in the arts."

The Challenge widened the community support for NCM, nearly doubling the number of donors. Priorities for funds raised include reducing the Museum's construction debt, contributing to operating the Museum — the most important aspect of which is opening a new exhibition every 18 months — expanding access to under-served communities, supporting the Arts Education Center, and supplying unlimited clay and paint for visitors to create art. On its opening day, NCM's construction debt was \$10 million. With \$1 million allocated this week to pay-down construction debt, the balance is now \$2.4 million, a 75% reduction. The aggressive reduction of construction debt signals NCM's confidence in community support for arts education that is at the heart of the Museum's mission.

ABOUT THE NEW CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

The New Children's Museum is a dynamic new model of a museum that celebrates children and the arts. A nonprofit institution funded by admission, membership, and community support, the Museum empowers children to think, play and create with participatory exhibitions, engaging art-making activities, captivating artistic performances, and in-depth educational opportunities. Support from generous individuals, foundations and corporations makes the Museum available to all children in San Diego — as an example, one visitor out of every five visits the Museum for free. Serving all ages, from toddler to teen, NCM inspires new ways to see the world through the language of art. To learn more, visit thinkplaycreate.org.