

BFK Rocket Report



2023 Annual Report Included



New STEM Programming Space Coming Soon

The Lab sponsored by Amcor

Part of our mission at the Building for Kids is to inspire discovery. This takes many shapes throughout the museum from exploring how pulleys can change a ball's path in Move It to what different foods taste like during one of our Food to Grow activities. Giving kids a safe, encouraging, and welcoming place to try new things is a critical component for their development. This is why we are excited to share that we will be opening The Lab, sponsored by Amcor, on April 6, 2024!

This new space is dedicated to creating hands-on experiences that build observational skills and inspire curiosity of the world around us. In the Lab, visitors will be able to experience the entire scientific method. Kids will have the opportunity to investigate various topics as they build skills around asking questions, thinking through problems, learning as they test their solutions, and sharing their findings.

To help encourage STEM exploration for all ages, The Lab will host daily activities around a variety of quarterly themes that encourage inquiry, experimentation, and collaboration. Within its first year of opening, The Lab will explore the following topics:

- Food Spoilage
- Polymers
- Recycling
- Robotics

As part of the experience, kids will also learn more about what a lab



sponsored by amcor



is like by wearing proper protective equipment and using real-world tools and instruments for their scientific investigations. Scientists and engineers from our community will regularly host activities within The Lab to expose kids to different STEM fields and careers.

We're looking forward to discovering with you and your family in The Lab soon!

Hero Elementary: April 11 - 14

To help us celebrate the opening of The Lab, we'll be joined by "The Sparks' Crew" from the PBS Kids show, *Hero Elementary*! They'll share their Superpowers of Science through daily activities and special events, sponsored by TDS Telecom.

Stay tuned to our Facebook page for more information as we get closer to their visit!



Summer Explorer Camp

Robotics, Sculpture, Music, and More

Make new friends and discover with us during Summer Explorer Camps at the BFK. This is an eight-week series of facilitated skill-building enrichment, social engagement, and free play around the museum.

Each session runs Tuesday through Friday and centers around the exploration of a specific theme. Our topics explore a wide range of activities that all ages will enjoy, including sculpture, robotics, percussion, and planting your own produce.

We have both half-day and full-day camps available for those who have completed 4K - 4th grade (4K is available for half-days only). Sign up for one week or all eight for a discounted price!

Summer Explorer Camp Schedule

- **Drawing, Painting, & 2D Media:** July 9 – 12
- **Robotics & Coding Part 1:** July 16 – 19
- **Rhythms & Percussion Part 1:** July 23 – 26
- **Food Beginnings Part 1:** July 30 - August 2
- **Sculpture, Pottery, & 3D Media:** August 6 – 9
- **Coding & Robotics Part 2:** August 13 – 16
- **Rhythms & Percussion Part 2:** August 20 – 23
- **Food Beginnings Part 2:** August 27 – 30



Learn more about a typical day's schedule, prices, and how to register at buildingforkids.org

2023 Recap

Exhibit openings, special events, refreshed programming, community partnerships, play-based learning, intergenerational memory-making — last year had it all. You

can check out the enclosed annual report to learn more about 2023's successes, but we wanted to highlight a few specific moments below.

Thank you to everyone who spent part of your year with us. We are grateful for the opportunity to continue to inspire discovery and building resilience in 2024.



Museum Learners

We revamped our field trip experience to promote hands-on learning and self-directed discovery.



Food to Grow

Our newest exhibit opened and invited visitors into the food system from the farm to the kitchen.

Children's Parade

The 14th annual BFK Children's Parade showcased the creativity and imagination of kids in our community.



Molly of Denali

Molly visited the BFK for Celebrating Culture & Community Week, as we explored local native cultures.



Thank you!

Through the generosity of our community, we exceeded our Building for Tomorrow's Kids campaign goal of \$1.2 million!

These investments in our core infrastructure and sustainability will help ensure this incredible community asset continues to make an impact for generations to come.

tomorrow's
Building for KIDS
Learning, growing, and exploring - today and for generations to come



Director's Digest

Happy 2024! I hope your family's new year is off to a great start.

As I reflect back on 2023, I first want to share my appreciation for the community and partners who made this incredible year possible. To our members and the families who visited, thank you for all of the memories, exploration, and fun. To our supporters, thank you for investing in the important work of play in a child's growth and development. To our community, thank you for partnering with us to provide engaging, authentic, and inclusive experiences for the kids and families in our local community and beyond.

There is a lot to celebrate from 2023, but I want to highlight and give context to one specific number from the enclosed annual report. Last year, we had 132,475 participants engage in play-based learning with us! This is one of the highest reach numbers in our thirty year history and the highest number of participants since the early 1990s. We are encouraged by this milestone and look forward to continuing to grow the impact of the Building for Kids in 2024.

This past year, we invested heavily in our physical space with routine updates like replacing our carpeting and improving our building's energy efficiency. We also enhanced our exhibit offerings, including refreshing some of our existing exhibits, such as Move It sponsored by AZCO, and opening our first new permanent exhibit in five years, Food to Grow sponsored by Children's Wisconsin.

In addition to these physical updates, we created a wide variety of robust programming opportunities as well. We continued to expand both our After-School and Summer Explorer Camps, providing museum enrichment and social engagement to local students. In partnership with PBS Wisconsin, we also hosted Celebrating Culture and Community Week with Molly of Denali sponsored by TDS, a week-long event during Native American Heritage Month. Kids and their adults celebrated their own cultures, explored informational text, and experienced local native stories and traditions.



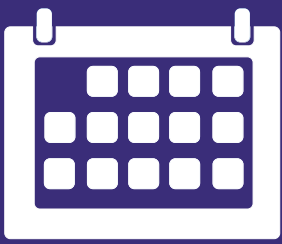
2024 is on track to be another exciting year at the museum. We will continue to invest in our core infrastructure, exhibits, and programming spaces, including upgrading our food prep space into a commercial kitchen to better support our Food to Grow programming and opening The Lab, sponsored by Amcor, a space that will encourage hands-on scientific exploration and inquiry.

There is so much to look forward to this coming year, so stay tuned! We hope you'll join us as we begin another year of inspiring discovery and building resilience through intergenerational play-based learning and exploration of the arts, sciences, and humanities.

Thank you and we hope to see you soon,

Oliver Zornow
President
ozornow@buildingforkids.org





Upcoming Events

February 17
9:00am - 4:00pm

Family Valentine's Day

You're invited to a special Valentine's event. Celebrate the love within a family by participating in themed activities.

March 8
5:00 - 7:00pm

Character Playdate with the Lorax

The Lorax is coming to visit the BFK! Join us for story times, themed activities, and lots of opportunities to meet the Lorax.

April 6
9:00am - 4:00pm

Opening of The Lab

Be some of the first to experience our new programming space, The Lab, sponsored by Amcor.

For more information about these and other upcoming events, visit buildingforkids.org.

Favorite Memories at the BFK

Recently, we asked visitors about their favorite memory from the Building for Kids. We've shared a few of them below. If you have a favorite memory to share, we'd love to hear it! Email marketing@buildingforkids.org.

Naomi O.

"My favorite memory was when my oldest climbed the ropes up to the tree house on her own for the first time and she was SO excited and proud of herself."

Chelsea C.

"So many good memories, but some that stand out are when my daughter was around 9 months old and we would meet up in the babies and toddlers section with our friends. The babies crawled around and explored while us moms could talk. It was a magical time as first-time moms to connect and one of the best places to take babies."

Cymone M.

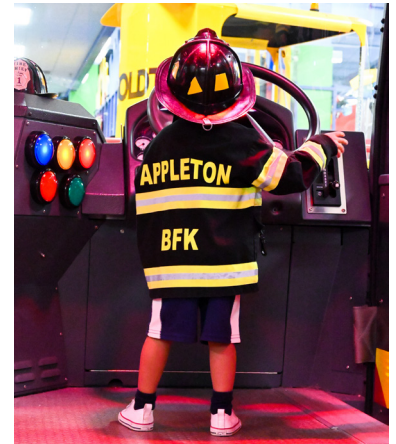
"I love sharing the memory of the heart slide! I went down it as a kid, and now my kids enjoy it!"

Jordyn P.

"My favorite memory is my son driving the semi truck, telling us over and over he's just like papa. Then we get upstairs to the fire truck and he says he's just like daddy."

Megan N.

"My favorite is watching both of our kids grow up in the museum. We started coming when our daughter was 6 months and now she is 10 and our son is 7. They still get excited for new exhibits!"



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