Kidspace Nurtures Children and Changes Lives

Kidspace Children's Museum provides kid-driven experiences through interactive exhibits, play-based programs and engaging events that support STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) principles as well as literacy and cultural awareness. The museum’s informal education environment pairs hands-on enrichment activities with self-directed play and learning, emphasizing 21st century skill building such as communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking.

Children have opportunities to try new things every day through experiential learning. What can sometimes look like play for play’s sake to grown-ups is often a groundbreaking experience for the child. Play can help identify a child’s learning style and guide his or her path toward problem-solving and self-confidence.

One of the organization’s top priorities is to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to learn through play. Kidspace relies on community support to help deliver powerful educational experiences on a daily basis and make the museum available for everyone through Kidspace for All access programs.

More than 90,000 of the 380,000 guests served this year will have visited through free and reduced-cost programs, which include an EBT card holder discount, Free Family Nights, military and veteran discounts, school and camp field trips, the My Masterpieces art program for PUSD kindergartners, and sensory sensitive events.

The ability to serve this number of guests is due to the success of our Campaign for the Future of Kidspace, which was completed in 2017. This capital campaign transformed the campus’ interior and outdoor spaces, setting Kidspace apart from other children’s museums. Improvements include Galvin Physics Forest, Milias Imagination Workshop, S. Mark Taper Foundation Early Childhood Learning Center, Arroyo Adventure, Storyteller Studio and a host of new experiences.

The museum supports the whole child, through its mission: to nurture the potential of all children through kid-driven experiences, inspiring them to be joyful, active learners. From the youngest learners in Baby and Me classes, to school-age children visiting with their classmates, to Free Family Nights, the goal is to provide a variety of experiences that enrich the lives of children at every age. CEO Michael Shanklin noted, “We encourage curiosity and imagination throughout the museum — there is something for everyone.”

Parents and teachers regularly provide feedback, and this parent’s story captures the spirit of Kidspace: A mother shared, “I never knew my son could successfully walk on the rope bridge or even want to do it. I was shocked that he did it six times at an event you offered for my community of those with autism and other disabilities. This was a life-changing moment. My son is unable to communicate like you or I, he is able to sing, read, surf the net and ask for his needs but cannot have a conversation. ... So I’m not always sure what he would like to attempt to do. I thought he would be afraid to walk on the rope bridge, since it was high. But I was wrong. You are expanding experiences and changing lives.”

As 2018 comes to an end, Kidspace encourages you to support the museum and the life-changing moments it provides each day. General admission revenue covers only a portion of the operating budget. Support from individuals, as well as sponsorships and grants from governments, corporations, and foundations, help close the gap. Become part of the Kidspace Family by adding the museum to your holiday giving list. Please consider a tax-deductible gift before Dec. 31.

Visit kidspacemuseum.org/support to view Kidspace’s 2017 Annual Report.