



Pretend City[®]
CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

Because of You Annual Report

January – December 2023

Dear Friends,

It's **Because of You**. As we reflect on the past year, we are overwhelmed with gratitude for the incredible support you've offered Pretend City Children's Museum. Our City is a welcoming place where families learn about important child development milestones and early learning, and children grow in myriad ways as they explore the museum with joy and curiosity. Your involvement as a member, volunteer, community or corporate partner, or donor, has been a driving force behind every success, every milestone, and every positive change we achieved in 2023.

Because of You, lives have been transformed. Your generosity has allowed us to provide families with developmental resources as well as guidance for parents and other caregivers to be their very best. We've provided learning spaces that are designed to help develop skills needed to prepare children for school readiness and a lifetime of success and wellbeing. **Because of You**, we've expanded initiatives that promote inclusivity, diversity, and acceptance. The ripple effect of your involvement has created a wave of positivity, impacting not only Orange County families, but also our thousands of guests who travel from across the country and internationally to experience all that Pretend City is.

Because of You, progress has prevailed. Your commitment to our mission has been the catalyst for innovation and growth. This has allowed us to adapt, evolve, and continue making a meaningful difference based on our community's needs. We continually evaluate our programming for our youngest Pretend City citizens to ensure an impactful learning and growth experience. We've found valuable ways in which we can provide support for their families.

Our 2023 year in review serves as a testament to the collective power of **You** - caring individuals who believe in our children's potential and wellbeing. As our plans take shape for Pretend City to grow into Orange County's premier hub of early childhood education at the Great Park in Irvine, you're helping to create the success stories that will be told in the future. But for now, as we look at what we did together in 2023, we are inspired by your gifts of time, talent and treasure and look to the future with optimism, knowing that **Because of You** we will continue to offer a unique and quality early learning experience to our community's youngest citizens.

With gratitude,



Erin Boyl

Chair, Board of Directors

Pretend City[®]
CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

2023 Board of Directors

Our dedicated 2023 Board of Directors provides guidance and leadership, serve as ambassadors, and make generous financial commitments to help advance our mission. Their commitment to excellence helps to ensure a positive experience, each and everyday, for our member families and other young visitors.

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Because of You...

197,700 guests

counted on Pretend City to **engage their curiosities and imaginations** through art, dramatic play, and rich **educational learning experiences.**



Because of You...

3,600 guests participated in Neurodivergent Family Nights

Our **free** events give parents and children a session in a special **sensory-friendly environment**, to explore the City while hosting a supportive hub of families experiencing similar situations.

Pretend City's trained professionals support families with access to community partners and **guidance** during their play time.



"This week we went to [@pretendcity](#) for their Neurodivergent Night. I had no intention of staying the full two hours, thought for sure Silas would be too young to enjoy it. But he explored the entire place for the full two hours and could've easily stayed to play longer! 10/10 would recommend! "

-Grateful Pretend City Guest



**Social
Competence**



**Physical Health &
Well-Being**



Emotional Maturity



**Communication Skills &
General Knowledge**



**Language &
Cognitive Development**



Because of You...

**1,300 Children Received
Developmental Screenings**

"As a first-time parent, this program helped me understand the milestones my son should be achieving; we are grateful for the opportunity to participate, receive educational tips and feel part of the museum."

Our **free screenings** pinpoint developmental progress in the areas of communication, gross motor and fine motor skills, problem solving, and personal-social skills.

Because of You...

63,600 guests visited
Camping in the City -
A Trek through our
Wilderness Park

Our summer learning space focused upon **Conservation, Respect for Eco-Systems, and Nature's Impact on wellbeing**, while families bonded through fun **STEM** activities. This experience featured hiking trails and animal prints to track, a fishing pond, a campsite to pitch a tent and a campfire to sit around and share stories.



A post-survey shared the top four reasons guests loved Camping in the City:

- I was inspired to spend time with my family in the outdoors
- I took care of the environment by reducing my waste
- I liked practicing for my outdoor adventures in a safe space
- I played more zero-energy games with my family and friends

A special thanks to our Sponsors:
Frank's Irvine Subaru, Off the Grid Rentals,
Applied Medical, Orange County Power
Authority, PwC, Modern Woodmen,
The Lotts Agency

Because of You...

Pretend City celebrated
14 years in Irvine!

Since our opening in 2009, we
have served **over 2.2 million
guests** and counting.

Our birthday party was a
“**WILD**” celebration with bugs,
amphibians, and reptiles!





This year, we transformed our Café into **Marukome** Japanese Cuisine (above) and changed out our Home to feature the Tongan and Samoan heritage of the **Fifita-Talavou** Family. (right).



Because of You...

250 community and cultural partners enhanced programming

Pretend City is a **welcoming place** for all our community members. Our Home and Café learning spaces, along with our Cooking in the City program, are dedicated to representing the many **cultures** of our visitors.

Every day families learn about our world through storytimes and interactive programming.

Because of You...

Pretend City became the **first** Orange County city to proclaim **Hunger Action Month** in September with mayor of the day, Cora, one of our frequent member visitors.

Storytime taught children about hunger and food insecurity. Families packed apples with Second Harvest, our new partner.



"Thank you to all the parents and grandparents that visit Pretend City with their kids. Here they get to explore many career opportunities.

Maybe the new Frank's Irvine Subaru Service Center will help kids to find their specialization and the automotive industry will be in their future."

Sergio Sanchez
Owner, Irvine Subaru



Because of You...

Pretend City celebrated the **Grand Reopening of the Subaru Service Center** in November 2023, made possible through their Share the Love program.

This busy learning space in the City showcases just one of the many **career opportunities** a little one might imagine in their future.



Because of You...

We welcomed **750** volunteers who provided **5,700** hours of their time and talents to advance our mission. As the backbone of our organization, our volunteers demonstrated a sense of belonging and purpose as a Pretend City citizen.





Because of You...

PNC supported Pretend City with a generous **grant** to partner with **MOMS OC, Orangewood Foundation, and Inland Empire families**, to receive monthly early childhood development **classes, transportation**, and museum **membership**.

Additionally, **PNC's Grow Up Great initiative brought their traveling Mobile Learning Adventure** exhibit to the City. Children and families enjoyed a free early learning and play program as part of PNC's community outreach and dedicated philanthropic mission.

"At PNC, we know that parent and caregiver engagement in early learning and development provides children with a strong foundation for success."

"For nearly 20 years, PNC has supported early childhood education through our PNC Grow Up Great initiative. We are thrilled to partner with Pretend City and in community events in support of young learners and their families."

Denise Scott, client & community relations director, PNC Bank

Because of You...

Pretend City ensured that **every member** of our community **had access** to the **joy of learning** at Pretend City.

Our **Welcome Families** program distributed **7,840 tickets**, to **14 nonprofit partners**, a gift of over \$156,000. These organizations focus on serving young children experiencing challenging circumstances.

Our **Museums for All** and **Military Families** discounts have afforded **13,150** guests a Pretend City experience, a gift of **\$176,000**.

We hosted **18 Title 1 School Field Trips** at **no cost** for **948 students**.





Because of You...

**1,778 families participated in
Baby Steps**

Pretend City supports parents
of **birth to 18-month old
babies** by teaching them about
their **child's developmental
milestones** and engaging them
in appropriate activities and
learning.

*"The magic in early education is not
only for the children but also for us
parents. We have witnessed our
children develop and been able to
connect with them more. We have
also been able to connect with other
parents in this magical world."*

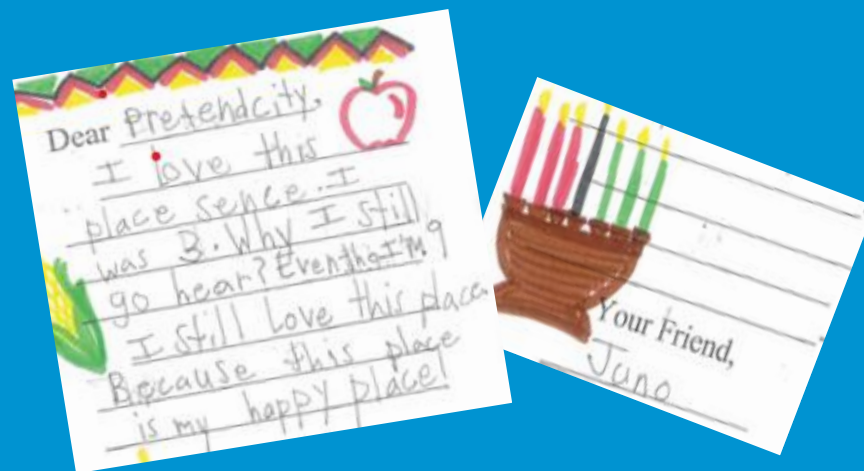


Because of You...

Pretend City celebrated an abundance of **cultural celebrations and holidays** with our diverse families visiting from across the region, country and internationally.

Children and families **expanded their world views** and understanding of the varying and wonderful ways that families express themselves.

Pretend City is truly a welcoming place for all.



We are grateful

Investing in the healthy development of our children benefits all of us. We could not accomplish our mission without the generosity, involvement, and enthusiasm of our 2023 supporters. We thank each and every one of you for partnering with us to bring a unique and quality learning experience to our community's young children.

Our community of supporters is growing! We acknowledge and thank those who are **first time donors** as noted with a **!**

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Hans Weissenberger !
Anabelle Burns and Daniel White !
Aaron Williams !
Aneesah Williams !
Michelle and Clint Williamson !
Sheila and Jay Witzling
Karen Wong !
Monica and Randy Wong
Stephanie Hoi-Nga Wong !
Sonya Woods
Meredith and Landon Wright !
Lisa Yamamoto !
Johnny Young !
Kim and Brent Young !
Qin and Peng Yu
Desiree Flores and Metin Youssein !
Laila Zakharia
Kayla and Matthew Zeigler !
Cindy Zercher !
Chen Zhang !
Sunny Zia !
Suzy Zigner !
Nour Batarseh and Faris Zuriekat !

In Kind Gifts

Anonymous (2)
Behr Paint !
Campbell & Company
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher, LLP
Ganahl Lumber Company
Google
Industrial Metal Supply
Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP
Off the Grid Rentals
Ude Ohuche and Onuora Ononye

And thank you again to our dozens of donors who contributed items to our events throughout the year!



Thank you!



Our 2023 VIP Pretend City Members

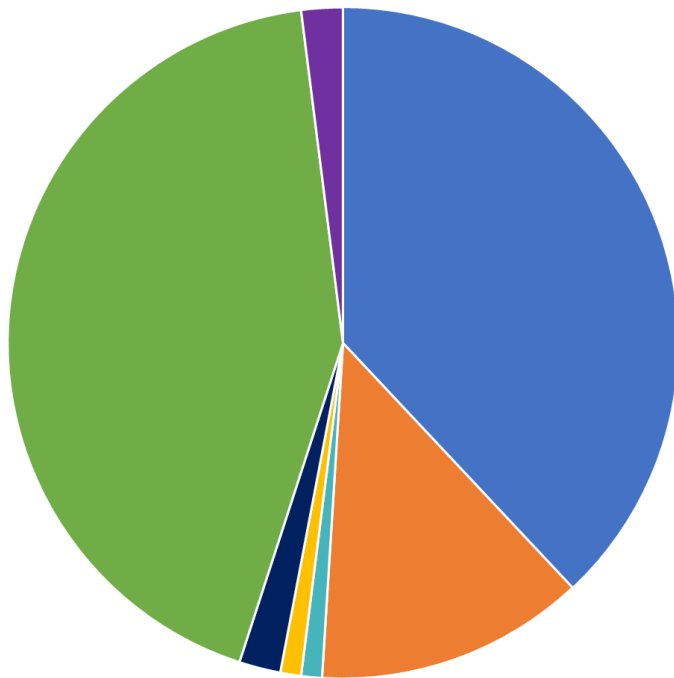
Esther Kang and Jonathan Chang
Jenny Tran and Patrick Clinger
Hannah and David Goffredo !
Rose and Sandy Goldberg !
Kendall Anthony and David Gomez !
Natalie Jensen !
Micaela Razo and Schuyler Lifschultz !
Kalie McCartin
Arely Garcia and Evan Mitnick
Christina and Kanin Sathienvantanee
Morgan and Joe Shone !
Sean Wilson

This report acknowledges donors who contributed between January 1 – December 31, 2023. Every effort has been made to assure the accuracy of your name. If your name has been misspelled, omitted, or listed improperly, please accept our apology and contact **Madelyn Garcia** at **949-428-3900, ext. 212** or **Madelyn.Garcia@pretendcity.org** so that we may correct our records.

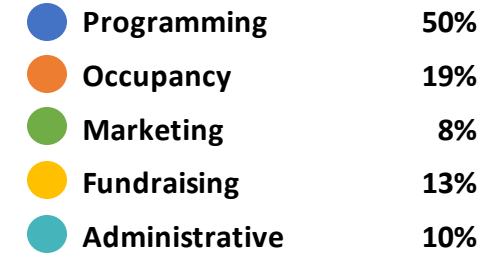
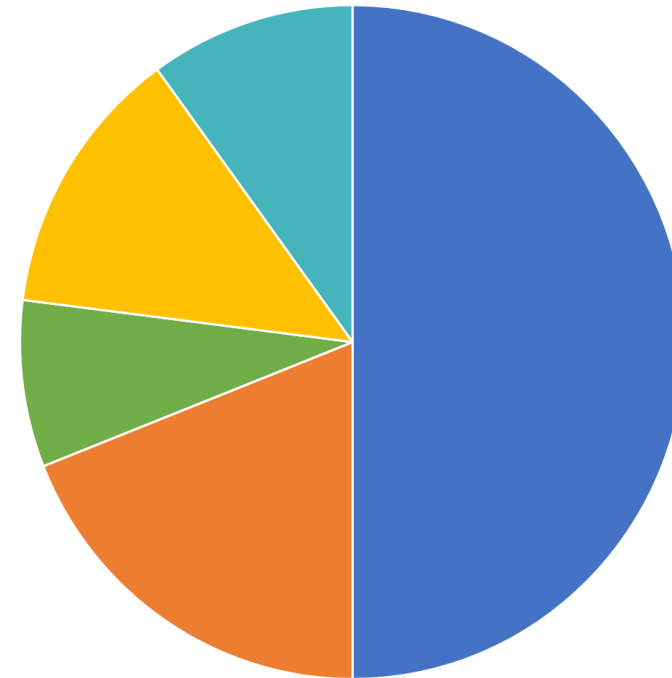
Early Childhood Learning

A smart Investment

Revenue - \$5,357,520.79



Expenses - \$3,639,051.12



* Includes individual, grant, and events gross revenue, and capital pledge payments
NOTE: Based on unaudited financials and does not include in kind services or depreciation expense.

A photograph of two young girls with curly hair hugging each other. They are in a museum exhibit that looks like a pretend city. The background is a large green wall with several small black bowls containing colorful objects (like fruit) mounted on it. To the right, there is a painted mural of a tree with purple and red fruit. The girls are wearing light-colored clothing. The girl on the left is wearing a white shirt and white pants, and the girl on the right is wearing a light green shirt and blue jeans. They are both smiling and looking at each other.

Because of You...

Pretend City is an early childhood development hub where kids and families unite in boundless fun and joy – all while propelling our youngest citizens into a successful life-long journey of learning.

Thank you for your generosity to Pretend City and your dedicated belief and investment in our children and their future.

Pretend City[®]
CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

29 Hubble, Irvine