

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Dear MOMI Community,

Oh what a year! This pandemic has affected so much of all our daily lives including how we spend our time with family and friends. Like you, we had to adapt and develop creative and engaging learning experiences that bring joy and wonder for our own family - as well as yours.

In late 2019, we officially became a nonprofit organization and the future was bright. With months of planning, 2020 started with in-person activities and our first special event. Then the pandemic hit. A changing world meant a changing expectation for children's museums everywhere. As a new, emerging museum, we felt fortunate to have the opportunity to reflect and re-imagine our path forward. We turned in person events into playpacks stuffed with endless opportunities for

play at home. We took time to build our organization and re-imagine spaces where families gather as places for joyful playful learning.

**In one short year,
we've built incredible
support for our vision.**

Going forward, we are committed to examining strategies for delivering engaging learning experiences. We've created a Playful Learning Landscapes Initiative, and have plans for a chalkFEST and opening tinkerLAB, a temporary space that is open to the public.

We are still an all volunteer organization. Yet with continuing support from our Council of Advisors, donors, community partners, and you, we are committed to creating more playful learning experiences and a place where all are welcome to discover, explore, create, learn, and play.

Sara, Nicole & Nisha



MOMI exists to spark curiosity and wonder, and ignite the lifelong love of learning. Its mission is to build more playful communities and a museum that celebrates the curious and creative spirit in all of us. This approach helps develop the innovative thinking needed to build strong communities and meet 21st century challenges.



A YEAR IN REVIEW

Museum Anywhere: Building a MOMI Community

This year was filled with disappointment, uncertainty and the need to re-imagine what is possible. 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.

200+ FAMILIES IMPACTED

SERVING ONE FAMILY AT A TIME

From our dino clay event hosted by The Children's Museum of Somerset County to creating summer playpacks, we brought creative and innovative ways to learn through play to families in Morris and Somerset County.

1 PRESENTATION

SPREADING THE WORD

MOMI supporter, Sara Grosser (Equitable Advisors, LLC) asked us to present our vision at her company event in November. Many expressed excitement at the possibility of a new world-class museum for NJ families.



\$19K+ RAISED

INCREASED GIVING

In our first full year as a nonprofit organization, we raised \$19,637 - doubling contributions and grants from 2019. In 2020, we received two large grants from local family foundations - \$5,000 and \$10,000. We also conducted our first online fundraiser and raised \$2,030. The generosity of our supporters, like you, allows us to continue our mission to create more playful communities.

+3 COUNCIL MEMBERS

BUILDING A FOUNDATION

We grew our Council of Advisors from one to four individuals with a variety of expertise and from a wide geographic area. We had our first intern, McKenna Douglass, from Monmouth University.

"I always wondered why New Jersey did not have a children's museum on par with those in other states."

Allison White, Council of Advisors



Andy Ackerman

Retired Executive Director of Children's Museum of Manhattan speaking at our Gearing Up For Greatness Event in February.

1 SPECIAL EVENT

GEARING UP FOR GREATNESS

Just before the pandemic, we held our first private event to raise awareness of MOMI and share our vision. Leaders in business, education, philanthropy, and arts and culture from Morris and Somerset County attended. A highlight of the evening was a talk by Andy Ackerman, Retired Executive Director of the Children's Museum of Manhattan, on the community impact of museums that are built just for children and families.

NOTEABLE PROJECTS

Operation Summer Playpack



With the help of a 2019-2020 Morristown Rotary Grant of \$2,775 and an online fundraising campaign that raised \$2,030, we joined Help MorrisNOW in July in serving the Morris Township/Morristown community and provided over 150 playpacks to families hardest hit by the pandemic.

2021 chalkFEST

In November, we were awarded a \$1,000 grant from the Morris Arts through the NJ State Council on the Arts/ Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. Details to be announced soon. We look forward to bringing our first family day of playing with chalk to a community near you!



Natalie & Kay
Smith

MOMI volunteers for Operation Summer Playpack delivered over 150 playpacks to families hardest hit by the pandemic.

Playful Learning Landscapes

MOMI was awarded a \$10,000 grant from the Smart Family Foundation of New York and David and Jenny Stone for our Playful Learning Landscapes Initiative (PLLs). The goal of PLLs is to bring joyful learning to everyday spaces like parks, bus stops, and grocery stores.

MOMI is actively working with its partners including Temple University and the Playful Learning Landscapes Action Network, and Morris Township to include PLLs into several neighborhoods in 2021.

LOOKING FORWARD: TINKERLAB BY MOMI

MOMI believes that tinkering develops the capacity for innovative problem solving by engaging both children and adults in hands-on, skill building experiences that incorporate science, technology, engineering, art, and math. Tinkering is a creative approach to learning that focuses on open-ended exploration with materials, tools and ideas.

With 2020 filled with remote learning, families are looking for innovative opportunities for learning outside virtual platforms and the classroom. So, we plan to open a tinkerLAB in 2022 -a temporary preview space that provides inclusive and equitable tinkering opportunities for NJ families.



2020 VISION RENDERING
Credit: Laura Davidson, AIA

"Every child deserves the opportunity to have a safe space to discover, explore and imagine what is possible."

Sara Sorenson, Founder

LEADERSHIP

Board of Trustees

Sara Sorenson, Founder & President

Nicole Pittaluga, Founder & Vice-President

Nisha Patel, Founder & Secretary

Council of Advisors

Marco Hernandez, Creative Labs Consulting

Allison White, Graham-Pelton Consulting, Inc.

Heather Crawford, Inherent Wellness

MD Maruf, Deloitte

*"As soon as I
heard about MOMI's
mission, I knew I had to get involved."*

Marco Hernandez, Council of Advisors



DONORS

Thank you for helping us spread the joy of curiosity and creativity throughout Morris and Somerset Counties!

Anonymous	Courtney Freund	The Pittaluga Family
Anonymous	Karla Gabre	Despina Psillides
Vicki Barghout	Deb Giambalvo	Sandy Roberts
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This list includes all donors who made a financial gift or provided an in-kind donation for one of our events between January 1st and December 31st, 2020.

Special thanks to Tom Davidson,
the Smart Family Foundation of New York and the Stone Family