



iexplora!

Annual Report July 2011-June 2012



"Awesome! Best learning place ever!" - Visitor's Comment









The Explora Experience

"We were very delighted to find so many open-ended activities, and so many activities that were fun for grown-ups as well as kids."

- Visitor's Comment

"¡Nos encanta Explora! Elia, mi hija, ha crecido aquí. Gracias". - Visitor's Comment

- visitor's Comment

"I think it is the best place a human being can ever go!!" - Visitor's Comment

"This Explora night has been a great family building and bonding experience."

> - Family Science Night Participant's Comment

Explora is a new kind of learning place, providing real experiences with real things that put people's learning in their own hands. Explora is part science center, part children's museum, part freechoice school, part grandma's attic, part grandpa's garage, part laboratory, part neighborhood full of interesting people, and part of many people's lives.

Currently, Explora serves more than 234,000 people a year, and presents over 2,500 educational programs to more than 72,000 students from schools and other organizations. Since 2004 Explora has provided over 18,900 *Helping Hand* memberships at no cost to families whose children qualified for free or reduced-price school lunches. Explora has collaborated on projects with more than 50 other organizations, including local non-profits, science centers and children's museums from around the country, universities, libraries, senior centers, and city community centers.

Explora is a place where families can get to know each other better, learn together, and share new experiences of the basic processes and materials investigated and used by science, technology and art. Explora's exhibit activities engage people of all ages with small-scale materials and equipment in personal spaces where family and friends can communicate comfortably with each other, manipulate a wide range of physical variables, and develop their own thinking about what they are experiencing.

Community Involvement

Explora values the numerous collaborations fostered with local community organizations to create engaging learning experiences for people of all ages in science, art and technology. Explora strives to expand its existing partnerships as well as develop new ones. This year, one of our new partnerships was with the University of New Mexico Service Corps, in which university students worked alongside Explora educators to learn about our inquiry-based pedagogy and assisted with a number of programs, including after-school clubs.

Explora collaborated with other organizations in our community to provide programs and activities for: Celebra la Cienca at the New Mexico State Fair; Cuidando los Niños; KNME Science Café; The New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department's Adoption Exchange; Youth Development, Inc. (YDI); Growing Up Thinking Scientifically (GUTS); New Pathways; Bear Canyon Senior Center; Corrales Community Library; OASIS for lifelong learners over 50; ABQ-GED; and more. We also worked with 516 Arts and ISEA2012: Machine Wilderness, the International Symposium on Electronic Art, held in Albuquerque, in which artists in residence worked with Explora youth interns to create mural projects that combined traditional art with an augmentedreality phone application.

Explora hosted a number of organizations and special events,



including PNM Zia Solar Car Day; Explora Adult Nights with The Albuquerque Astronomical Society (TAAS) and the HAM radio operators; TAAS's Telescope Amnesty Day; Teacher Open House; KNME Science Crawl for middle school students; and events with the Museum Cooperative Council, United Way, and Life Roots. For Women and Creativity Month, Explora once again collaborated with the National Hispanic Cultural Center to provide weekend educational programs and theater programs. Explora also worked with the American Chemical Society and its local chapter to provide hands-on activities for National Chemistry Week.

One of Explora's core values is community. We make great efforts to provide opportunities for all New Mexicans, including lowincome families, to access quality learning experiences. This year, we provided over 3,200 no-cost *Helping Hand* family memberships to welcome these families into the Explora educational community.





"I really love Explora. It is one of my favorite places." - Visitor's Comment

"The WHOLE day was incredible!!" - Teacher's Comment



Explora Professional Development

Many teachers and early childhood care providers participated in Explora's professional development opportunities this year. Teachers in the Albuquerque Public Schools Indian Education Department, at Juan de Oñate Elementary in Gallup, at G.W. Stout Elementary in Silver City, at Santa Fe Community College, and at the Early Childhood Learning Center in Las Vegas all participated in workshops on teaching inquiry science. Explora educators also presented science education sessions at the National Conference on Common Core State Standards and at the Association of Science-Technology Centers annual conference.

Early childhood care providers looking for ways to fulfill required training hours now have a new option. This year Explora was certified by the UNM Continuing Education Cariño Training and Technical Assistance Program in three early childhood education competency areas: Learning Environment and Curriculum Implementation; Child Growth, Development and Learning; and Professionalism. Explora began offering science-rich workshops that fulfill 1.5 required early childhood

training hours. Each workshop takes an inquiry approach to learning and involves every participant in active exploration of physical materials that can be applied immediately in their classroom settings. The early childhood care providers investigated the nature of light in a program called "Crazy Light," discovered qualities of the forest through digging in the soil in "Ecology of the Forest," and explored art/science connections by using pigments to make their own paints in "Pigments of Your Imagination." One participant commented, "I've learned many new things that I can now pass on to the children I work with in science/art."

Another new venture this year was the Explora Teacher Professional Development Initiative, in partnership with Intel. Over spring break, teachers from all over the state attended a workshop at Explora, where they participated in "How to Put on a Science Fair" trainings and met local STEM stakeholders. This teacher professional development initiative provides New Mexico teachers with intensive training and follow-up mentoring to build their capacities for providing inquiry-based STEM experiences and to increase the number of underrepresented

"I loved how it was hands-on. Made it fun and gave me ideas to teach with the kids."

- Teacher's Comment

"Thank you Explora for being the highlight of my spring break! Every time I come I have a blast! "





"It was great! Sometimes you have to think outside the box."

- Teacher's Comment

"In a time of education in which much is being demanded of children, the science programs that Explora offers give the children an opportunity to interact with science materials that are insightful and motivating."

- Teacher's Comment



students with access to science fair competitions and similar learning experiences. One teacher wrote, "Great experience! It was really fun to learn about all the ways I can incorporate inquiry learning in my class—it really helped shift my paradigm on how I think about science and what I can do to make these experiences happen in my classroom." This project is ongoing, and long-term relationships are being built between participating teachers and Explora educators.

Explora was excited to continue its participation in the National Science Foundation-funded project, Girls RISE (Raising Interest in Science and Engineering) Museum *Network*. This project, led by the Miami Science Museum, builds a national alliance of science centers committed to strengthening the professional capacity of informal science educators to engage girls in science and engineering. Explora serves as a regional hub for the project, and Explora educators hosted a professional development workshop for science center professionals throughout our region. The workshop engaged these educators in program development that considers girls' prior experiences and cultures

in efforts to create programming that initiates and maintains girls' interest in science and engineering studies and careers.

Utilizing a 'train the trainers' approach, Explora worked with staff at Santa Fe Community College and the New Mexico Public Education Department. This professional development enabled college staff to train and mentor their students as they facilitated high-quality science and engineering activities in after-school programs for younger students.

Explora continued workshops for local scientists to prepare presentations and hands-on activities that demonstrate their work to visitors in Explora's Portal to the Public (PoP) project. PoP began as a NSF-funded three-year collaborative project in 2008, and Explora has continued this award-winning project locally, engaging Albuquerque-area scientists in face-to-face interactions with public audiences in unique and effective ways. Explora is grateful to our *PoP* scientists for taking the time to engage with our community about the science happening right here in New Mexico.





"...programs are high interest and engaging." - Teacher's Comment

Explora Serves New Mexico

Reaching out to schools and communities



"Explora brought both expertise and materials to the classroom. We got to do hands-on, age-appropriate, child-initiated science activities. It gave our students and their families access to an educational experience that isn't readily available because of the distance and cost of going to Albuquerque."

Education

This year school groups from all over the state participated in Explora's Exhibit Explorations and classroom programs, like "Play Ball!," in which students used flexible tracks and a variety of balls to make discoveries about the effect of mass on collisions and the ways to affect velocity, and "Water on the Move," in which students designed, built and tested aquifer models to track contaminants, water tables and well levels. Explora educators provided over 2,500 educational programs to more than 72,000 students this year and have served all 33 New Mexico counties and 95% of New Mexico's school districts. We saw groups from as far away as Grady, Las Cruces, Farmington, Dulce, Cimarron, Alamagordo, Zuni, the Navajo Nation, Abiquiu, Vanderwagen, Lumberton, Quemado and many more. Students even visited Explora from El Paso and Amarillo, Texas; Durango, Colorado; Ganado, Chinle and Window Rock, Arizona; and even Minto, Alaska!

When students couldn't get to us, we traveled to them. Explora provided outreach education programs to schools in Taos, Farmington, Gallup, Espanola, Roswell, Jemez, Kirtland, Silver City, Las Cruces, Grants and Santa Fe. Explora also facilitated activities at the Corrales Community Library, the Laguna Rainbow Center, Children's Day at the Mexican Consulate, the New Mexico State Fair, and the American Indian Science and Engineering Society Science Fair. Explora educators also served as judges at the Central NM Science and Engineering Research Challenge, a local Home School Science Fair, and the Manzano Day School Science Fair. Students from NM MESA's western region participated in Explora workshops on designing boats, bridges and cars in preparation for the statewide MESA Day competition.

- Teacher's Comment

Additionally, Explora continued to offer many popular semester-long programs, like Growing a Scientist[™] for preschoolers and their adult caregivers and *Science to Grow On*™ for students in kindergarten through third grade. Explora continued its Home School Explorations series for students in kindergarten through eighth grade and Robo Task Force for students in the third through seventh grade, and for the first time ever, Explora's robotics club entered the international RoboRAVE competition. Explora continued its commitment to providing full-length, science-themed plays with its production of Radium Girls by D. W. Gregory.

Explora collaborated with the APS Title I program to provide *Family Science Nights* at Explora for families attending Title I, Provision 2 schools. These special evenings provided students, teachers, principals and the students' extended families the opportunity to investigate Explora's exhibit activities in a safe, bilingual environment.







"A wonderful day of science for the class *and* myself. It gave me some great ideas!"

- Teacher's Comment

"Explora is a great place to visit. We include it on every trip to Albuquerque. Thank you for always making it a great experience!"

- Visitor's Comment

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Officers: Calendar Year 2012

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"¡Me encanta! I am happy that you guys are doing a great job!" - Visitor's Comment

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Youth Intern Program

Hundreds of young children and their families were directly affected this year by the work of Explora's thirty teen interns. The Youth Intern Program prepares high-achieving, low-income teens to educate elementary school children through programs in science, technology and art. After working with Explora educators to learn several Classroom Explorations, the youth interns provided these explorations to students in City of Albuquerque after-school programs, to students at Alice King Community School, and to family groups at Explora during the teens' weekend Adventures in Science programs. The teens also contributed to our community by facilitating activities at the Carnuel Parade and Fiesta, Cosmic Carnival, Lockheed Martin/Sandia National Labs' New Mexico Hydrogen Fuels Challenge, South Valley Pride Day, and the City of Albuquerque Summerfest.

An Explora staff member is assigned to every youth intern to serve as a mentor, supporting the student's job performance and helping the student enroll in higher education. Mentors accompanied interns on a trip to the Grand Canyon and Flagstaff, Arizona this year, where interns had their first camping experience and visited local universities and museums. The interns' work was celebrated this spring during a ceremony marking the passage of new interns into the program and of seniors graduating on to college.



"The *Youth Intern Program* let me meet new people...and I learned a lot of science I wouldn't have been able to learn in school. Being around children every time I work and teaching classes makes my day that much brighter. I've learned how to work with kids of all ages and have in mind being a teacher."

- Liz Nevarez, Youth Intern

"The *Youth Intern Program* allowed me to really get out of my comfort zone around people. I've had to force myself to interact in different ways. I've learned how to work with kids and how to facilitate well on the exhibit floor."

- Keaton Sheppard, Youth Intern

"The internship allowed me to gain actual work experience and polished my social skills through facilitation in the museum. At first I was nervous to walk around the museum and talk to people I didn't know, but now I've learned to communicate well with various kinds of people."

- Helen Yeap, Youth Intern

"What a wonderful place to spend an afternoon! Very kid-friendly. Can't wait to try some of these activities at home and school! Thank you." - Visitor's Comment

"Amazing as always. Very helpful and knowledgeable staff. Thank you!"



"Thank you for such a wonderful place to bring my grandchildren when they come visiting. You sure can't stay for just a couple of hours!" - Visitor's Comment

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Exhibits

"Es muy interesante y divertida la manera en que los niños pueden aprender a través de cada actividad. ¡Felicidades y muchas gracias!".

- Visitor's Comment







This past year, Explora opened a new exhibit area, *Math Moves/¡Movidas matemáticas!* This area was developed as part of a National Science Foundation-funded project, in which Explora collaborated with three science centers and two research organizations: the Science Museum of Minnesota, Museum of Life and Science in North Carolina, Museum of Science in Boston, the Center for Research in Mathematics and Science Education at San Diego State University, and Technical Education Resource Centers (TERC) in Massachusetts.

Math Moves/*¡Movidas matemáticas!* features exhibit activities that help visitors of all ages build experiential familiarity with the pre-algebra concepts of ratio and proportion. The exhibits offer opportunities for visitors to physically explore these math concepts with their bodies and senses. This personal exploration provides a physical understanding of math ideas on which visitors can build. Among these new exhibit activities, for example, visitors can use building blocks to scale shapes in three dimensions, compare a partner's linear motion on a graph, listen to the variation of clicking frequencies of spinning disks, use weights to test different ratios for balancing a number of objects, and much more.

As part of the NSF grant, over the next year and a half, researchers will conduct an ongoing evaluation of the *Math Moves/;Movidas matemáticas!* group of exhibits at the collaborating science centers in an effort to learn more about the exhibits' long-term effectiveness. With the help of selected visitors, researchers will investigate how middle school students, specifically, and their families interact with these math exhibits over time.

"Wow! As ASTC members we have been to lots of museums around the nation. This is the best one we've been to, by far! The ability to be creative in discovery makes it a step above! Thank you so much for the superb exhibits!"



"A very enjoyable place full of discovery and wonder. A lot learned from your exhibits. Thank you and job well done!" - Visitor's Comment

"We had a great family experience!" - Visitor's Comment



Explora strives to continue to refine and improve learning opportunities for visitors through evaluating exhibit activities at all phases, from the initial concept through prototyping and fabrication. Further research and evaluation often occurs after installation as well. Explora's in-house exhibit design and fabrication team members offer their early full-scale prototypes for testing by staff members, and further developed prototypes then undergo observed visitor and staff testing on the exhibit floor.

Explora exhibit developers were busy this year developing and prototyping exhibit activities for a new area called *Light, Shadow, Color/Luz, sombra, color.* Several of these exhibit activities opened in June 2012, and the full exhibit area opened in August 2012. These exhibit activities enable visitors to experiment with some of the unique properties of light. Visitors can mix colored lights and change the apparent colors of objects, explore fiber optics and transmit light around corners, investigate refracting light with different lenses, and experiment with moving shadows. These activities with light, optics, color and perception offer insight into principles of physics, math and biology.



"With some museums you go to, things are all too simple, and with others everything is too complex. Here things are just right, everything is intriguing!"





"Had a wonderful day with my dad and brother. We were blinded ... by science! Thanks for making a place for all of us."

- Visitor's Comment



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Rep. Conrad D. James

Rep. Larry A. Larrañaga



"Love it! The kids get to explore and use their imagination. It's so great. Thankful Explora is in our city."

- Visitor's Comment

"We love Explora! Thanks, NM." - Visitor's Comment

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iexplora!

Explora is a private nonprofit organization operating in a unique private/public partnership with the City of Albuquerque. Explora es una organización privada no lucrativa operando en asociación privada/pública única con la Ciudad de Albuquerque.

city of albuquerque

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"Que mis hijos se divierten mucho y les encanta este lugar. Y que ellos se van bien contentos para mi casa". - Visitor's Comment

> "Explora is the BEST!! We come from Denver every spring break to your museum. We have visited many science museums in the US and many other countries, but nothing comes close to what you offer here as far as the hands-on exhibits are concerned!! We love you!!"



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"It was great to see *all* students learning and having fun." - Teacher's

Comment



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"The children were very attentive and involved with the materials. They were very excited as new materials came out. Many wanted to be scientists when they grow up. Thank you. We really appreciate your outreach program. Many of our children would not have this opportunity without you coming to us."

- Teacher's Comment

Individual Donors

Explora is fortunate to have the support of many families and individuals both within and beyond New Mexico's borders. Our thanks to the following contributors for their financial support:

17 anonymous donors Betsy Adamson Natalie Adolphi and Andrew McDowell Steve Armbrecht Robert G. Armstrong Ron Beauchamp and Cecilia Navarrete Mary and Len Beavis Bidtah Becker and Paul Spruhan Connie and Roger Beimer Toni Belleranti Nancy and Cliff Blaugrund Ted and Pascale Blue Shirley and Christopher Brown Randy Burge Julie Canniff and Karl Smith Robyn and Scot Carpenter, in memory of Bill Reuler Donna Carroll Armelle Casau and Malcolm Carroll Sarah Chavez Elizabeth and Peter Chestnut Judy and Stephen Chreist Amy Coburn Poly and Sissy Cohen, in memory of Bill Reuler Amanda Miera Colburn and Brian Colburn Carol Conway Jim and Geri Cramer Iean Craven Dorothy C. Crist Karen and Fran Current Linda Dailleboust Mary Jo Daniel Linda M. Davis Ellis Dawson Duane and Margaret Dill Leonard and Patricia Duda Susan and Dan Dunne Nick and Sharee Estes David and Frankie Ewing Lisa and Claude Ferebee Jane and Michael Flax Russ, Peggy and Kitty Foos Kathryn and Terrance Frame Dee and Ruth Friesen Diego Gallegos and Teresa Archuleta Ruth Gannaway

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"This is a fabulously beautiful place for both children and adults. Thank you very much!" - Visitor's Comment

Memorials

Memorial funds and gifts support Explora's mission in memory of family and friends.

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Gift in memory of Aida Alva Gerdes Gifts in memory of Vidal Oaxaca Gifts in memory of **Bill Reuler** Gift in memory of Robbie Robledo



Galileo Society and da Vinci Society



New da Vinci Society members, Donna and Mike Mullane

"It showed us how exciting science can be and was a great spark for extended learning in our class." - Teacher's Comment



"I love it here so much I want to scream!" - Visitor's Comment The Galileo Society was established by the Board of Directors of Explora to recognize and honor those who make a significant financial contribution to Explora of \$25,000 or more.

The Galileo Society is named for Galileo Galilei, who was born in 1564, the same year as Shakespeare, and who died in 1642, the year Isaac Newton was born. Galileo, a mathematician, astronomer, physicist and philosopher, was the founder of modern experimental science. His contributions to science and understanding of the physical universe changed the world forever.

The Galileo Society recognizes those who help Explora bring scientific understanding to our community and its families.

Galileo Society

Louis and Stacy Abruzzo Adelmo "Del" and Rebecca Archuleta Don and Dianne Chalmers Kay Collins Jim and Geri Cramer Gertrude Dazzo Leonard and Patricia Duda Jane and Michael Flax Dee and Ruth Friesen Matt and Pauline Gubbels H. B. and Lucille Horn Drs. David and Kathy Hsi William and Jan Keleher Robert A. Levin Mike and Donna Mullane Bob and Betsy Murphy Deborah Peacock and Nathan Korn Elizabeth R. Ouinn Jack and Donna Rust Betty Sabo Paul Tatter Larry D. Willard

The da Vinci Society was established by the Board of Directors of Explora to recognize and honor those who make a significant financial contribution to Explora of \$100,000 or more.

The da Vinci Society is named for Leonardo da Vinci, who was born in 1452 and who became the icon of the Renaissance. Da Vinci, a scientist, engineer and artist, made contributions to sculpture, painting, anatomy, physiology, medicine, natural history, optics, acoustics, astronomy, botany, geology, hydraulics and mathematics.

The da Vinci Society recognizes those who help Explora bring the diversity of human experiences in science, technology and art to our community and its families.

da Vinci Society

Don and Dianne Chalmers Kay Collins Matt and Pauline Gubbels Mike and Donna Mullane Deborah Peacock and Nathan Korn Elizabeth R. Quinn



"It allowed students to put experience behind words. It's more meaningful. Thank you!"

- Teacher's Comment



"Awesome Awesome Awesome. There is so much to do. My wife and I had as much fun as the kids." - Visitor's Comment

"Explora is the BEST MUSEUM IN THE WORLD!!!" - Visitor's Comment

Statement of Finances

Explora dollar allocations for the fiscal year 2011-2012 from audited year-end financial reports.



Revenues

Earned Income*	\$1,616,783
Foundation Grants	\$125,840
Corporate Gifts and Grants	\$108,083
Contributions	\$85,396
Local, State and Federal Government	\$1,455,537
Total Revenue	\$3,391,639

*Includes program fees, admissions, memberships, rentals and store sales



Functional Expenses

\$396,063
\$1,195,132
\$1,095,910
\$796,566
\$3,483,671
(\$92,032)

Year-End Operating Cash and Cash Equivalents** \$463,290 **Includes temporarily and permanently restricted fund balances





"My family is currently on a year-long trip around the country. We have been to many museums between NJ and here! This has to be one of the best we have come across."

- Visitor's Comment

Volunteers

Volunteers are an integral part of Explora. Currently volunteers can be found in every work group, whether they are helping visitors enjoy the exhibits, assisting educators in the labs or taking part in theater explorations. Sometimes they work behind the scenes, providing support for facilities, exhibits, or the administrative and external relations offices.

This year 220 volunteers have donated 16,598 hours to Explora. Some of our volunteers are students from service learning programs at Central New Mexico Community College, the University of New Mexico, Colorado College, South Valley Academy, Amy Biehl High School, Rio Grande High School and other local high schools. Other volunteers include local scientists in the *Portal to the Public* program, and local actors in Explora theater productions.

Explora has active volunteers associated with Youth Development, Inc., the City of Albuquerque Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, ARCA, and the City of Albuquerque Job Mentor Program. Explora is very appreciative and proud to have such strong support from our community.

Volunteers

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