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2018-2019 Annual Report







EXPLORA ANNUAL REPORT JULY 1, 2018-JUNE 30, 2019

EXPLORA'S MISSION: Creating opportunities for inspirational discovery and the joy of lifelong learning through interactive experiences in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math.

OUR VALUES

Learning:

We advocate for self-directed, hands-on experiential learning as a foundation for innovation, creativity, and critical thinking.

Community:

We celebrate the diversity of the community in which we live and grow, and we create environments where all community members are welcomed and valued.

Generosity:

We practice and cultivate generosity through listening, respect, and the sharing of time, ideas, and resources.

Sustainability:

Organizational health enables us to act boldly for the long-term benefit of Explora, our community, and our partners.



Letter from the President and Executive Director of Explora



During 30 listening sessions with more than 300 people, we heard a consistent desire for safe, child-centered communities with high-quality early childhood education and plentiful jobs that create pathways out of poverty. Explora utilized this feedback to develop our Cradle through Career STEAM Learning Strategic Focus through which we engage, educate, and employ New Mexicans in STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math).

This year was a big one in terms of implementing this strategic focus, and we are thankful to the countless volunteers, partners, and donors who made our work possible. In fiscal year 2019 (July 1, 2018–June 30, 2019), Explora reached a record-breaking number of people and did more to improve educational and economic outcomes for New Mexico than ever before. We also made great strides in our capital campaign to develop a Cradle through Career STEAM Learning Campus. Phase One of the Campus is X Studio, an 8,000-square-foot STEAM education and workforce development center for teens and young adults. Our team has completed significant benchmarks in design development, program planning, and partnership building for X Studio, which will be Albuquerque's only dedicated teen center preparing students from historically underserved backgrounds for courses and careers in STEAM.

Explora will continue to listen to the community and the people we are honored to serve. The following pages illustrate why this approach has been so successful: it has increased the relevancy of our programs, improved our collaboration with partners, and enabled Explora to serve as a leader and convener on major initiatives. As we reflect on and celebrate these shared accomplishments, we are reminded that—as always—none of it would have been possible without you. Thank you for your steadfast support and for investing generously in New Mexico's future.

Alexis Kerschner Tappan

President

Joe Hastings Executive Director



At Explora, we know that it's never too early to engage young minds in science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM). STEAM learning in early childhood (0-5 years) primes children for success in school and in life. That's why we're committed to facilitating Early Childhood Education (EC) programs at **Explora and across New** Mexico, training EC educators statewide to expand partner capacity, and convening EC stakeholders to promote high-quality early childhood opportunities for all.



ENGAGING NEW MEXICO'S YOUTH FROM CRADLE THROUGH CAREER

Explora continued our work with fellow service agencies, caregivers, higher education institutions, and funding partners to make STEAM an integral component of high-quality early childhood education across New Mexico. Our efforts focused on making EC STEAM learning accessible and affordable for families statewide.

Program/Service Highlights:

- Our Growing a ScientistTM program engaged 808 preschoolers and their adult caregivers in science and engineering activities that incorporate art, literature, and fun. Our Science to Grow OnTM program engaged 1,885 children in grades K–3 and their adults in fun, hands-on STEAM discovery.
- Over 7,778 children and adults attended Monday morning Toddler Time at Explora.
- 1,110 students in grades K–5 attended our Home School Explorations classes, which offer a semester of weekly, hour-long experiential STEAM classes facilitated by Explora educators.
- Explora provided professional development for 70 librarians from over 40 libraries across New Mexico to build their capacities to provide STEAM programs integrated with literacy for young children and their families within their home communities.

Explora as a Leader and Convener:

- Explora organized and presented the **2018 Building Science Learning in Early Childhood STEM Summit** in Albuquerque on November 9-10. The Summit brought together 125 EC stakeholders and educators to learn and collaborate via an opening plenary and 12 breakout sessions. Participants commented: "I learned some great ways to extend and expand on lessons I already do," "Hearing people's stories and attending classes gave me a reinvigorated passion to teach!" and "Me gusto mucho las clases que nos dieros, proporcionando ideas para implementar en nuestras salones."
- Explora offered a 3-credit course in collaboration with CNM called Math and Science in the Early Childhood Classroom. 25 students completed the course, gaining ideas and strategies for engaging children in math and science in fun, hands-on, and materials-rich ways.
- In collaboration with NM PBS, Explora developed short television spots highlighting the importance of early engagement of children with STEM, encouraging adults to explore, experiment, and play with their children. This partnership was part of STEM Charging Stations for Young Children & Families, a collective impact project funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, focused on addressing the achievement gap between students from low-income, rural, or diverse communities and their more advantaged peers. We addressed this community condition in collaboration with Central New Mexico Community College (CNM), New Mexico State Library, the University of New Mexico Early Childhood Services Center Toy Lending & Resource Libraries, KNME NM PBS, Early Childhood Accountability Partnership, and a number of smaller community groups and organizations.







BUILDING THE WORKFORCE OF TOMORROW, TODAY!

FY2019 was a period of exciting growth for Explora as we continued our journey to build X Studio, New Mexico's first STEAM education and workforce development center for teens. We leaned in to conversations with many amazing young people, gained invaluable insights, and found inspiration to power our capital campaign.

Service Highlights:

- Explora's Youth Intern Program employed 26 high school students from economically-disadvantaged backgrounds. Boosting Explora's capacity in almost every area of our service delivery, interns engaged 21,767 learners through exhibits, camps, classroom programs, and educational outreach across Albuquerque. In turn, Explora supports interns with professional development, mentoring, skill-building opportunities, and stipends as they grow to be confident young leaders.
- The Youth Apprentice Program served 24 middle school students, equipping them with 21st-century workforce skills through a three-week program centered around Making. Students learned 3D modeling and how to use a laser cutter, and practiced their entrepreneurism by building and demonstrating prototype products that will change the world.



Collaborative Efforts:

- Explora partnered with two local Café Scientifique sites to host seven **Teen Science Cafe** events, where local STEAM professionals engaged 188 teens with hands-on demos and provided STEAM career connections.
- VanDyke Software has partnered with Explora for the past five years to engage 15 middle school students per year in programming, game design, computer engineering, and more during Programmable Pi summer camp. Each camper receives a free Raspberry Pi device (a computer the size of a credit card), which they learn to use in camp and take home to continue creating.
- Sandia National Laboratories funding enabled 15 girls to code, design, and build using micro:bit controllers during the two-day **Tech Girls! camp.** Students learned about technology and programming and cultivated essential skills, like problem-solving, communication, and teamwork.
- UNM Brain and Behavioral Health Institute's professors and graduate students partner with Explora staff each month to offer Frontiers for Young Minds.
 More than 125 students engaged with these important mentors while learning about neuroscience and participating in a peer review process for real neuroscience research papers!

Explora as a Leader and Convener:

- AFRL-NM and Explora are collaborating to increase teacher capacity in computer science education and coding, support teachers as they incorporate Next Generation Science Standards into their practice, and prepare youth for jobs in STEM fields. As part of this work, Explora provided **professional development** for 123 teachers, enabling them to provide computer science instruction for 3,896 students across New Mexico.
- In partnership with the City of Albuquerque, Explora presented our first-ever **Teen Night** on June 28, 2019. Over 550 youth, ages 12-19, engaged with our exhibits and special attractions created just for them, including an escape room and a science lounge, where teens could chat with STEM professionals and learn about STEM careers.



NARROWING THE OPPORTUNITY GAP FOR NEW MEXICO'S YOUTH

In FY2019, Explora engaged more students from historically underserved backgrounds and communities than ever before. In the process, we learned that relationship-building among partners is of critical importance when attempting to catalyze community change. As we collaborate with more allies each year, learning and doing together, Explora continues this vital work toward changing the face and landscape of STEAM learning in New Mexico.

Service Highlights:

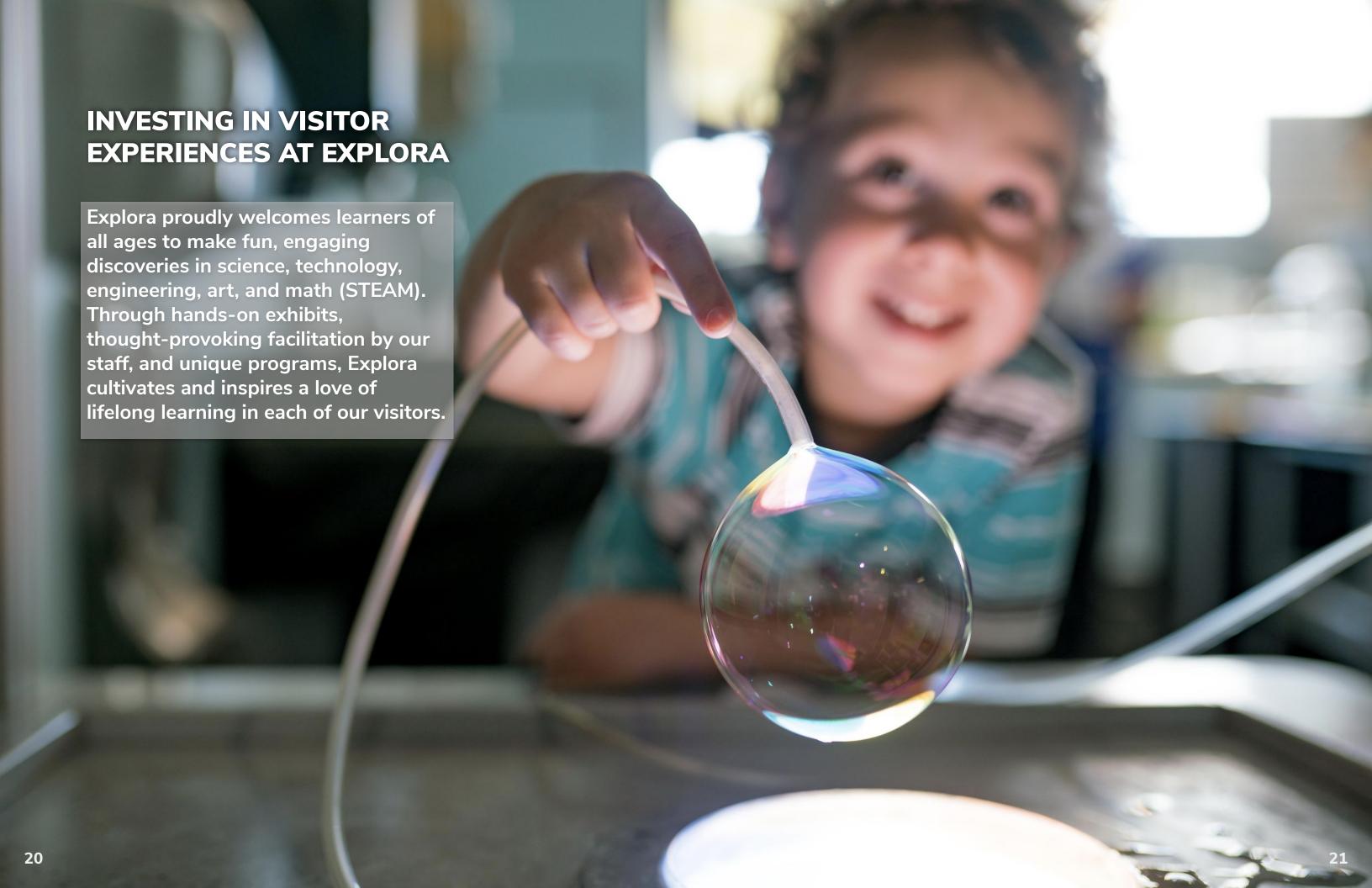
- Explora engaged 52,082 children and adults in **statewide outreach**, an increase of over 16,000 from the previous year!
- With donor support, Explora offered **scholarships** for 88 low-income students to attend seasonal camps, both on- and off-site.
- Explora worked with 108 community partners to provide 29,828 no-cost memberships to families in financial need. Our Community Partner Membership Program makes Explora's science-rich learning exhibits and programs truly accessible for low-income families.
- In collaboration with Albuquerque Public Schools Title I Program, Explora engaged students, families, and entire school communities through our Family Science Night program. 17,192 attendees engaged in hands-on, intergenerational STEAM learning!
- Approximately 3,000 children and their families participated in the 2019 New Mexico Science Fiesta, a week-long celebration of science from June 22–29. Organized by Explora and STEM-NM in collaboration with the region's science, cultural, and educational organizations, the Fourth Annual NM Science Fiesta kicked off with our popular Science Fiesta Expo at the state fairgrounds and featured free community events and classroom connections. As part of the festivities, Explora provided training and activity kits for staff at 23 City of Albuquerque Community Centers and 21 Early Learning Centers, reaching 1,198 students.

Collaborative Efforts:

- With the support of Navajo Transitional Energy Company, Explora educators facilitated programs on the eastern Navajo reservation for over 1,300 caregivers, teachers, and students of all ages. A principal at one of the rural Bureau of Indian Education schools emailed after the program: "Please send Explora our way again for fall and spring semester of FY18-19 at NO COST to our school, since we don't have much funding to expend."
- In partnerships with the Village of Los Ranchos and local agriculture professionals and with scholarship support from Lavender in Village, Explora offered Farm Camps for 86 students in grades K-5. Camps explored topics such as pollinators, seeds, plants, soil, and farm-to-table. One parent wrote: "...having this option of a farm camp this close to town is GREAT! It allows my child to have an opportunity to get closer to nature and learn to appreciate all that we get from plants. I'm planning on having his younger sister try it out next year."







ENGAGING LEARNERS OF ALL AGES WITH HANDS-ON STEAM EXPERIENCES

Explora engaged 387,937 people during FY2019—more people than ever—through a combination of outreach across New Mexico and, of course, visits to our home base in Albuquerque. We had a banner year introducing new STEAM-focused exhibitions, updating some of our most popular exhibits, and offering new public programs to members and visitors alike.





Service Highlights:

- On December 15, 2018, Explora celebrated our **15th anniversary** on Mountain Road. Visitors enjoyed a display of vintage Explora photos, fun hands-on activities, and cake and commemorative souvenirs.
- Explora's **AIRWORKS** exhibition opened on March 2, 2019, introducing new exhibits on moving air and additional experiences showcasing the amazing powers of air.
- Annual members and donors to Explora are the bedrock of our museum.
 One of the perks we offer them are unique, specially-curated
 Member/Donor Preview events. These exclusive gatherings gave our treasured supporters opportunities to engage with AIRWORKS, Bounce, and Studio Inventivo before the general public.

Collaborative Efforts:

- Explora created our popular Adult Night event series in 2004 in response to requests from community members who wanted to experience Explora in a whole new way: without the kids! In FY2019, we hosted some of our most well-attended Adult Nights ever, featuring talks and demos from partners such as Animal Humane of New Mexico, ABQ BioPark, and Main Event, in addition to great food and live music.
- On May 18, 2019, Explora welcomed visitors to experience Bounce, a traveling exhibit visiting from Don Harrington Discovery Center in Amarillo, Texas. By playing with circles, curves, and spheres, guests of all ages discovered concepts of geometry, optics, sound, force, motion, inertia, and more. In exchange, the residents of Amarillo hosted and enjoyed Explora's classic sound and music exhibits.

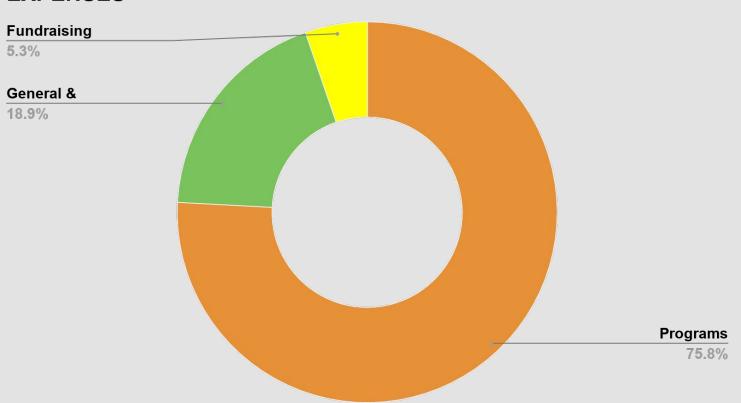
Explora as a Leader and Convener:

 Explora's Studio Inventivo STEAM Room Makerspace opened June 15, 2019, featuring exciting additions like a 3D printer, laser cutter, sewing machines, light table, and basic hand tools. Studio Inventivo encourages people of all ages to become tinkerers and inventors with accessible tools, technology, and materials that support active exploration of the intersections of science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM).

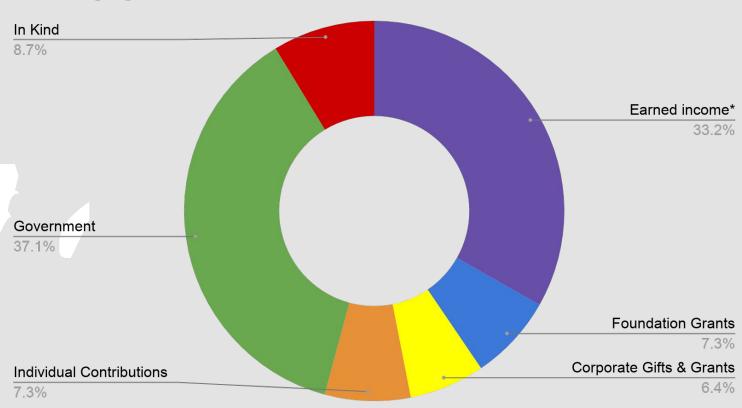
Organizational Strength: By the numbers, July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019

Explora's dollar allocations for fiscal year 2018-2019 from audited year-end reports

EXPENSES



REVENUES



Organizational Statistics: By the numbers July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019

- 387,937 people experienced Explora, an increase of over 64,748 from the previous year
- 3,086 adults attended Explora's Adult Night events
- 6,210 birthday parties celebrated at Explora
- 15,621 hours of service contributed by 217 volunteers
- 52,082 people served through statewide educational outreach
- 2,945 New Mexico educators received professional development experiences
- 19,934 students visited Explora on field trips
- 33,529 families with Explora memberships
- 17,192 attendees at Family Science Nights
- 29,828 no-cost family memberships issued through 108 community partner organizations
- 2,467 students, grades K-8, engaged through Explora's home school program
- 6,172 Explora camps attended by pre-K through high school students

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