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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Explora honored to receive W.K. Kellogg Foundation funding for important work around racial healing and early childhood STEAM education**

In support of Explora's ongoing efforts to provide long-term community solutions that provide infants, children, and families across the state with quality early childhood education and care, STEAM engagement, and opportunities for conversations around racial healing, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation has awarded Explora two grants for a total of \$300,000.

A portion of the grant funding will support a series of events in celebration of the 8th Annual National Day of Racial Healing (NDORH), to be held in January 2024 at Explora and at partner sites throughout the community. Racial healing facilitates trust, builds authentic relationships, and bridges divides. It is at the heart of racial equity, work that leads to community, organizational, and systems transformation. Explora was honored to host activities for the 7th Annual NDORH last January 2023, including a teen summit on racial healing in the brand-new X Studio and an open community event with plenty of festivities. This year's NDORH promises bigger and broader programming, with additional discussion groups, work with teens, and partnerships throughout the community.

The remaining funding will support Explora's culturally-centered Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) programming at schools in Albuquerque's International District and South Broadway neighborhoods and early childhood STEAM work in connection with the planning and implementation of Brillante Early Learning Center, phase two of Explora's Cradle through Career STEAM Learning Strategic Focus. This work will include a pilot Pre-K classroom at Explora, provision of direct childcare services in partnership with Central New Mexico Community College, professional development for classroom teachers in STEAM education, and other vital support for childcare providers and early childhood educators throughout New Mexico. Explora's Co-Executive Director, Kristin Leigh, said: "Explora has relied on community listening and co-creation to develop relevant strategic

initiatives that can improve educational and economic outcomes for New Mexico students and families. We are so honored to partner with the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in support of the teens at X Studio, young children and caregivers at Brillante Early Learning Center, and the students at our partner schools in the International District and South Broadway neighborhoods. We are so excited about how this funding will help us lift up youth voices to create change and healing and develop new cradle-through-career programs STEAM programs that support the next generation of scientists, engineers, and creative thinkers.”

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), founded in 1930 as an independent, private foundation by breakfast cereal innovator and entrepreneur, Will Keith Kellogg, is among the largest philanthropic foundations in the United States. Guided by the belief that all children should have an equal opportunity to thrive, WKKF works with communities to create conditions for vulnerable children, so they can realize their full potential in school, work, and life. The Kellogg Foundation is based in Battle Creek, Michigan, and works throughout the United States and internationally, as well as with sovereign tribes. Special attention is paid to priority places where there are high concentrations of poverty and where children face significant barriers to success. WKKF priority places in the U.S. are in Michigan, Mississippi, New Mexico, and New Orleans; and internationally, are in Mexico and Haiti. For more information, visit [www.wkkf.org](http://www.wkkf.org).

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About Explora: Explora is a science center and children’s museum in Albuquerque, with the mission of inspiring discovery and the joy of lifelong learning through interactive experiences in science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM). Explora serves thousands of people each year and is dedicated to improving New Mexico’s educational and economic outcomes. The museum has 20,000 square feet of exhibit space on two floors, containing over 250 interactive exhibits that cover a broad range of science, technology, and art. In addition, the museum houses a performance theater, gift store, café, multiple educational program areas, an in-house exhibit workshop, and staff offices. Explora offers year-round, educational, in-house and outreach programs; science-based Adult Nights; and various community partnership events. Recently, Explora unveiled its new X Studio: an 8,000-square-foot teen center where kids can hang out, experiment, create, and discover pathways to great jobs. X Studio unifies teens and their dreams using cutting-edge tools, technologies, and mentors—all with a focus on STEAM, bridging vision with New Mexico’s needs for the future.