Putnam Museum and Science Center
2019 - 2020
Annual Report
Putnam Museum and Science Center Renewal, Reflection, and Reimagining

This annual report comes to you with a renewed sense of passion and purpose at the Putnam Museum & Science Center. It is a complex time around the world, across our community, and in our beloved museum. These challenges require reflection on the impact that we each have on the world as individuals, as well as the role and responsibility of our institutions. We are engaged in an exciting process of reimagining the Putnam Museum experience for our visitors and many participants, as well as the impact we are meant to have on our community. When we look back on another year of compelling exhibitions, dynamic activities, and engaging educational offerings, “Connection” stands out as a common theme that will also guide our future path. It is the heart of our mission to Preserve, Educate and Connect.

The museum's connection to and preservation of the past remains steadfast as we plan for what's next. It is our proud heritage that gives us confidence in our future. We are committed to innovating and transforming the museum while preserving current offerings that evoke the greatest joy for participants and provide the most impact on our community. This past year our exhibits drew large crowds, served as inspiration for more meaningful educational experiences for all ages, and gave new insight into our glorious collection. Our fan-favorite galleries offer diverse appeal, from exhibits on our local ecology and history to galleries featuring treasures in our collection from around the world. An engaging and ever-changing series of Putnam-original exhibits broadens access to some of the quarter million intriguing objects in our collection. Virtual, online, and “portable” programs carry the Putnam’s mission around the world and serve the changing needs of our community during turbulent times.

As a charitable organization, the museum relies heavily on the generosity of grantors, donors, and supporters, including more than 2,200 memberships and nearly a hundred volunteers, to continue our mission to preserve our history in order to educate and connect people of all ages in their love of history, culture, and science. Support for our museum remains strong and passionate. Now more than ever, the Putnam Museum & Science Center is grateful for the dedication of our trustees, staff, volunteers, funders and donors, who together make the Putnam Museum and Science Center a leading cultural institution in our community.

With sincere gratitude,

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THANK YOU for supporting our events, exhibits and films.

Exhibits:

The Dragon and The Rising Sun
A comparison of the objects and design of Japanese Tokugawa Shogunate and Imperial China.

Rube Goldberg: The Hilarious World of Invention
Family fun with fantastical, over-engineered machines.

OMg! Elements of Surprise
The weird and wonderful periodic table!

Liberated Voices: Changed Lives
The Quad Cites’ unique suffrage story 100 years after the 19th Amendment recognized women’s right to vote.

Events:

Decadence on Division Gala
Polar PJ Parties
Dino Days
Monarch Workshop
Animuseum
National Chemistry Day
Lunar Landing Party

Films:

Apollo 11
50th Anniversary of the 1969 Lunar Landing

Back from the Brink:
Saved from Extinction

Haunt
Movie by local filmmakers Beck and Woods

Polar Express

Sensory Friendly Film Series in partnership with the Autism Society of the Quad Cities.

“A Bridge Too Far from Hero Street” by Fourth Wall Films
**Youth Programs**

**Creation of Virtual Content for Kids and Families**
- Four streamable learning programs
- 10 chemistry video demos thanks to Arconic Foundation
- Videos and backpack science projects with our community partner, Spring Forward, which served more than 300 students per week for six weeks
- Behind-the-scenes videos in our Collections with our Curators
- Learn United video partnership with the United Way of the Quad Cities and KWQC, in partnership with the Figge Art Museum and QC Botanical Gardens.

**Annually, in-museum, regional outreach programs and virtual offerings serve 4 states, 13 school districts, and over 50,000 youth.**

**Additional Programs**
- OMG! Demonstrations
- Summer Camps
- Putnam Explorers
- Storytime
- LEAD Enrichment
- Stepping Stones Enrichment
- Introduce a Girl to Engineering
- Battle of the Bridges partnership with Quad City Engineering and Science Council

**Events**
- FIRST Lego League partnership with Quad City Engineering and Science Council and volunteers of John Deere and Iowa State Engineering, hosting 2000 visitors and competitors for a museum-wide robotics marathon.
- Rube Goldberg Family Competition: “Rube’s Ringing in the New Year” was held for families to over-engineer silly machines to do one simple task of ringing a bell.
IMMERSE empowers teachers, primarily from Title I schools, to weave our vast assets - from our 250,000-item collection to our exhibit halls to programming from our education team and curators - into school curricula. Teachers then develop lesson plans and bring their students to the Putnam for a week of turbo-charged learning that jump-starts interest in science, math, history, reading and other subjects. 600+ students were served in this week-long in-residence experience at the Putnam.

"As always, this was a rich and wildly engaging experience for my students. I felt they were excited about learning, and more confident to try rigorous activities here at the museum."
– Community Teacher

"I want this to happen all the time!!!!!!!"
– Immerse Student

"I think you should let us come two weeks to learn more."
– Immerse Student
Yearbook

Decadence Gala

Storytime

Rube Goldberg

Youth in Black Earth Big River Exhibit

Animuseum

FIRST Lego League

Dino Days

Battle of the Bridges
A Historic Year

The Putnam is passionate about exploring and lifting the shared human experience. The year 2020 has become one of those moments in time that will always connect us as human beings around the world. In mid-March, for the first time in its history, the Putnam Museum closed its doors to the public for nearly four months due to the pandemic. Immediate steps were taken to adapt the role of the museum and to adjust our programs to serve the changing needs of the community.

Virtual Tours and Activities for Home

The closing of the museum facility required reflection and reimagining how we connect with those who love the Putnam but couldn’t physically be here with us. We began a weekly e-newsletter to keep our members and supporters informed, and we reshaped our website as a learning portal. New virtual learning tools were put online and promoted through social media that gave a look behind-the-scenes of our cherished collection, virtual tours of our exhibits, and at-home science experiments and projects.
Contemporary History Project

This extraordinary time in our history will be talked about for generations to come. As the Quad Cities' Smithsonian Institution Affiliate, we launched a Contemporary History Project asking our community to document the challenges of 2020 with objects, images, and stories that reflect the shared and personal experiences of the Quad Cities during this time. One of these stories is a personal one for the Putnam. We are commemorating the life of Mary Ann Otte, with the family selecting items to place in the collection. Mary Ann was a long-time volunteer with the Putnam Museum Guild and was the first life lost to the pandemic in Scott County. The Guild worked over this past summer creating nearly 1000 masks for our local front-line health care workers. Thank you to our Putnam Guild members and the family of Mary Ann Otte for your love of the Putnam and our community.

Youth Journal

Our kids also have a story that other Quad City kids will want to hear many years from now. This year, the Putnam created a downloadable journal for kids to document their experiences through some reflective and engaging activities. The journal is a partnership with Vera French Community Mental Health who provided expertise on trauma-informed questions and activities and advice to users on how to talk about the impact of COVID-19 on families and in our community. The journal can be found at: www.putnam.org/learningexperiences.
Community Support

The Putnam Museum & Science Center has more than 2,200 memberships and served an audience of 103,404 youth and adults this past year. We thank our many donors and patrons for their generous contributions over the past year. In Fiscal Year 2020, our work was made possible through:

$274,352 in monetary gifts
$561,605 | Earned Revenue
$1,185,715 | Government funding, grants and trusts
$82,462 of In-Kind Donations

Volunteers

81 | 2,653 Hours
$26,532 | Value of Volunteer Time
Contributors

THANK YOU for supporting the Putnam Museum & Science Center!

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