



**Children's Museum**  
of Southern Minnesota

224 Lamm Street  
Mankato, MN 56001  
cmsouthernmn.org  
507.386.0279

## HF68I TESTIMONY 3.24.21

Incorporated in 2006. Opened in 2015.

100,000 Visitors per Year (see lower left map below)

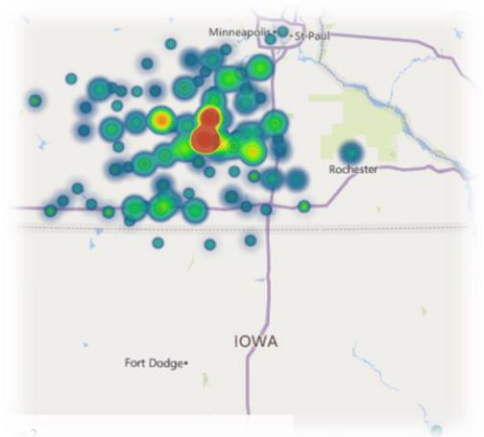
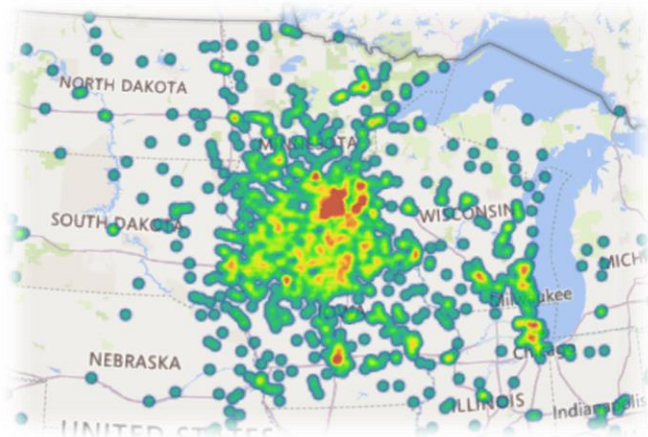
- 75 of 87 Minnesota Counties
- 49 States and Six Countries

### Access Programs

- Gateway to Play Memberships for families in need
  - 2020 Total = 668 GTP Memberships, 33% of total
  - 50 Community/Regional partners identify families
- School Group Visits – 8 to 9,000 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students (lower right map)
  - Education programming meets the Minnesota Academic Standards
- Military Appreciation Events
- Special Needs Play Time Events

### Education Focus areas

- Ag & Nature
- STEaM
- Health & Wellness
- Manufacturing
- Dakota Language and Cultural Heritage



PLAY. It's what we do.



**Children's Museum**  
of Southern Minnesota

224 Lamm Street  
Mankato, MN 56001  
cmsouthernmn.org  
507.386.0279

## 2021 CMSM ACCESS AND DEAIB INITIATIVE GOALS

### Diversity - Equity - Accessibility - Inclusion - Belonging

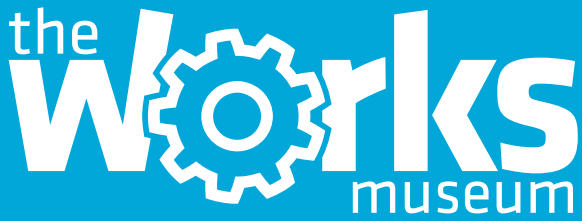
1. Gateway to Play Memberships: Goal = 480
2. Access Admissions: Goal = 1,000 (10% of all Museum admissions)
  - a. Including Free Family Passes, Blue Star and Military initiatives, Brother/Sister Program
3. Value of Access Memberships and Admissions in 2021
  - a. Access Memberships: 480 x \$108 = \$51,840
  - b. Access Admissions: 1,000 x \$9 = \$9,000
4. Gateway to Play Outreach Community Partners: 50 Total
  - a. Addition of 12 organizations to current listing of 38 active partners
5. Goals associated with demographic audience engagement via Gateway to Play Memberships and other \*DEAIB Initiatives:

Racial or Ethnic Identification	MN Kids Count Data	MAPS Demographics	CMSM Goals
White - Non-Hispanic	67%	73%	70%
Black/African American	10%	14%	14%
Hispanic/Latino	9%	6%	7%
Asian/Pacific Islander	6%	2%	3%
American Indian	1%	<1%	1%
Multi		5%	4%
Families where a second language is spoken in their home.		7%	7%
Students enrolled in Special Education	19%	15%	18%

*\*In addition to CMSM visitor and community engagement, the lens and application of DEAIB values encompass all dimensions of Museum operation:*

- Foundational – Vision & Values, Leadership, Governance, Resources
- Internal – People and Operations (HR), Vendor Diversity
- Public-Facing – Community Engagement, Services/Exhibits/Programming, Communications
- Evaluation – Data collected and used to inform DEIB practice and assess performance

**PLAY.** It's what we do.



**Gateway:** Our access program serving low-income children and families

## Gateway inspires.

Recently a school with more than 40% low-income students visited The Works Museum. The students were mesmerized by our K'Nex Ball Machine, a jaw-dropping example of engineering. One student announced, "It makes me want to go home and make something!" All kids deserve this kind of inspiration. That's why we created the Gateway program.

## Gateway is about accessibility.

Gateway helps children and families participating in state or federal assistance programs, and the schools serving those students, engage in The Works Museum's unique engineering learning experiences through discounted or free admission, field trips, and camps. In 2019, more than 26% of our 43,000 school visitors attended schools with significant low-income populations. These aren't just inner-city schools; many suburban districts and schools across greater Minnesota also serve high populations of families with economic need. Gateway helps to ensure that all Minnesota children have access to engaging, career-inspiring hands-on STEM learning experiences.

## Gateway is critical for kids.

Kids are naturally curious, but their interest needs to be nurtured to grow. Kids in low-income households often lack access to high-quality STEM learning, and we're seeing the impact in STEM achievement. Only 50% of low-income high school graduates in Minnesota are ready for college coursework in science and math, compared to nearly 75% of their higher-income peers.

Hands-on, group-based programs like ours increase student interest in STEM and build confidence and classroom achievement. We help kids stay excited about STEM subjects and build critical skills for their futures.



**"All kids deserve this kind of inspiration."**

# Gateway is more important than ever.

COVID-19 and the resulting academic disruption is broadly impacting education outcomes, disproportionately impacting students at under-resourced schools. The school you attend, and the resources available to your school and family affect your learning experiences and outcomes. A 'COVID slide' is projected from COVID closures for students, especially in STEM subjects including mathematics\*, and the risk is even greater for students already impacted by the STEM opportunity gap. Teachers report that at-risk students are being left further behind in the shifting education models.

The need is especially great for the under-resourced schools that rely on our Engineering for All Gateway subsidies. Schools have faced unexpected costs related to the pandemic, leaving even fewer resources available for STEM enrichment. For under-resourced schools, our free and discounted programs may be the only way they can offer experiences to their students.

# Gateway impacts more than jobs.

Engineers, scientists, and other STEM professionals are central to our on-going fight against the coronavirus pandemic, and as we look to the future, we know water scarcity, renewable energy, and chronic disease are just a few of the problems that need all our best minds. We can't afford to lose future problem-solvers in elementary school because they don't have the opportunity to be inspired to dream of STEM career opportunities.

# Gateway needs your help.

We can't do this work alone. Your support is critical to reach more low-income students and families in our community with engaging engineering learning opportunities. Donations to Gateway directly provide access for students, families, and campers who otherwise would not be able to participate in our programs. Please consider making a gift to the Gateway fund at The Works Museum.

*\*Source: Collaborative for Student Growth, April 2020.*



**Inspire. Provide access. Build the future. Support Gateway.**

Gateway is generously supported by Donaldson



*For more information about supporting Gateway, please contact Sarah Curtis, at 952.888.4262, ext. 221 or [sarah@theworks.org](mailto:sarah@theworks.org).*



With a mission to inspire the next generation of innovators, engineers, and creative problem solvers, The Works Museum provides essential science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education to elementary school students across Minnesota. Our unique learning environment inspires children to explore engineering and pursue STEM subjects throughout their educational careers. We give children opportunities to design, create, build, and innovate.

**The Works Museum is guided by our core values of:**

- Creating engineering experiences for all children
- Fueling the innate curiosity and creativity in each child
- Transforming elementary engineering education and its approach to STEM learning
- Fostering a culture of innovation in everything we do



Through our high quality educational programs, engaging visitor experiences, and innovative programming, we deliver critical education to our community.



**To achieve these results, The Works Museum serves elementary students, families, and teachers:**

- School groups enjoy field trip and in-school programs that foster interest in science and engineering, support academic success, and complement the *Minnesota K – 12 Academic Standards in Science*.
- Families experience hands-on activities and engineering design challenges in our galleries and through camps and special events that spark interest in science and engineering.
- Educators receive our expert professional development in elementary engineering. We work with educators statewide to provide training and integrate engineering into their curriculum.
- Through our new virtual workshops and family programming, we can reach even more students statewide by eliminating a geographic barrier.

# The Works Museum. Engineering Fun!

## WHY OUR WORK MATTERS

Many local and national groups do excellent work with middle and high school youth. But few concentrate on the K-6 audience. These facts highlight why The Works Museum chooses to focus on elementary students. They are a critical, and underserved, audience in need of engaging informal STEM education programs.

The Works Museum is an essential component of the community pathway preparing today's children for tomorrow's high-tech jobs. According to Wilder Research and the U.S. Department of Education:

- Only 10% of Minnesota high school students plan on a STEM major in college.
- Between fourth and eighth grade, student-reported interest in STEM drops from 57% to 30%.
- In the state of Minnesota, 28% of all new jobs are projected to be in STEM occupations between 2014-2024.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Data (2015) compiled by Minnesota Compass, MNcompass.org.



**“Year after year, The Works Museum allows our learners to extend their learning in ways that we are unable to provide.”**

*- Clover Ridge Elementary educator*

Annually we serve over 75,000 visitors and over 1,500 campers. While our 2020 numbers are lower due to COVID-19 closures, we've met demand for programs to serve schools and families through converting workshops for virtual delivery and developing new virtual camps and at home engineering programs for families. As schools reopen and families prepare for a new normal in summer 2021, we are ready to meet their needs.

Along with inspiring engineering interest, The Works Museum cultivates persistence and problem-solving skills that all students need to thrive. Regardless of career, employers repeatedly request these abilities in their workforce and engineering education is one of the best ways to build these essential skills.



**Help us inspire the next generation of innovators, engineers, and creative problem solvers.**



For more information about supporting The Works Museum, please contact Sarah Curtis at 952.888.4262, ext. 221