

**How did The Works “make it work” in 2020?
Read about our behind-the-scenes operations
during the pandemic below.**

**Thank you to our members, friends, supporters & fans for
engaging with us during a challenging year!**



The Works During 2020: SURVIVING THE PANDEMIC & COMING OUT STRONGER

The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic caused many organizations and businesses to go into survival-mode. The sudden cancelation of in-person programs and events deemed unessential meant that organizations had to quickly adapt. Most struggled; some didn't survive. And this threat lingered in the minds of organization leaders. This also presented a challenge for museums and cultural organizations, many depending significantly on admission funds.

The Works: Ohio Center for History, Art, & Technology felt this impact. With The Works' focus on interactive exhibits and programming, maintaining that focus while distanced was a hurdle. Thankfully, The Works' staff and supporters responded to these challenges in a way that not only kept the museum on its feet but has also built strength and resilience for moving forward.

FACING THE PANDEMIC

At the start of the pandemic, The Works had to establish a plan to continue to provide education while keeping the museum afloat. The first move that ensured The Works' programming and events could continue was bringing The Works to families virtually. Works' Executive Director Marcia Downes, explained, **“Switching everything to virtual was key to our survival.”**

Virtual programs like History@Home, SciDome@Home, and Curious Kids@Home became successful by offering fun learning experiences that people of all ages could enjoy. And transitioning events to virtual kept Summer Camps and other programs going. “Everybody put their brains to work on how we could still deliver content to our audience, even though we couldn't be open,” said Works Managing Director Janice LoRaso. The Works' goal was to bring a piece of the museum to the homes of members and fans.

Katherine Chisolm, the Museum Experience Coordinator, recognized firsthand the importance of this virtual transition and maintaining an online presence, “Things changed so quickly. We wanted to stay up-to-date, we wanted to keep going, and we wanted to keep providing programming.” Despite the pandemic, The Works still managed to create 19 new programs in 2020 and the programs in total engaged 18,380 people!

However, even with virtual programming, The Works still wanted to find a way to continue providing hands-on activities. “In an instant we had to shift our thinking and efforts to new ideas,” said Sarah Pickering, Director of Marketing & Communications. “Our education team jumped in with these amazing plans to reach families. We created a fresh framework to offer hands-on activities for kids at home.” This led to the creation of kits that focused on STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and art: packages constructed by

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2020 Financial Information

OPERATING REVENUE:

Memberships	\$ 31,414
Grants, Donations & Program Fees	\$ 828,008
Net Investment Income	\$ 54,233
Event Fundraising	\$ 134,500
Fund Transfers	\$ 948,822
Total Operating Revenue:	\$ 1,996,978

OPERATING EXPENSES:

Program Expenses	\$ 1,342,593
Management, General & Support	\$ 258,881
Event Fundraising	\$ 49,812
Total Operating Expenses:	\$ 1,651,286

NON-OPERATING EXPENSES:

Net Capital Projects & Rentals	\$ 420,509
Depreciations & Amortization	\$ (406,512)
Fund Transfers	\$(948,822)
Net Endowment Investment Income	\$ 3,256,131
Total Non-Operating Activity:	\$ 2,321,306

***The Works: Ohio Center for History, Art & Technology is a non-profit organization under IRC Section 501(c)(3): EIN 31-1395941. To learn more about investing in the future of The Works and the community we serve, please contact Marcia Downes, Executive Director, at (740) 349-9277 or marciadownes@attheworks.org.*

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staff at The Works and filled with all of the materials a student would need to conduct specific lab experiments.

Many families struggled to cover their basic necessities during the pandemic, causing non-immediate needs to take a back seat.

“There was a recognition of need in the community,” said Meghan Federer, STEM Education Director. “Even while everything is halted, there is still a need for those important moments where kids and their families can enjoy time together while learning.” The Works STEM kits, along with art kits, addressed that need and ensured that the learning was as convenient, accessible, and affordable as possible. “We wanted to ensure that we were providing for every family and not just the ones that could approach us,” said Meghan. The Works ensured this by working with libraries, after school programs, and Licking County Job and Family Services in order to hit every sector of the community.

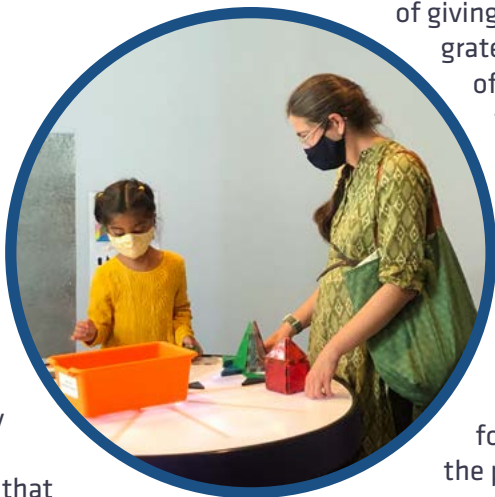
Overall, The Works’ staff traveled a total of 2,175 miles to provide the community with a total of 6,750 STEM and art kits. “The best part is seeing a child’s face light up – even behind a mask – because they have just been handed a kit full of fun activities,” said Sarah, Marketing Director.

“It’s such a gift to experience the impact first-hand and know kids are full of excitement about learning.”

Initially delivering STEM kits from the cars of staff members, The Works team hoped to eventually find a better delivery method. Later in the year, with the help of federal CARES Act funding awarded by the Board of Licking County Commissioners, The Works was able to purchase a van that could be used to deliver STEM kits and host outreach events.

Behind the scenes, the scope of putting together hundreds of kits with instructions was an extensive job, and included tiny pieces and parts that had to be assembled in a way that made it easy for families to enjoy. At times, staff members would count out thousands of items like paper towel rolls, construction paper, and fuzzy pipe cleaners. The Works team formed a system to put together each individual kit in an efficient way.

“Throughout the pandemic we were able to pull together as a team and create innovative ways to work while social distancing,” said Rori Leath, Director of STEM Education. “It was important for us to stay connected with the community even though our doors were closed. I loved the process of getting creative with activities we would normally use in-house, but were then able to share with our community.”



In time, The Works was able to reopen the museum doors by following CDC recommendations and creating new safety guidelines for guests. The Works Meeting Room was transformed into a staging area for cleaning the hands-on exhibits between visitation times as well as for putting together the many STEM kits that needed space to assemble.

HOW THIS WAS MADE POSSIBLE

These changes came with challenges, but The Works had strong community support to get through it. “We’re very lucky that we have so much support and so many resources from our community that give us information as well as dollars to do some of the programs that we were able to do,” said Nancy Richards, Director of Special Events and Volunteer Services. Despite not having the usual income from admissions and other programming, The Works was able to keep going thanks to the financial support of the community.

“It just makes you feel really good that our community values our institution and wanted to make sure that we were still here,” added Janice, Managing Director. Some of the support came through donors, grants and The Works Annual Fund campaign.

“We experienced an especially generous year of giving from our supporters and we were so grateful for that,” said Bonny Fowler, Director of Development. The Works was also fortunate to receive federal CARES Act funding directed from the Board of Licking County Commissioners. “This allowed us to reach so many in our area with learning experiences,” said Bonny. “It really was a wonderful way to dramatically boost our outreach.”

The Works’ staff was also a noteworthy force that pushed the museum through the pandemic.

“We are nimble, and we can flip on a dime,” stated Marcia, Executive Director. “We were able to shut the museum down and to get everybody working from home the next day and being productive ... It takes a special staff to be able to do that.” This flexibility and resilience is a through line for The Works’ staff. Even while faced with drastic changes due to the pandemic, the staff continued to rise to the challenge with new ideas to grow and change.

Effort and tenacity from individual staff members was key, along with the ability to work together, even when

separated remotely. “The staff and everybody really rallied around each other,” said Janice. “We are a close-knit group. And the compassion that everybody showed each other has really come through and made me even more proud.”

MOVING FORWARD

The Works’ staff plans to continue giving back to the community that supported the museum through the pandemic. This means continuing to distribute STEM Kits and providing more community events. “I think we put ourselves out in the community, making the museum part of the community more than we ever have,” stated Meghan, “and I think that it is really important for us to maintain that.”

The Works’ use of STEM Kits, school tours, and community events has been a great way for the museum to benefit many members of the community, and plans to continue this outreach. This is a testimony to the importance The Works places on community,

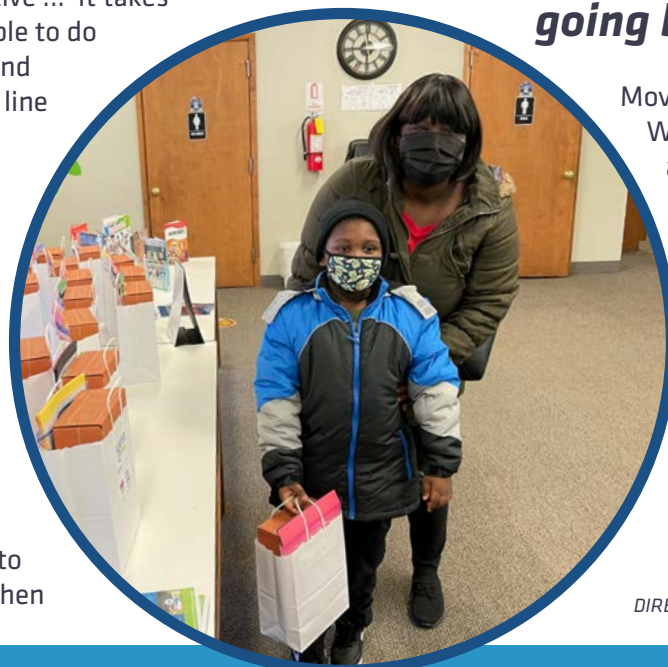
“The STEM kits stand out as how we were able to stay engaged and interactive,” said Nancy, Director of Special Events and Volunteer Services.

The Works also will continue outreach virtually through streamed programming. Through a virtual focus, The Works’ online presence has grown, and the staff plans to sustain that growth. This has enabled The Works to reach a much wider audience, including those who wouldn’t otherwise be able to attend. “The way some schools’ budgets are structured; they aren’t able to do field trips. I think virtual is a way for us to deliver programming to them,” Janice explained. “Even when everything returns to in-person, online programming will continue to benefit everyone.”

“We’ve come out of it almost stronger in a way,” said Janice. “We’ve collaborated and been able to reach our community.” There’s no doubt that many struggled during the 2020 pandemic and many continue to struggle. But The Works team finds hope in a future with newfound ways to connect and engage. The organization has adapted and improved in response to these changes. When asked about the pandemic, Bonny Fowler, Director of Development, said,

“It pushed our organization into ways of working that it may have taken years for us to do. And we’re never going back.”

Moving forward from COVID-19, The Works’ staff has not only created a stronger organization, but also created stronger bonds with the local community. •



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