Strategic Plan

Vision:
The Upper Peninsula Children's Museum is the premier organization in the U.P. for children and their families. The UPCM is constantly evolving to provide a fun, inspirational experience for children to discover and flourish through play and hands-on encounters through an imaginative, nurtured environment.

Mission:
Engaging youth and families to discover through interactive exhibits and learning opportunities.

Strengths
- Our product-We foster imagination/can do spirit
- Staff-Customer service, approachable etc...
- We offer a variety of activities
- Affordable
- Our caring culture
- Our building is a safe place for families

Weaknesses
- Facility/exhibit upkeep can be overwhelming
- HR issues- Staffing levels, high turnover of part-time staff
- Sustainability Plan- Lack of funds, emergency fund and employee pay increases
- Technology Challenges-Slow internet/lack of workable database
- Marketing funds

Threats
- Staffing challenges
- Old infrastructure
- Maintaining customer satisfaction
- More competition for limited philanthropic giving
- Technology
Strategic Plan

Opportunities

Goal #1: Increase/improve technology marketing
- Advertise special programming such as 2nd Thursday in elementary schools again. Marquette is seeing growth
  - Jan Edwards is willing to restart this
  - Connor Fries can assist with this
- Explore new technology options/NMU internet
  - Inquire with Dave Bammert how we can tap into this
- Ditch current database and purchase a new one
  - N is meeting with GLCYD
- Increase presence on social media to connect with community and customers/families
  - Look into Hootsuite through Eagle Mine
  - Set up a UPCM Twitter account/Instagram
    - YouTube Channel?
  - Continue with daily posts on Facebook
    - Create a plan for daily Facebook posts
      - Decide on a message and build social media plan around it.
      - Use popular hashtags to gain followers such as #cute#fun#instagood#tbt#happy
      - Don’t just make up your own hashtag.
      - Use FB to answer survey questions. Win free day passes to the museum.
  - Set up an easy mass email system
    - Check out MailChimp It allows you to see who’s clicked on and opened emails and provides some analytics.
- Use new website to advertise and tell our story in a personal way.
  - Connect with clicks, get folks to click to our website by providing links.
  - Give the museum a personality through posts on the web

Goal #2: Increase Fund Development
- Use Alumni as a resource
  - Develop a data base of past members who have grown up and program participants that have grown up
- Use Nheena’s skill and experience to raise and secure funds
  - Develop a yearly calendar that can be referred to by anyone not just in N’s head or day planner
  - Develop a list of possible funding sources not already approached
• Improve thank you note writing system.
  
  • Reach outside of Marquette for resources/funding
    o Develop lists of alumni of programming for future contact
    o Develop lists of former / expired members for future contact
    o Keep a guest book to garner comments and addresses of visitors
  
  • Look into ongoing funding directed towards city improvements
  
  • Continue and expand on the Friends of the Children’s Museum Group
    o Continue to recruit interested and active members
    o Invite all former board members to keep them
    o Consider unique ways for them to raise additional funds
    o Increase the reach into the community by asking the Friends to be ambassadors
  
  • Set up a 20th Anniversary sub committee to plan out the year!
    o Connect with alumni; programs, board members, etc.
    o Put together a slide show of stories
    o Invite to an event
    o Figure out fun things to raise money based on the increment of 20

Goal #3: Reinforce the Museum’s Brand within the Museum
  
  • Execute the Exhibit Team’s three year strategic vision
    o Organize exhibits manager’s time on a project board.
    o 2016 Concentrate four days of the week to just finishing the Body exhibit
    o 2017
      1. we will look within each existing exhibit and do upgrades.
      NOTHING huge, just one sweet little enhancement after another; tweaking and upgrading for over a year.
    o 2018 we will look into three big changes:
      1. a complete re-do of the radio station, bringing in some NASA elements,
      2. Redo the Toddler area,
      3. Develop a Dr. office next to the ambulance.
    o OTHER STUFF:
      1. Redo of the intercom system ALL when funding is secured.

  • More streamlined signage and at youngster level
    o Consider developmental ages and how to present key information
    o Always keep in mind appropriate heights of key exhibit components
  
  • More emphasis on being a learning experience for children
    o Consider developmental ages and how to present key information
- Make signs entertaining and readable.
- Have a unified looking floor staff
  - Identifying T-shirts
  - Identifying team member tags.
- Use all four exhibit halls/all museum space to its fullest potential
- Continue Youth Empowerment programming – strengthen and expand
  - Continue foundational programs
    - 8-18 Media Youth Journalism
      - Continue to produce a monthly newsletter
      - Continue to work with current media partners: Radio and print
      - Continue conducting Recognition Night-The Academy Awards of youth journalism
      - Take on special projects when available (such as political conventions, special visitors to the area, new projects etc.)
      - Maintain and stay within a reasonable budget
      - Modernize equipment, replace outdated technology
      - Update website on a regular basis to reflect current projects and current information on how to get involved with the program
      - Utilize social media to create a buzz about 8-18 Media
      - Improve new member recruitment and retention of new members by encouraging them to get involved quickly on a news team.
  - Guardians of WOW youth volunteers
    - Establish achievement ladder:
      - (Gnome - Pixie - Unicorn - Gryphon - Pegasus - Phoenix) and make all volunteers aware of it.
    - Bring all volunteers (youth and adults) into the program.
    - Identify a senior team of youth volunteers (Phoenix and Pegasus levels)
    - Develop new roles for senior youth:
      - Overseeing young Guardians
      - Signing Guardian cards after good work
      - Deciding monthly (City Hall) and quarterly rewards for Guardians
        - (Certificates, dinners, impromptu giveaways, praise)
      - Organizing out-of-museum activities with Guardians as Museum Ambassadors
        - (fund-raisers, outreach, peer training with other museums/ agencies)
    - Build “floor” programs to be led by Guardians:
      - Arts
      - Pre-school science
      - Technology
      - Money and Numbers
      - Language and Letters
      - Animal Care and Nutrition
    - School of Rock
    - Together Time programs
• Jim’s Toddler Clubhouse
• Second Thursday Creativity Series
  o Always be looking in to new and interesting programming.
• Regularly engage visitors and members through in house surveys, online surveys and other creative ways to measure our effectiveness.

Goal #4: Continue to develop strong ties to the Marquette Community
• Partner with Smart Zone/Invent@NMU and other cool stuff in town
• Partner with Northern Michigan University
  o Utilize interns
  o Be the site for engaging groups and individuals in service activities
  o Contact fraternity and sororities, meet at the beginning of the school year to determine partnerships.
  o Offer the Museum as a dynamic classroom
• Maximize opportunities to partner with community organizations and the city of Marquette
  o Staff and Board should represent the Museum on various committees and boards.
  o Reach out to community groups with free passes and space utilization to build stronger relationships.
  o Always be at the table.
• Continue to grow relationships with local businesses.
  o Engage area businesses with partnerships in advertising
  o Engage area businesses by having “business” days for employees and friends.
  o Identify area businesses to nurture to build relationships.
• Stay on top of family activity trends
  o Engage our members and guests through surveys
  o Place young people and young parents on the board of trustees and as employees / active team members
• Utilizing long winter with exciting indoor winter activities
  o Provide stimulating activities for families that honor the winter
  o Always remain open during school snow days.
• Connect with new families moving to area
  o Connect with area realtors / businesses / corporations
  o Provide free passes to new families to the area
    ▪ Partner with local Real Estate agencies
• Play an active role in this award winning community
• Participate in downtown event
  o Attend all Downtown Development Authority promotions meetings
  o Participate when possible and / or help promote Downtown activities; be a team player and a valuable member of the community.
• Be an active participant in neighborhood and Baraga Avenue improvements
  o Take part in any DDA initiated focus groups on Baraga Avenue upgrades
  o Advocate with DDA and the city for needed changes / addition of flowers / benches as needed.
• Connect with young entrepreneurs moving to and already existing in the area
  o Attend Business After hours events sponsored by the LSCP as much as possible
  o Make sure there is a young entrepreneur slot within the board matrix of membership
  o Be a member of the LSCP and the Chamber of Commerce
  o Attend Chamber of Commerce initiated conferences and activities
  o Connect with the 40 Below group
  o Participate in AccelerateUP 😊
• Participate as often as possible in outdoor spring/summer/fall events such as area sidewalk sales...
  o Take part in regularly scheduled activities such as Baraga Avenue Harvest fest, Art Week and Blueberry festival
  o Utilize our own courtyard for outdoor activities to stir up street activity
• With the new Hospital being built down the street develop a strong partnership
  o Invite hospital admin personnel to the Museum
  o Play a role in recruitment by offering free passes to the Hospital recruitment department
  o Offer passes to Beacon House for families utilizing the hospital
  o Offer hospital personnel the Museum exhibits to educate about critical issue of health concern.
• Capitalize on the Marquette growing population
  o Continue to advertise in local media venues – paid ads
  o Continue to send out PSAs to local media
  o Continue to have trade partnerships with local media
  o Continue to utilize facebook/twitter and Instagram
  o Be on top of new ways people are communicating
  o Step up our email lists through Salesforce, email regularly
• Marquette is a destination – make sure folks know we exist.
  o Advertise in local hotels where possible
  o Update our brochure and get out to all visitors centers in the state (we currently have brochures throughout the state but we need an updated version)
  o Partner with the other local cultural institutions and collectively advertise in the visitors guides
Goal #5: Utilize the of Museum's Entry space to the highest potential

• Market it as a retail space opportunity
  o Recruit possible venues
  o Advertise in facebook/twitter/instagram
  o Advertise the space in the DDA and LSCP listings

• Implement the new entrance design outside
  o Finalize the letters for the large sign around the window
  o Get the sign priced out
  o Determine source of funds

• Implement the enhanced elevator plan
  o Finalize the fire coding as instructed by elevator state inspector
  o Order sign from Signs Now
  o Install

• Explore options to utilize the Courtyard seeing it has incredible potential as an outside space that can be wacky and fun
  o Brainstorm ways to use the courtyard to make it magical
  o Determine a regular schedule of use
  o Encourage the tenants to also use the courtyard for special activities (Shoe Shop/Bakery/Restaurant/Artists/Music Co-op/Environmental group/Hair Salon/Coffee Shop)
    ▪ Have tenant manager maintain an active calendar of courtyard activities
    ▪ Have tenant manager remind tenants of the courtyard opportunities.
  o If upgrades/additions are determined define a schedule, budget and funding source

Goal #6: Staff Development

• Develop a budget line for employment opportunities and informational advancement

• Develop strategies for employee retention

• Develop a schedule of regular staff FUN times.

• Bring in expertise when needed on a variety of subjects to assist the staff's competency.