



The Children's Museum  
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**Jeffrey H. Patchen**  
*President and CEO*

February 27, 2009

The Honorable Richard G. Lugar  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Lugar:

I respectfully request fiscal year 2010 federal funds for The Children's Museum of Indianapolis for the following projects, which are listed in order of priority. The projects are summarized below.

1. \$1 million in HUD-EDI funds for the Winona Hospital Site Development Project;
2. \$225,000 in Education-FIE funds for SciencePort: Gateway to Extraordinary Learning, including a new energy sustainability learning investigation.

#### Winona Hospital Site Development Project

The Museum respectfully requests \$1 million in fiscal year 2010 federal funds (Department of Housing and Urban Development-Economic Development Initiative) for development of the Winona Hospital site to transform it into a viable community asset.

The Children's Museum of Indianapolis, the world's largest children's museum with over one million visitors a year, desires to transform nearly a full city block of blighted property (the abandoned Winona Hospital site) into an extraordinary family outdoor learning experience for neighborhood/city residents, school children and visitors to the Museum. The site contains a significant amount of asbestos, some of which has become airborne and is a danger to nearby children and families.

The Winona property has been long closed, boarded up, and has been put on the tax block two times with no buyers. The Children's Museum of Indianapolis has purchased eight parcels surrounding the Winona site in the hope of securing the property and transforming it into a viable community asset. With support from residents and two market studies, the Museum is poised to acquire the remaining property, demolish the hospital, mitigate any environmental concerns, and improve the property with a host of new outdoor exhibits. The Museum already has invested \$1 million in property acquisition and is in the process of raising additional funds. It estimates the cost of demolition and environmental remediation alone is \$5 million.

Total project cost is \$13 million. The project is expected to be completed by 2012. The museum has a “fund before build” policy that requires all funding be identified before moving forward on any capital project. The Museum continues to pursue funds from city, state and private funding sources.

The Children’s Museum is the single largest driver of cultural tourism in the state of Indiana, with an annual economic impact of more than \$58 million. The developed site is planned to be a permanent family learning experience at the Museum. As such, it would have an estimated life in its planned form of approximately 25 years and would reach more than 18 million children and their families over this time period.

The project is consistent with the key purposes in the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, namely, the elimination of blight and blighting influences and the deterioration of property and neighborhood and community facilities of importance to the welfare of the community, principally of persons of low and moderate income. The project will contribute to the goals of The Children’s District project for which the Museum has invested \$3 million in infrastructure improvements and new developments to enhance real estate values and encourage redevelopment in the area.

SciencePort: Gateway to Extraordinary Learning, including a new energy sustainability learning investigation

The Museum respectfully requests \$225,000 in fiscal year 2010 federal funds (Department of Education-FIE) for *SciencePort: Gateway to Extraordinary Learning* – an innovative on-site and on-line family learning program.

The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis recently opened *SciencePort: Gateway to Extraordinary Learning*, a physical and virtual portal serving as the headquarters for special on-line and on-site science “investigations” for families and schools. SciencePort investigations are designed to serve diverse audiences and offer multiple levels of engagement (on-line activities, on-site activities or a combination). Central to the design of SciencePort investigations is “family learning” enabling different family members and groups to design a science experience that meets their needs. After children and families complete their investigations on-line or on-site at the Museum, SciencePort also serves as a forum for them to question, defend, explore and communicate what they discover about science.

The first SciencePort investigation, *Biotech – Cool Green Tool!*, supported with a grant from Dow AgroSciences, focuses on the science methods and tools used to create biodiesel. The Museum’s long-term plan is to create additional investigations based on the content and resources of the Museum’s current science programs and permanent exhibits. The Museum will focus its next two investigations on energy/sustainability and paleontology.

- *Energy/Sustainability Investigation* – Tied directly to the Museum’s broader goal to be a leader in energy and conservation education, the Museum will create an investigation that links its on-site exhibits, such as Health House (supported by

Health Care Excel), its large water table area and the Fall Creek Watershed experience (a mode of the local watershed) to specific energy and water conservation activities children and families can do at school and home.

- *Paleo Investigation* –Tied to the content in Dinosphere (a \$25 million exhibit opened in 2004 featuring real dinosaur fossils presented in settings which reflect life in the Cretaceous Period), the Museum will create an investigation that challenges children and their families to investigate real questions that paleontologist encounter during their fieldwork.

SciencePort investigations are purposefully designed to meet national and Indiana education standards. Such standards are built in to all Museum educational content. Units of study and related investigations are expected to reach approximately 90,000 students per year.

Two additional SciencePort investigations will cost approximately \$225,000 to create including an on-line learning module, multi-disciplinary curriculum unit, consumable program supplies, research and travel and professional development for teachers.

Dow AgroSciences granted \$500,000 to the Museum to create the infrastructure, technology, learning management system, physical space and the first investigation for SciencePort. The Museum will contribute the ongoing costs of supporting SciencePort at \$95,000 per year, including staff.

Again, I respectfully request that you direct federal funds to The Children's Museum for the above-described projects. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jeffrey Patchen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "J".

Jeffrey H. Patchen, D.M.E.  
President & CEO