



DISCOVERY WORLD
science + technology center

2021 Annual Report

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Our Mission

Discovery World provides fun and educational experiences through interactive exhibits and educational programs for families and students in Milwaukee, the region, and the state of Wisconsin.

We generate excitement for Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM), freshwater education, and careers in the minds of children and young people, while playing a vital role in the workforce development pipeline.





Dear Friends of Discovery World,

Science has rarely played a more evident role in our lives. Our ability to make informed decisions has had a significant impact on the health and well-being of each of us and our community. Your generous support of Discovery World helped us to adapt as an organization to ensure we could continue to support science learning even as we faced another year of challenges brought on by the pandemic. I am immensely proud of the work our team has done to rely on science, to stay focused on our educational mission, and to be an example of how to safely engage public audiences.

We are grateful for the generosity of our donors, members, volunteers, and partners who helped advance our mission during these trying times. We are thankful for the limited time funding we received through federal programs like the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and Shuttered Venues Operators Grant (SVOG) program, along with recovery funding from the State of Wisconsin and the City of Milwaukee. Your critical support of Discovery World allowed us to reopen to the public, provide a broad range of educational resources and programs, and will be necessary as our future direction takes shape.

In this annual report, you find Discovery World's key accomplishments—the inspirational work implemented by our amazing staff, volunteers, and board. We create and deliver educational resources to meet the changing needs of the children, families, schools, and communities we serve. We provide opportunities and experiences in our building, at home, in classrooms, and throughout the community. This work provides a foundation for our return, our growth, and our impact in the years ahead.

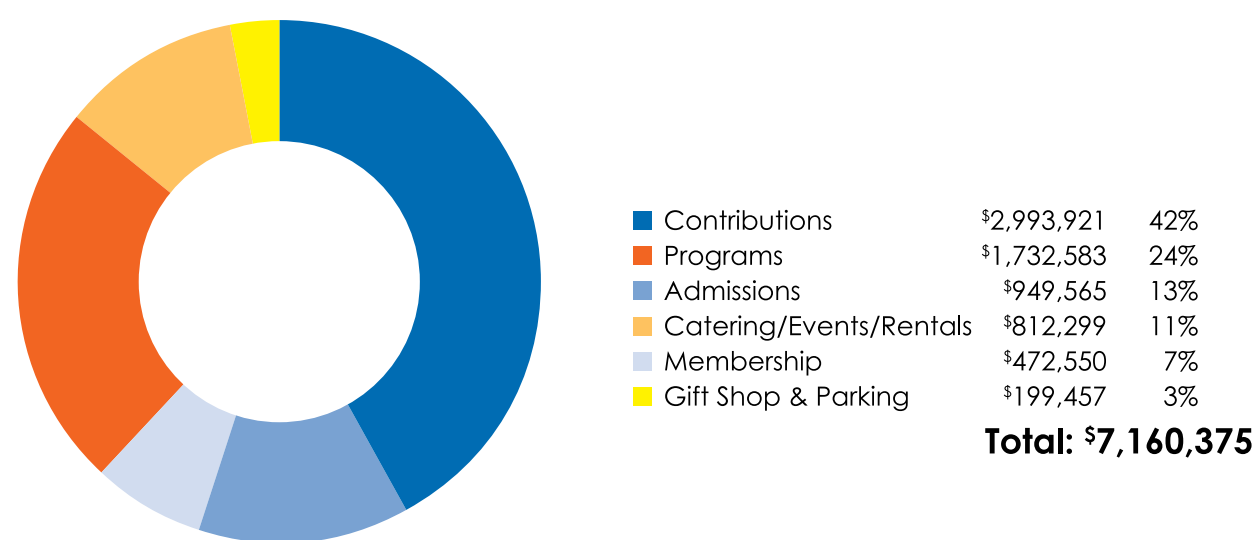
Our ability to remain committed to serving our audiences would not be possible without you. I thank you for your support during these challenging times and hope you will continue this journey with us as we strive for a better future.

Sincerely,

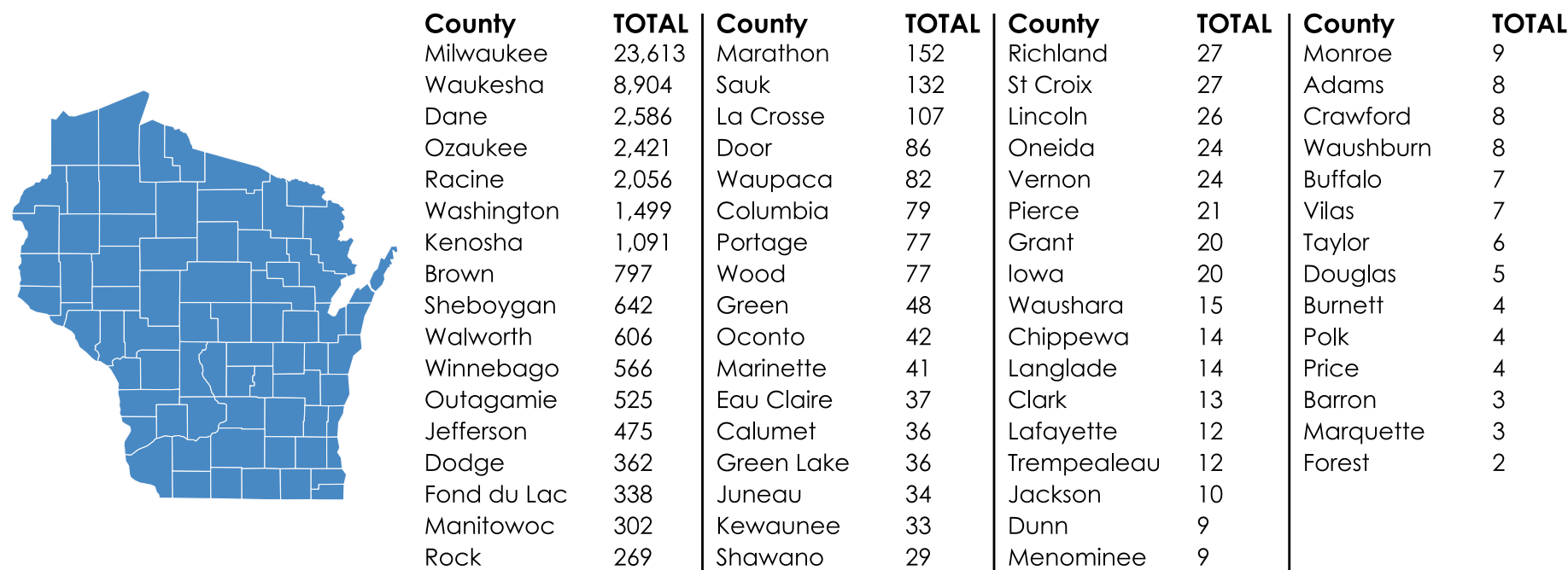
Bryan Wunar
President and CEO

2021 Demographics & Revenue Review

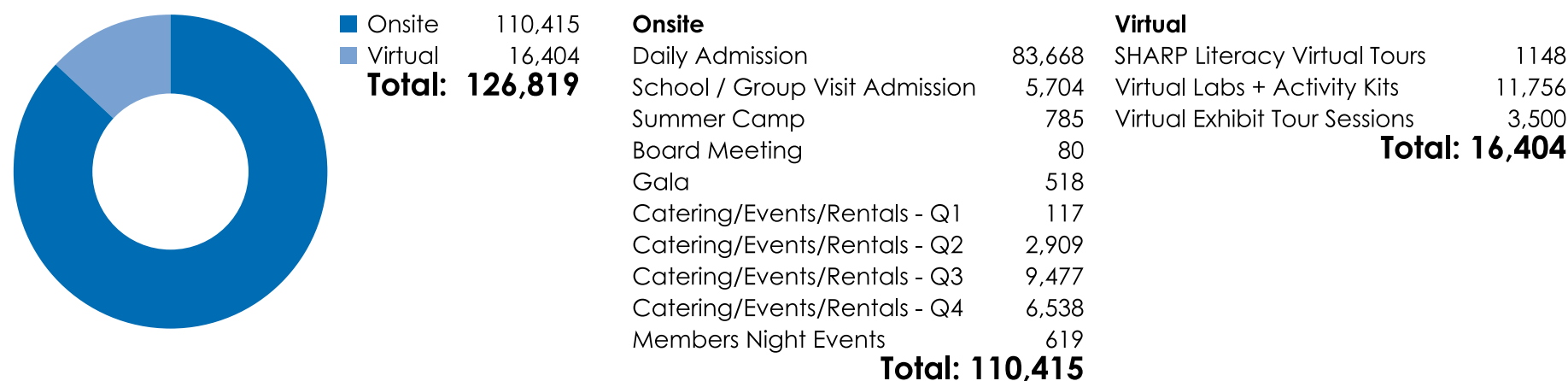
Revenue Numbers



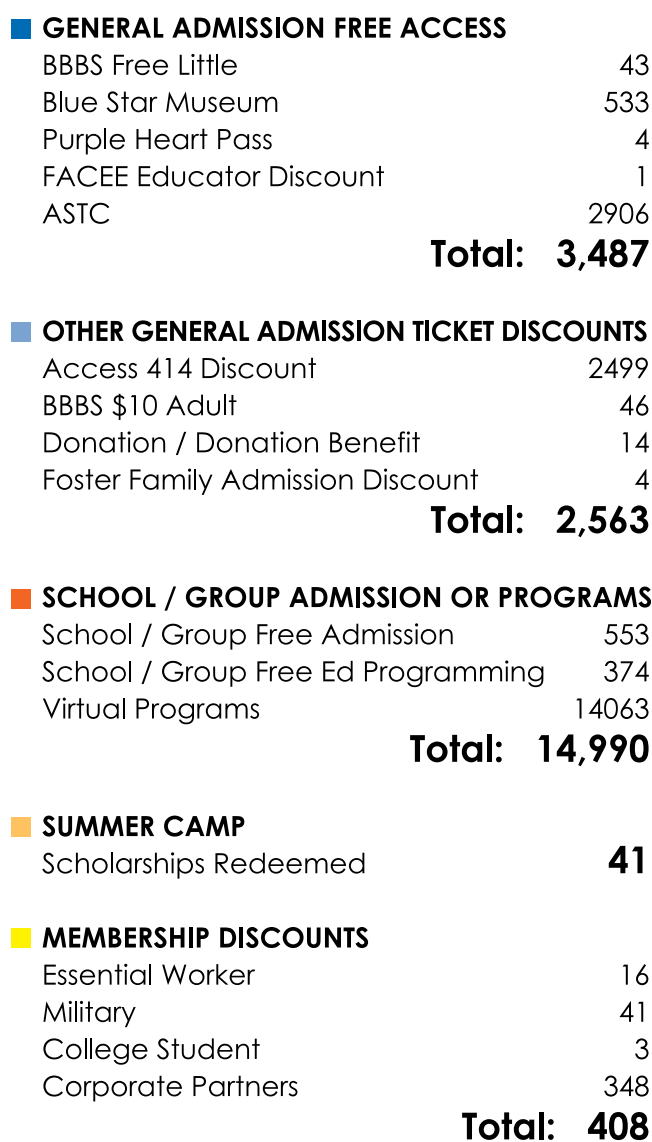
Admissions by WI Counties



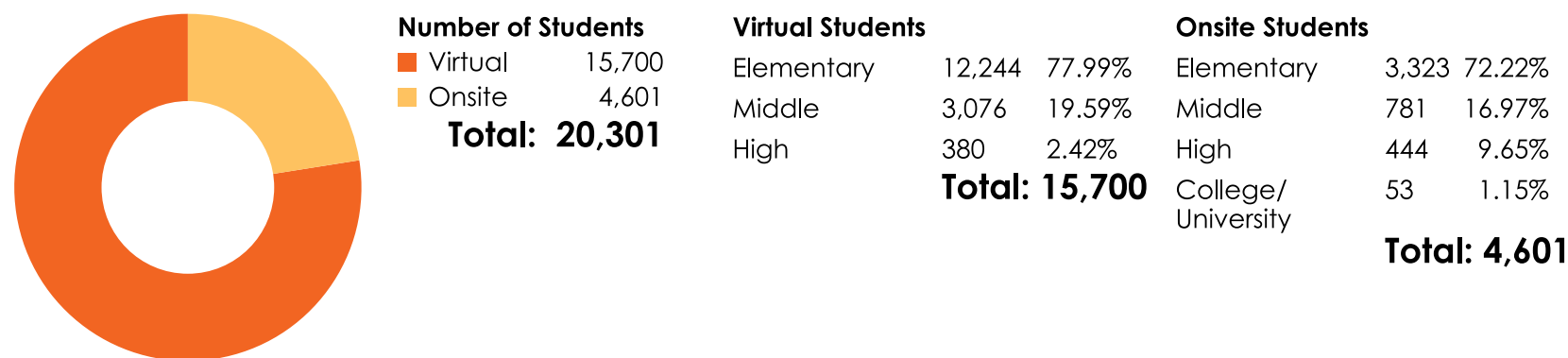
Total Attendance



Free Community Access Provided



School Group Admission by Grade Level



2021 Year in Review

January – March

Discovery World offered the School and Community Initiative (SCI) Program to school and community groups throughout Wisconsin and Illinois (ran into June). Students received virtual instruction, tours of the aquarium, and hands-on experiment kits to accompany their live, real-time instruction sessions with a Discovery World educator. In March, the museum also reopened to the public with safety protocols in place and timed ticketing.

April – June

Discovery World hosted talented, local artisans on our promenade with the Milwaukee Makers Market. The building was also buzzing with young summer campers starting the second week of June for what was to be a fun-filled three months of science-focused camps.

July – September

We hosted our Wheels & Water event, which featured local heroes and safety vehicles from the City, and a Mermaid Echo, a live mermaid experience in the Reiman Aquarium. We also invited our wonderful members for a fireworks event in September in conjunction with Summerfest and again hosted artisans for the Milwaukee Maker's Market. More than 700 campers joined us throughout the summer.

October – December

Discovery World welcomed back two of our most popular events - Sci-Fi Family Day and Halloween Members Night. Sci-Fi Family Day featured characters from the world of fantasy and Halloween Member's Night gives our loyal members a chance to trick-or-treat in costume throughout the museum. The Kohl's Design It! Lab also reopened its doors in November after closing during the pandemic, and we hosted an event called Space Out! featuring all things outer space. The second floor of the technology building was steaming ahead with the opening of our new train exhibit, All Aboard!, and we hosted another Milwaukee Makers Market. To wrap up the year, Santa greeted children over several weekends during the month of December.



Membership in Review

We had **23,248** individual adults and children make up our **5,563** family memberships at the close of 2021. We also offered our Corporate Partner Employee Membership Discount Program in which employees of our corporations and foundation supporters receive a percentage discount off summer camp, membership purchases, and more. We had **74 organizations** serve as corporate partners in 2021.

Community Partners

Milwaukee County Disability Services Division (MCDSD)

We continued a strong partnership with the MCDSD, which provides a variety of services for families of children with disabilities, including opportunities for enriching experiences throughout the community, like a Discovery World membership.

Essential Workers Membership Matching Program

For every new membership, gift membership, or membership renewal purchased while the museum remained closed to the public, Discovery World donated a free membership to the employers of essential workers.

We donated memberships to Roundy's, Pick 'n Save and Metro Market, Ignite the Spirit Fund, Milwaukee Firefighters, and Children's Wisconsin.



Learning in our Labs

The Kohl's Design-It! Lab is one of the most popular Discovery World destinations, as it allows museum visitors an opportunity to create their own vision and design projects alongside our talented lab educators. Our staff provided **21,546 experiences** to guests visiting Discovery World.

We provided MPS' Extended Learning Program **600 activity kits** for their students throughout the summer as an extension of our **SCI Program**.

In addition to the Kohl's Design It! Lab, Discovery World is the proud home of the:

- **Curiosity Works Lab**

Sponsored by Brady Corporation

- **Spark! Lab**

- **STEM Lab**

Sponsored by PPG Industries

- **Automation Lab**

Sponsored by Rockwell Automation

- **Video Studio**

- **Health Sciences Lab**

Sponsored by Aurora Advocate Health

- **Freshwater Sustainability Lab**

Sponsored by Fund for Lake Michigan

- **Thirst Lab**

Sponsored by Molson Coors

Each classroom space provides opportunities for school group and camp learning throughout the year.



Reiman Aquarium

The Reiman Aquarium, housed in our “Aquatarium Building” is the most popular experience on the Discovery World campus. The aquarium allows visitors to explore the strange, beautiful, and fascinating creatures from around the world, including the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, the rivers of the Amazon Basin, African Rift Lakes, and right here in the Great Lakes. Guests can also pet stingrays and sturgeon. Families bond over meeting adorable turtles, ball python, poison dart frogs, and so many more animals within the live collection. The museum also employs several full-time aquarists who bring tremendous talent and expertise to the animals. Further, the Reiman Aquarium is a great location for volunteerism, as it welcomes scuba divers, subject matter experts, and friendly faces wanting to lend their time.

The Reiman Aquarium has welcomed over **2.2 million visitors** since it opened in 2010. In 2021, we housed **147 species** and over **350 individual animals**, including fish, reptiles, amphibians, inverts, and corals.

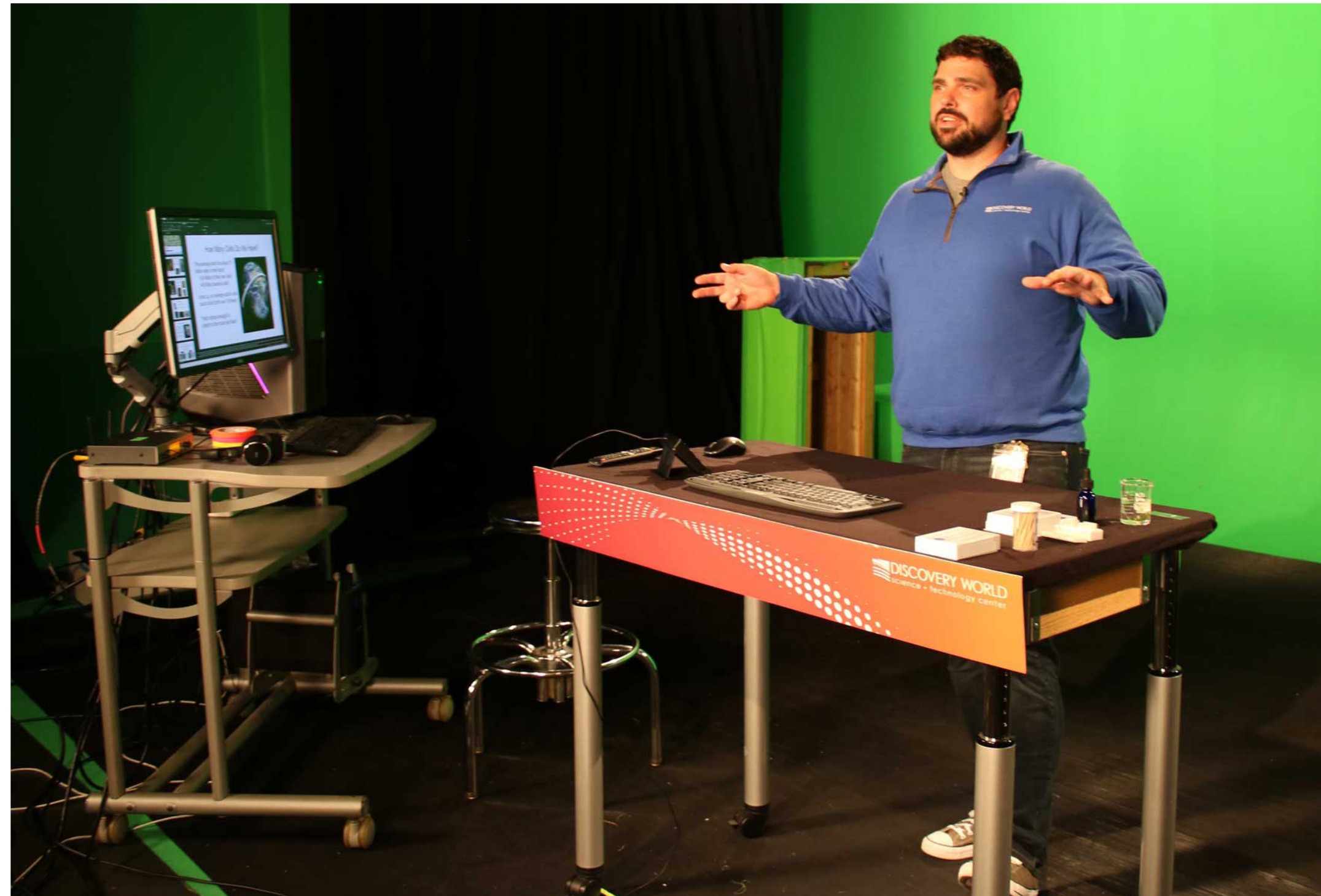
In the spring of 2021, the Reiman Aquarium staff worked together with the Education Team to record Q&As for the SCI “Virtual Aquarium Tour”. These streams provided students an opportunity to ask aquarists questions about their virtual tour and the ins and outs of managing an aquarium.

The Aquarium staff welcomed **6 interns**, **3 new aquarists**, and a **new Aquarium Curator**. Our **23 volunteers** were an amazing asset to daily operations both behind the scenes and diving in the tanks.

Discovery World received a donation for the aquarists to expand their knowledge by taking the E-aquarist Vet Course, an online class designed by a veterinarian specifically for zoos and aquariums. This course strengthens the skills of the aquarists to provide even better care of our aquatic friends.



School & Community Initiative (SCI)



In the 2020/21 school year, the vast array of field trips that we offer to schools – both on scholarship and not – could not happen. Many schools held classes virtually, and those with in-person instruction were not taking in-person field trips. In response, Discovery World created virtual tours, activity kits, video-based labs, and equipment loans to provide a broad range of instructional supports for educators to enhance their students' educational experience. High-quality science education should not go by the wayside simply because schools were not taking field trips. So we brought Discovery World field trips and labs to the schools.

We provided hands-on STEM activities and instruction to **12,124 students from 95 schools**. With the return of in-person field trips in the fall of 2021, we welcomed **727** students back into our education spaces for experiences on robotics, water quality, taste, circuitry, physics, magnets, and more.

In December of 2021, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Metro Milwaukee once again began working with our Education Team to offer in-person science activities.

Our educational programming consistently receives wonderful feedback. Here's what a few teachers had to say:

"Thank you so much for the wonderful virtual field trip! The kids and I loved it! It was so exciting and very engaging!"

"Thank you so much for offering these programs free of charge. Your generous donors have given my students an experience that they would not have gotten otherwise."

"Thank you so much again for yesterday! The kids LOVED it! I printed them some of the sheets you sent, and I know they will love them. I just took the survey and had nothing but positive things to say."



Summer Camp

Over 11 weeks, **785** students (grades 1-8) took part in our summer camp program. Each week-long camp here at Discovery World covered a different topic, including design, automation, robotics, food science, fishing, and more! We capped capacity due to Covid-19 restrictions, to keep our campers safe.

Here's what some parents had to say:

"Oh, thank you so much! Marie was really enjoying each day of camp and asked me to register her for more weeks! :)"
-Spy Central Camp

"Thank you so much for a wonderful week of DW camp. My girls --had a wonderful time and are super excited for this week!"
-Lego Robots (Girls Only)

"Well done, amazing staff and program. Beyond impressed with our first experience and will definitely be back next summer."
-Underwater Robotics Camp

"Thanks for having my child in your camp! She had a blast! She stayed with her grandparents, who live closer by and we can't wait to hear more about it from her! She showed us what she made and proudly told a little about it. Thanks again!"
-Art & Science Camp

"Thank you so much for these memories! Robert just absolutely adores summer camp at Discovery World. Single. Year. It is the highlight of his summer. And this year was no different. We are grateful to the Rocket Science instructor and TAs as well as all of the faculty and staff at DW for a wonderful adventure amidst uncertain times."
-Rocket Scientist Camp



Thankful for Volunteers

220 volunteers contributed more than **8,200 hours** in 2021. Volunteers and interns helped with special events, assisted in summer camps, worked on tall ship maintenance, entered data, helped keep the aquarium animals and tanks healthy and clean, created activity sheets, and participated in public-facing roles like Touch Tank Attendant and Kohl's Design It! Lab Assistants. Volunteers are an integral part of our success, and we are incredibly thankful for the dedication of our volunteers!



Annual Gala

While we typically hold our largest fundraiser in summer, we moved this year's gala to November 13, 2021. Discovery World was thrilled to safely welcome nearly **600 guests** into our doors for the event. Everyone was healthy and happy, and enjoyed themselves tremendously after a year of being away!

The event welcomed our supporters to celebrate another year of accomplishments and service to children and families in the community. We were honored to have Jon and Bridget Donahue as our Gala co-chairs and Johnson Financial Group as our Event Sponsor.

We awarded the **Milwaukee Academy of Science** the first annual "Gary Grunau Award for Academic Excellence" in honor of their great work in STEM education for Milwaukee's youth.

Thank you to all of our wonderful sponsors, donors, guests, and auction contributors. **You made our fundraiser spectacular!**



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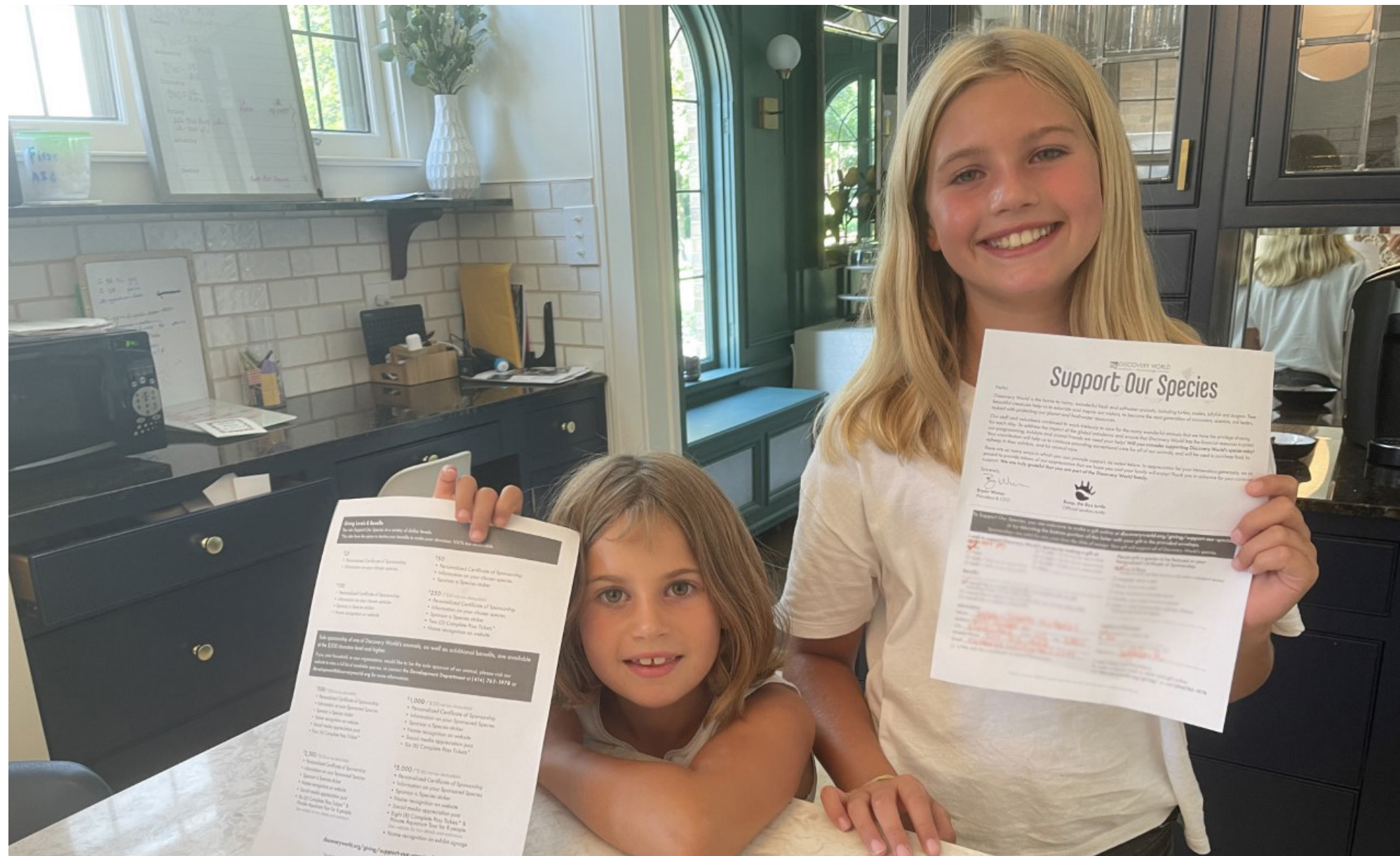
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