

Leading attractions in Milwaukee receive \$750,000 boost from Northwestern Mutual

Betty Brinn Children's Museum named one of 10 organizations to benefit from grants

MILWAUKEE, May 8, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- Northwestern Mutual is committed to enhancing its hometown by ensuring it is an inviting and exciting place to live, work and play.

To reinforce this commitment, the company, through its Foundation, is announcing \$750,000 in grants to Milwaukee organizations. These gifts support a variety of programs that bring visitors to the area, attract and retain current residents and workers, and provide significant learning and enrichment experiences to children and families.

"Each year, millions of visitors travel to Milwaukee to enjoy some of the best arts, entertainment and educational opportunities the country has to offer," said John Kordsmeier, president, Northwestern Mutual Foundation. "These grants ensure visitors, community residents and our employees have engaging and memorable experiences."

Spotlight on Betty Brinn Children's Museum

One grant recipient is the Betty Brinn Children's Museum, dedicated to providing interactive exhibits and resources that promote the healthy development of children in their formative years, from birth through age 10. Since 1995, the museum has been recognized as a Milwaukee landmark and treasured learning resource for locals and visitors alike. The organization serves 200,000 visitors each year, including 30,000 disadvantaged children and adults who benefit from Museum outreach services.

A \$150,000 grant over a two-year period to the organization will sponsor a new 1,500 square foot educational experience that will present early literacy as the foundation for a child's academic and lifelong success. The hands-on exhibit will include special emphasis on *alphabetic principles, print and phonological awareness, building vocabulary* and *reading comprehension* through a variety of interactive components.

The Northwestern Mutual Foundation is committed to improving the lives of Milwaukee children and families in need through its four focus areas, including 3rd grade reading proficiency and post-secondary completion, neighborhoods, childhood cancer and making Milwaukee a great place to live and work. This grant fits within these areas by tying a prominent destination in the community with supporting programming that builds literacy skills with students from 3K to third grade.

"Research continues to highlight the importance of literacy and early learning to school readiness and, in the longer term, to local workforce and economic development," said Fern Shupeck, executive director, Betty Brinn Children's Museum. "This grant will give caregivers and kids the opportunity to learn and experience how to build fundamental skills during the most critical phase of a child's cognitive, social and emotional development."

A 12-month development process begins this year with a goal to open the exhibit in spring 2015.

2014 Northwestern Mutual destination grant recipients

Organization	Program
Discovery World at Pier Wisconsin	Destination: Discovery World
Marcus Center for the Performing Arts	Opening Our Doors
Milwaukee Art Museum (MAM)	MAM After Dark
Zoological Society of Milwaukee County	Outdoor gorilla exhibit transformation
Friends of Schlitz Audubon Center Inc.	Bringing events to families throughout southeastern Wisconsin
Brewers Community Foundation	Stolen Bases , Happy Faces , Leadership Council and 50/50 raffle sponsor

Milwaukee World Festival Inc.	Summerfest: Make a Child Smile Day & Children's Playzone sponsorship
Betty Brinn Children's Museum	Literacy exhibit
Milwaukee Public Library Foundation	Read to Achieve: Milwaukee Bucks Library Reading Challenge
Milwaukee Public Museum	Body Worlds

About Northwestern Mutual Foundation

The mission of the Northwestern Mutual Foundation is to improve the lives of children and families in need. The Foundation has given more than \$250 million since its inception in 1992 and is designed to create lasting impact in the communities where the company's employees and financial representatives live and work. We accomplish this by combining financial support, volunteerism, thought leadership and convening community partners to deliver the best outcomes. Our efforts are focused nationally on curing childhood cancer, and locally on education, neighborhoods and making our hometown of Milwaukee a great destination.

About Northwestern Mutual

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About Betty Brinn Children's Museum

The Betty Brinn Children's Museum is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to providing educational resources that promote school readiness and the healthy development of children in their formative years – from birth to age 10. The Museum's mission is supported by the development of hands-on exhibits and programs for children, and adult education programs that focus on early childhood brain development, learning styles, parenting skills and how the Museum environment can be used to promote a young child's cognitive, emotional, social and physical growth. The Museum has benefited more than 3.2 million children and adults since opening in 1995. For more information, visit www.bbcmkids.org.

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