



Edwardsville Children's Museum Launches "raise The Green" Campaign

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EDWARDSVILLE, IL – The staff and Board of Directors of the Edwardsville Children's Museum's (ECM) is excited to announce the launch of its first annual Raise the Green campaign. The goal of the annual giving campaign is to support ECM's Field Trip Scholarship Fund, which will provide free field trips to any school serving 50% or more free or reduced student lunches.

ECM first opened its doors in June of 2003. Today, the museum receives visitors from all over the Metro St. Louis region, offering programming for newborns through 12 years of age. As a non-profit organization, the Museum is dependent on corporate sponsorships, private donations, individual memberships, and revenue from special events to fund its programming and maintenance requirements.

Dr. Abby Schwent, Director of ECM, hopes to provide field trip scholarships to local children who qualify. The scholarships will not only introduce them to the museum's unique offerings but also hope to lessen the effects of the recent budget cuts on some local districts by providing a free field trip experience to their students.

"ECM's field trips offer a unique learning experience for children and it would be a dream come true for us to be able to offer them at no cost to local families who need them," Schwent said. "We believe firmly in the power of play as a learning tool and have carefully designed each exhibit space and educational workshop to maximize experiential learning."

The museum hosted nearly 4,000 students for field trips in the 2018-19 school year from more than 40 local communities. In order to offer Field Trip Scholarships, Schwent will need to raise \$30,000 from the first annual Raise the Green. By offering a scholarship program, the Museum will help make the financial burden on our local schools lighter while keeping the field trip experience alive for our local children.

"Our field trips are well attended currently, but, as a non-profit, we must charge an attendance fee to cover our costs in creating interactive learning activities. Field trip funding is trending downward in many of our local school districts and we are hearing from many teachers that they can't afford to bring their students. This is truly a terrible shame as field trips offer a powerful opportunity for meaningful learning," Schwent said. "Think back to your school days. What experiences can you remember to this day? I bet a field trip is among them. We believe that ALL children deserve to have those kinds of inspirational and formative experiences, no matter their school district budget. Help us make that happen by supporting our Raise the Green campaign."

The campaign will culminate on Saturday, March 14th with a family-friendly event at the Museum, which will include crafting, a balloon drop, DJ, and more. Donations can be made online at www.edwardsvillechildrensmuseum.org or at the Museum, located at 722 Holyoake Road in Edwardsville.