



# FY24 STATE OF THE MUSEUM



CLEVELAND MUSEUM *of* NATURAL HISTORY

July 1, 2023–June 30, 2024









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“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”

—Eleanor Roosevelt, American diplomat, humanitarian, and former First Lady of the United States

In the 2024 fiscal year, the Cleveland Museum of Natural History achieved astonishing progress toward our \$150 million transformation project—a dream more than 20 years in the making. This project will strengthen our vision to support healthy humans, a healthy planet, and a better future for all. And the Museum’s outstanding future will finally be revealed this December, when we celebrate our Grand Opening and welcome all to explore a natural history museum unlike any other.

Our bold project, which includes more than 375,000 square feet of new and expanded spaces and more than 2 acres of outdoor visitor areas, entails the most sweeping transformation in our more than 104-year history. But it is far more than just a physical transformation. With reimagined exhibits, immersive experiences, and an innovative approach to content and programming, the transformed Museum will reconceptualize what natural history museums can be. The result will place visitors at the center of the experience—highlighting how human health and the health of our planet are inseparably connected.





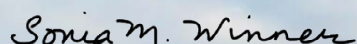
Amidst our metamorphosis, the Museum has remained a pillar for scientific literacy in Northeast Ohio and beyond. This fiscal year, we forged new partnerships in our community, nurtured our audiences' connection to science and nature, and advanced our work to make science education available to everyone. Notable achievements included the opening of our Visitor Hall in October 2023. This welcoming community space presents some of our most iconic objects and specimens in a space that is free to all—and which highlights stories of groundbreaking discovery with deep ties to our region. Our Total on the Oval community watch party for the April 8, 2024 Total Solar Eclipse brought people together to celebrate a natural phenomenon the city hasn't witnessed in centuries, igniting curiosity about the natural world. And throughout the year, we welcomed visitors to experience outstanding special guest lecturers and bestselling authors, sold-out planetarium shows, and dynamic science education programs.

Throughout our efforts, the steadfast leadership of dedicated individuals has guided our vision and kept our mission in focus. The Museum's Board Chair, Sally Zlotnick Sears, has been a steward of the Museum's mission in every sense of the word. A longtime Museum supporter, Sears has been a Board Member since 2014 and was named Board Chair in 2021, becoming the first woman to hold that position. During her three-year term, she has played an invaluable role in the design and development of our new galleries and exhibits, in addition to serving as Co-Chair on our \$150 million *Transforming the World of Discovery* campaign. As Sears' term as Board Chair comes to an end in September 2024, I extend my deepest gratitude to her for her commitment to this role and for her ongoing advocacy for this Museum. Along with her husband Larry Sears, Sears' passion for science education, her dedication to the Cleveland community, and her outstanding example of philanthropic leadership have inspired many others to follow her lead.

Sears will be succeeded as Board Chair by Susan Donlan, who has served on the Museum's Board of Directors since 2020. Donlan was elected as the Board's Vice Chair in 2023, and has served on the Executive Committee, Advancement and Campaign Committee, and as the Co-Chair of the Community Engagement Committee. As the Chief Communications Officer at KeyBank, Donlan leads a team of communications professionals who deliver internal communications, media relations, and reputation management for the company. With more than 20 years of experience in communications and public affairs, she brings a wealth of invaluable knowledge and experience to her new role at the Museum. As Board Chair, Donlan's expertise will be a tremendous asset as we work to make science education more relevant, responsive, and welcoming to all.

All the successes represented in this report were made possible by the unwavering support of the Museum's champions, partners, and supporters. Your belief in the Museum's future—in this remarkable dream—has ushered the Cleveland Museum of Natural History into an extraordinary new era. As you read about the many achievements of the past fiscal year, I hope you reflect on how far we've come—and how each of us has a role to play in creating a better future for all. Thank you for supporting the mission of this pivotal institution.

Sincerely,



**Sonia M. Winner**  
President & CEO






# OUR VISION

## TRANSFORMING THE MUSEUM

The Museum's \$150 million transformation project will reframe the very concept of what a natural history museum can be. And between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024, the Museum achieved some of the most significant project milestones to date. One of the most dramatic milestones occurred in September 2023, when the stunning new exterior of the Larry Sears and Sally Zlotnick Sears Dynamic Earth Wing was revealed to the public. The building's curving architecture was inspired by the geological history of Northeast Ohio, with flowing white forms that pay homage to the glaciers that carved the Great Lakes. Simultaneously, floor-to-ceiling glass windows dissolve the boundaries between the exhibits within and the outdoor landscape. Together, the features of the Museum's reimagined façade act in the service of science—providing visitors with expanded opportunities to connect with the natural world.



**\$146M**  
RAISED FOR THE  
TRANSFORMATION  
PROJECT TO DATE



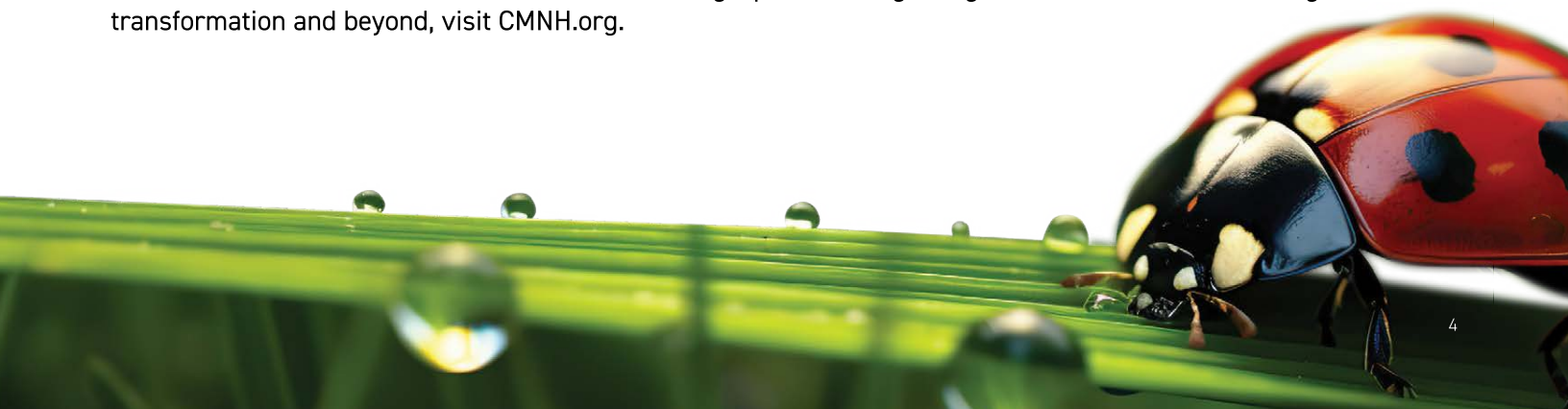
**375,000**  
TOTAL SQUARE  
FOOTAGE WITH  
EXPANSION

## OUR MISSION, VISION & STRATEGIC PLAN

**MISSION** To inspire, through science and education, a passion for nature, the protection of natural diversity, the fostering of health, and leadership to a sustainable future.

**VISION** Healthy humans, a healthy planet, and a better future for all.

**STRATEGIC PLAN** To learn more about the strategic plan that is guiding the Museum's efforts through our transformation and beyond, visit [CMNH.org](https://cmnh.org).





*“The Cleveland Museum of Natural History has always been a beloved institution. Now it will be an essential destination in Northeast Ohio and beyond.”*

—Sally Zlotnick Sears, Board Chair Emeritus

## THE VISITOR HALL UNVEILED

In October 2023, the Cleveland Museum of Natural History achieved another spectacular milestone in its transformation project: the opening of its luminous, 14,650-square-foot Visitor Hall. Presenting some of the most renowned objects and specimens in the Museum’s collection, this welcoming space is free to all visitors—inviting you to experience stories of groundbreaking discovery that are centered here in our region. While each represents an important contribution to our understanding of the world, these specimens’ stories also stand out for the profound impact they have made on Northeast Ohio, the scientific community, and this Museum.





## TIMELINE OF EARTH



### Douglas McCreery and Dr. Laurie McCreery Timeline of the Earth

This scaled timeline sets the stage for the Museum experience, with medallions marking geological and biological events, milestones, and time periods in the history of the Earth. Every inch of the timeline represents 1 million years, allowing visitors to walk from the planet's origins 4.6 billion years ago to the emergence of *Homo sapiens* 300,000 years ago, before ending their journey in the present day.

## ICONIC SPECIMENS



### Moon Rock

Collected by astronauts Alan Bean and Charles Conrad during the Apollo 12 mission in 1969, the Moon rock is on long-term loan from NASA (the National Aeronautics and Space Administration). Specimens like this one help us understand the natural history of the Moon and Earth—and illustrate the gargantuan efforts humans have made to explore our planet and beyond.

### “Happy” or *Haplocanthosaurus delfsi*

—Sponsored by Pam and Don Washkewicz

This plant-eating, long-necked dinosaur walked the Earth during the Jurassic Period roughly 150 million years ago. Happy's fossils were discovered in Colorado in 1954, when the Museum sent a team including college student Edwin Delfs and three high school students to find a dinosaur. Not only did they find one, but Happy was also the first of its kind ever discovered—making it the holotype of its species.





## Gems

This exhibit contains more than 130 specimens from the Museum's collection of gems and minerals. Many of these specimens were originally owned and collected by Jephtha Homer Wade II, grandson of Jephtha Homer Wade I, the noted Cleveland industrialist and benefactor. This collection is an important record of Earth's geologic history—and illustrates the significant role of local citizens in shaping the Museum's legacy.



## Moths and Butterflies

—Sponsored by Julie A. Clayman, MD

This exhibit features lifelike models and images of moths and butterflies that represent specimens in the Museum's collection. These specimens serve as a critical record of the region's moth and butterfly species and how their populations have changed over time. The collection continues to inform research today—providing valuable opportunities for researchers to model changes in Ohio's populations over time.



## “Dunk,” or *Dunkleosteus terrelli*

—Sponsored by Tammy and Dennis Matecun

*Dunkleosteus terrelli*, fondly known as “Dunk,” was a giant, armored fish and fierce predator that swam in Ohio's ancient seas roughly 359 million years ago. *Dunkleosteus* discoveries by Museum scientists, including Peter Bungart, Jesse Earle Hyde, and Dr. Bill Hlavin, have made the Cleveland Museum of Natural History one of the foremost places to study Ohio's Late Devonian ecosystem. In 2020, Dunk was named Ohio's State Fossil Fish.





## Bald Eagle

The Visitor Hall's model of a bald eagle serves as a great reminder of the importance of wildlife conservation. In the 1970s, when populations of bald eagles were rapidly declining, the Museum pioneered a captive breeding program led by the Museum's former Chief Wildlife Officer and current Museum Ambassador Emeritus, Harvey Webster, and Wildlife Specialist Carl Lutzmann. The program revolutionized captive breeding techniques and successfully hatched 10 eaglets that were transferred to wild nests.



## Balto

—Sponsored by The Milton and Tamar Maltz Family Foundation

Balto captured global attention in 1925 when he led a 13-dog team on the final leg of a 674-mile dogsled relay. Their mission—to deliver lifesaving medicine to Nome, Alaska, during an outbreak of diphtheria. After the lifesaving journey was completed, Balto and several of his teammates were given a new home in Cleveland thanks to the generosity of local citizens. Nearly 100 years after Balto's rise to fame, the sled dog's story continues. In 2023, Balto's DNA contributed to studies published in the journal *Science*.



## “Lucy” or *Australopithecus afarensis*

—Sponsored by Robert J. and Linnet E. Fritz

The fossils of Lucy, or *Australopithecus afarensis*, were discovered in Ethiopia in 1974 by a team of scientists led by Dr. Donald Johanson, a paleoanthropologist and the Museum's former Curator of Physical Anthropology. Dr. Johanson and his team found about 40% of Lucy's skeleton and later determined her fossils to be approximately 3.2 million years old. This made Lucy both the oldest and most complete hominin ever found at the time. Lucy's discovery contributed significantly to our understanding of hominins, and she remains an important individual for comparison with new discoveries.





## LOOK AHEAD: A UNIQUE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

With completely reimagined exhibits, more than 375,000 square feet of new and expanded spaces, and more than 2 acres of outdoor visitor areas, the transformed Cleveland Museum of Natural History will invite all to experience one-of-a-kind encounters with science and nature.

### LARRY SEARS AND SALLY ZLOTNICK SEARS DYNAMIC EARTH WING

Through interactions with the fossil record and a myriad of immersive displays, the Sears Dynamic Earth Wing takes visitors on a uniquely personal journey as they explore the 4.6-billion-year history of our planet. Throughout the gallery, insightful exhibits uncover the cycles that shape the Earth, revealing how all living things are connected to the physical world.



**Exhibit spotlight—We're All Stardust:** At this gallery's key interactive experience, participants will use their bodies to control the life cycle of a star as they discover that we are all stardust—made up of the same elements that formed the Universe.

### EVOLVING LIFE WING

In the Evolving Life Wing, visitors will learn about the story of life on Earth—and how all living things adapt and change over time. Using Museum specimens, the Evolving Life Wing reveals how humans are products of the same evolutionary processes that shape all life on our planet. Media-enhanced dioramas immerse visitors in a variety of ecosystems—including near arctic, temperate, tropical, and sub-Saharan Africa—while fascinating case studies and fun interactives illustrate key concepts.



**Exhibit spotlight—Dunk in Action:** Did you know that a tropical sea covered Northeast Ohio about 359 million years ago? At this media-enhanced experience, visitors will engage with an immersive display to see modern-day Cleveland “flood” into the past. Along the way, they’ll be introduced to *Dunkleosteus terrelli*—the fierce predatory fish that swam Ohio’s ancient sea.

### AMES FAMILY CURIOSITY CENTER

This hands-on space encourages visitors of all ages to design their own experiments, observe and identify real Museum specimens, and learn how science relates to their daily life. The Ames Family Curiosity Center invites all to become citizen scientists as they participate in interactive exhibits and explore questions about Ohio’s biodiversity, our changing climate, and the natural world.







# OUR COMMUNITY

## VISITORS, MEMBERS & ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

In the past year, natural wonders and innovative programming allowed the Cleveland Museum of Natural History to bring the community together like never before. We welcomed thousands of Clevelanders to the Museum free of charge during the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Community Days. Since January 2022, this initiative has welcomed nearly 20,000 visitors from Cleveland and East Cleveland with free admission every Sunday. This number signifies an overall growth in visitation to the Museum, with some guests visiting for the first time ever.

Mandel Community Days continue to allow more local families to visit the Museum at no cost—engaging in dynamic programs that strengthen science literacy and inspire a sense of connection to nature.

This year, the Museum also continued its participation in Museums for All, sponsored locally by Paul Lincoln and Kathy Toderick, which offers \$1 admission to participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Museum scientists, educators, staff, and volunteers engaged with thousands of individuals during engaging programs and events. We welcomed numerous special guest lecturers to share fascinating discussions and partnered with local organizations to extend our resources across the region. And through compelling news coverage, staff interviews, and online engagement, we advanced our efforts to reach new audiences and engage our local community and those around the world.

Now, as we complete the final stages of our transformation, we can't wait to welcome the community to a completely reimagined Museum—one that places them at the center of the experience.







*“The Cleveland Museum of Natural History’s community-centered vision is aligned with our focus to support neighborhood development. Our hope is that the Mandel Community Days and Mandel Community Space will help individuals throughout Greater Cleveland foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of science and nature and its relevance to civic engagement.”*

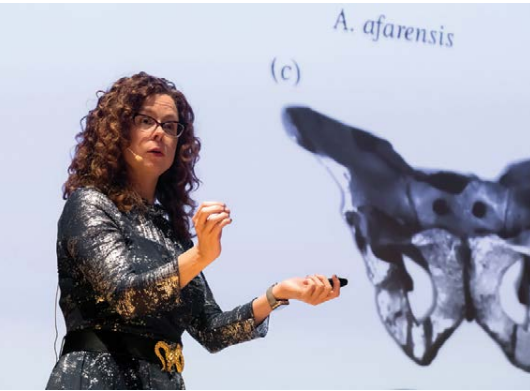
*—Jehuda Reinharz, President and CEO of the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation*

## VISITOR ENGAGEMENT AT A GLANCE





## PROGRAMMING



- **5,110 guests** visited the Museum during Discovery Day. Hosted on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the event features special programming and free admission for all.
- **23,802 visitors** engaged with Museum objects and specimens through touch carts in the galleries.
- **14,500 visitors** engaged with scientists presenting their work and Museum collections during *Current Science* and *Scientists Unleashed* programs.
- **4,900 visitors** attended the Total on the Oval: Community Watch Party for the April 8, 2024 Total Solar Eclipse.
- **43,063 visitors** attended live, interactive planetarium shows.
- **8,641 visitors** attended Pink Floyd's *The Dark Side of the Moon*.











# TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE

A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

On an unseasonably warm Monday in spring, nearly 5,000 people gathered outside the Cleveland Museum of Natural History to witness a cosmic event: the April 8, 2024 total solar eclipse. For many, the anticipation for this event had been building for more than a year, and for good reason—it offered the residents of Northeast Ohio a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to witness a total solar eclipse from their hometown.

Starting early that morning, community members, out-of-town guests, and eclipse-chasers from around the world began to gather at Wade Oval. While they waited for the main event, visitors participated in hands-on activities and peered at the Sun through special solar telescopes. Attendees enjoyed engaging eclipse-themed presentations by Museum Astronomers, who gave overviews of what to expect and informed audiences on how to observe the eclipse safely. The Museum was also thrilled to welcome retired NASA Astronaut Mike Foreman, who shared his experiences from over 637 hours in space during presentations with the public and the Museum's Board of Directors.





Before long, the countdown began. And at precisely 3:13pm, the Moon passed between the Sun and the Earth—perfectly aligning to completely block out the Sun's surface for nearly 4 minutes. As the total solar eclipse darkened the skies to a deep blue, golden light appeared at the edge of every horizon—as if there were a 360-degree sunset. All the while, shouts of joy and awe filled the air as onlookers stared in wonder at the mesmerizing view of totality.

Altogether, it was a breathtaking example of the power of nature to bring people together. The Museum is proud to have been part of this event, which was produced in collaboration with University Circle Inc. and in partnership with the Association of Science and Technology Centers (ASTC), with the Simons Foundation as part of its 'In the Path of Totality' initiative, and the American Astronomical Society (AAS). We hope that the event inspired in many a renewed sense of wonder at the natural world and a greater interest in astronomy, science, and nature.







In March, the Museum hosted a press conference with Cuyahoga County Executive Chris Ronayne to discuss Cleveland tourism, safety, and the science related to the total solar eclipse.

## IN THE NEWS

\$186B

IN ESTIMATED ADVERTISING VALUE EQUIVALENCY (AVE), A METRIC USED TO MEASURE THE DOLLAR VALUE OF MEDIA COVERAGE IN PUBLIC RELATIONS



4.66B

ESTIMATED  
PEOPLE  
REACHED



116

INTERVIEWS  
GIVEN BY  
MUSEUM STAFF



3,034

STORIES  
PUBLISHED  
IN THE MEDIA



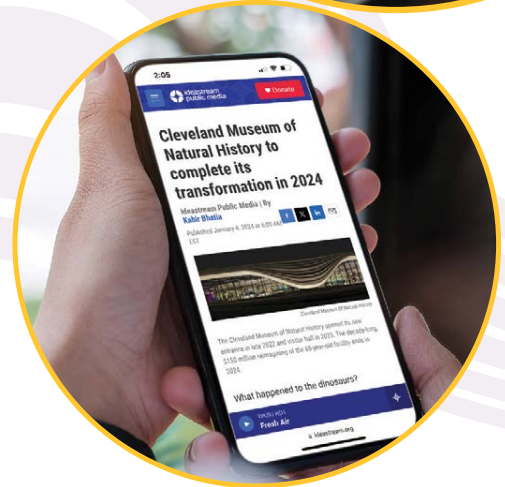
26

PRESS  
RELEASES  
SENT



Throughout the year, Museum milestones generated buzz and captivated audiences across the nation. Below are a few highlights of the Museum achievements that made headlines:

- The opening of the Museum's Visitor Hall garnered 451 pieces of media coverage and reached over 270 million potential viewers.
- The city of Cleveland and the Museum's transformation were listed on *Travel + Leisure's* list of "The 50 Best Places to Travel in 2024."
- *Wanderlust* highlighted the Museum's transformation as one of "The world's best museum openings and expansions in 2024."
- The Museum's transformation made the cover of *Properties Magazine* and was highlighted in the feature article, "Evolving approach: Cleveland Museum of Natural History renovation, expansion elevates visitor experience."
- Associate Curator and Robert J. and Linnet E. Fritz Chair of Human Origins, Dr. Emma Finestone, was featured in national media including *National Geographic's* "The 11 most astonishing scientific discoveries of 2023."
- *New York Times* journalist John Hanc visited the Museum and reported on the vision behind the transformation in the article, "Museums Are Changing How They Bring Natural Sciences to Life."
- Museum President & CEO Sonia Winner published an op-ed in *The Plain Dealer/Cleveland.com*. The piece, "Revealing the interdependence of humans and nature by bridging the divide between art and science," highlighted the Museum's vision of making science education more relevant and accessible to all.
- Winner also delivered Ursuline College's 2024 commencement address in a speech that highlighted the power of change to create opportunity.



## MUSEUM FEATURED IN

The New York Times

TRAVEL+  
LEISURE



CRAIN'S  
CLEVELAND  
BUSINESS







# OUR STUDENTS

## LEARNING AT THE MUSEUM & IMPACT

The Cleveland Museum of Natural History was founded upon the belief that the city of Cleveland needed an agency for the diffusion of knowledge. Since the Museum's inception, that belief has remained central to our mission.

Created in 1921, the Museum's Education Department was one of the first of its kind in the United States. It was established at a time when the Museum's only space was an office in the Lennox building at East 9th Street and Euclid Avenue. The Museum did not yet have any exhibits or even collections—and yet, its trustees had the foresight to cement the importance of education in the institution's future.

Today, the Museum continues to innovate in the field of education, delivering engaging programs carried out by teams of dedicated educators and scientists. Advancements such as virtual learning opportunities have enabled our educators to reach learners in 84 of Ohio's 88 counties, all 50 states, and 27 different countries. Meanwhile, our Science-to-Go™ program brings the expertise of Museum educators to Cleveland classrooms, where they engage in hands-on explorations with fossils, ancient artifacts, and more—all during lessons informed by groundbreaking research and that meet Ohio's Learning Standards. And when the Museum's transformation is complete in December 2024, students and visitors will be invited to explore completely reimagined exhibits abundant with interactive and inquiry-based learning opportunities.

All of these efforts are guided by Project Athena—an ambitious educational initiative that provides the architecture for the development of programming and educational experiences. And as part of its transformation, the Museum is further investing in virtual programming through new distance learning studios including the Bama and Pomeranz Distance Learning Lab, located in the Larry Sears and Sally Zlotnick Sears Dynamic Earth Wing.

The Museum is grateful to all who have supported its next chapter of innovative science education through the *Transforming the World of Discovery* campaign. Soon, the transformed Museum will present a world of opportunities for the promotion of science literacy, citizen science, and curiosity—in Cleveland and beyond.

**“...We believe that the time is not far distant when Cleveland will have a museum of natural history of which it may feel proud.”**

*—Recommendations as to the Establishment of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History.  
Report of the Committee on Education of the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce, December 17, 1919.*



“The Cleveland Museum of Natural History has provided invaluable educational programming to Northeast Ohio students for decades.”

—Heather Lennox, Practice Leader of the Jones Day Foundation's Business Restructuring & Reorganization practice

## EDUCATION

- **61,819 students and adults** served through education programming.
- **28,123 preK-12 students** served through school programs.
- **59,579 visitors** to Smead Discovery Center—Presented by PNC.
- **5,848 participants** in Show & Tell in the Smead Discovery Center—Presented by PNC.
- **16,033 students** served through in-person school programs.
- **4,690 participants** served through Science-to-Go™ programs.
- **10,858 participants** served through Virtual Field Trips & Learning Experiences.
- **17,482 participants** in programs provided free of charge to Title I schools, where children from families with low incomes make up at least 40% of school enrollment.







# OUR SCIENCE

COLLECTIONS, RESEARCH & CONVERSATION

“*I participated in after-school and summer camp programs at the Natural History Museum in Cleveland, where I grew up. My mother signed me up to every possible program. That’s a place where I not only had my curiosity piqued, but I also began to meet scientists, to learn what the scientific process is like.*”

—Sean Decatur, President, American Museum of Natural History,  
in an interview with PBS NewsHour

During the last fiscal year, the Museum made significant progress in research, collections, and conservation, while also advancing its exhibit and gallery development. Museum scientists published peer-reviewed studies, submitted grant proposals, fielded public inquiries, and provided external researchers with invaluable data and information about Museum collections that enabled further studies. In their efforts to promote science literacy, they presented dozens of gallery talks, delivered academic and public presentations, and spent hundreds of hours interacting with Museum visitors during programs such as *Current Science* and *Scientists Unleashed*.

At the same time, the Museum achieved major milestones in its work to reimagine all exhibits and content. This included the completion of exhibit scripts, artwork design, the placement of objects and specimens, and the design of mechanical interactives. The Museum also advanced the immersive media experiences that will bring scientific concepts to life in its new galleries—working through the final development of story, copy, software design, user experience, and visual assets.

Thanks to philanthropic support, the Museum's transformation will bring visitors even closer to its unique collections and groundbreaking research. The Museum's new exhibits will integrate active research and current scientific knowledge, using real specimens to provide evidence for case studies and creating a platform of trust with the public. In doing so, the Museum will cultivate a passion for science within the community through authentic interactions with scientists and their work, translating the latest in science and research to inspire a personal investment in protecting the health of humans and our planet.



## RESEARCH



890

NEWLY ACCESSIONED  
SPECIMENS ADDED TO  
THE COLLECTIONS



3,791

RECORDS  
NEWLY DIGITIZED



159

REQUESTS FOR COLLECTION  
INFORMATION OR DATA FULFILLED  
FOR EXTERNAL RESEARCHERS



259

PUBLIC INQUIRIES FIELDIED  
REGARDING INFORMATION  
ON NATURAL HISTORY



79

GALLERY TALKS PRESENTED FOR EXHIBITS  
IN CORNING GALLERY, INCLUDING JOHN  
JAMES AUDUBON'S *BIRDS OF AMERICA*,  
ANDY WARHOL'S *ENDANGERED SPECIES*, AND  
*DISCOVERING DUNKLEOSTEUS TERRELLI*



29

RESEARCH STUDIES PUBLISHED  
BY SCIENTISTS USING MUSEUM  
COLLECTIONS OR DATA



5

PEER-REVIEWED STUDIES  
PUBLISHED BY MUSEUM  
SCIENTISTS



13

GRANT PROPOSALS  
SUBMITTED BY  
MUSEUM SCIENTISTS





## THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

Since its founding more than a century ago, the Cleveland Museum of Natural History's collections have grown to include millions of objects and specimens, representing a vast repository of knowledge that spans generations. Fossils provide crucial data on human origins and species evolution, while flora and fauna specimens offer critical insights into biodiversity and ecosystem changes. These collections also document environmental shifts, serving as invaluable resources for understanding the impacts of climate change.

Traditionally, accessing museum collections required in-person visits, a factor that can limit their reach. However, digitization is transforming this process, making collections more accessible and preserving them for the future. In the past year, the Museum digitized 3,791 specimens using advanced technologies like photogrammetry, LiDAR, and structured light scanning. These 3D models are used for archival and research purposes, with over 500 shared on platforms like Sketchfab for public viewing. Supported by grants from organizations such as the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the National Science Foundation (NSF), the digitization efforts aim to broaden access for researchers and educators.

These 3D models have also been used in the construction of new exhibits. They help exhibit designers to model specimen placement on the platforms, create laser-cut mineralogy mounts, and create reproductions of certain specimens for display. Museum staff have also scanned many of the institution's most iconic specimens for use in educational and outreach programs. This includes the sled dog Balto, many of the gems in its mineralogy collection, and the skeletal reconstruction of Lucy, the ancient hominin.

Ultimately, preserving and expanding the Museum's collections is a continuous effort that involves a committed team of scientists, volunteers, and supporters. This collective effort not only safeguards the treasure trove of information our collections hold, but also fosters an environment where scientific advancements can flourish—and where everyone is invited to discover them.

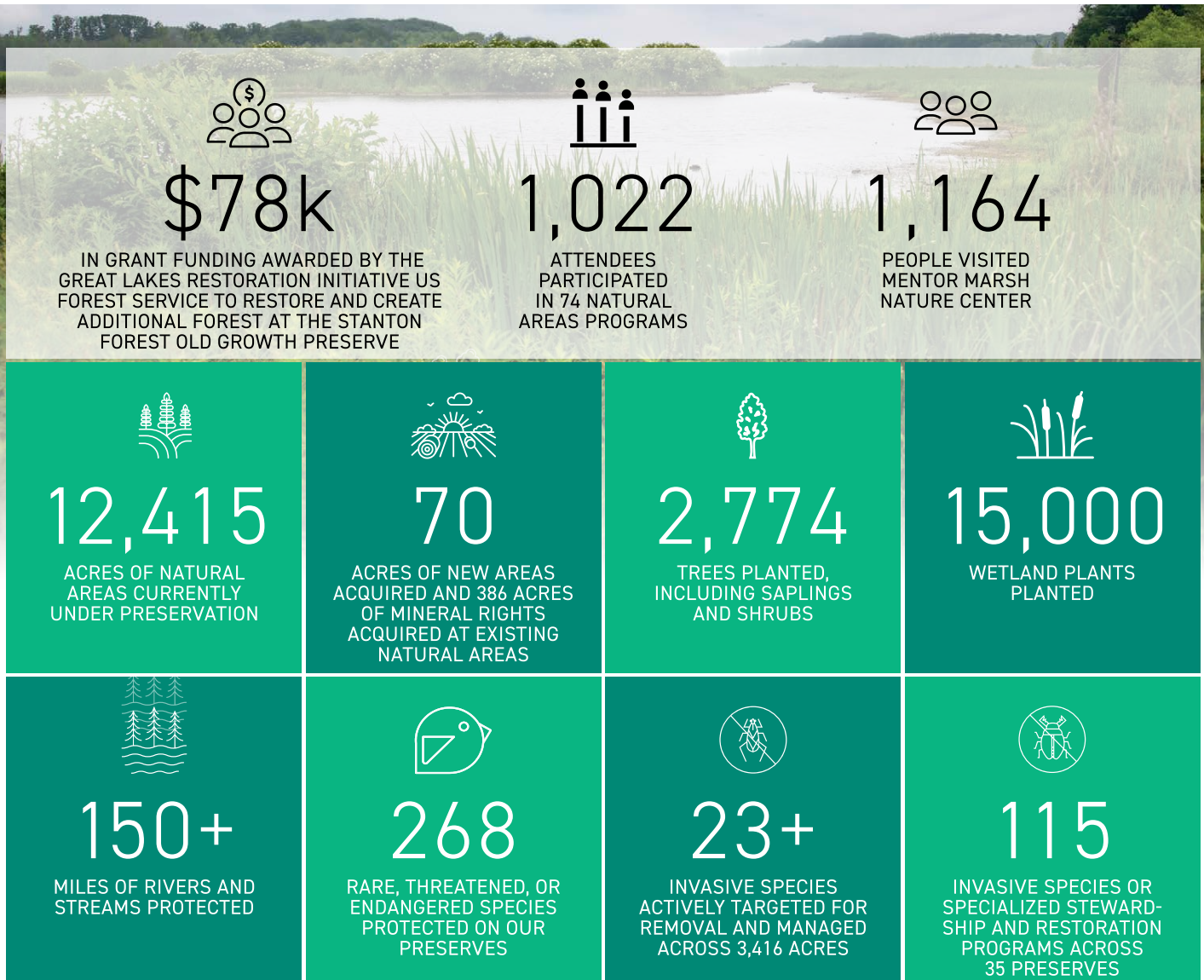




## NATURAL AREAS

The Museum's Natural Areas team performs the important work of stewarding its 12,415 acres of natural preserves. In the past year, Natural Areas staff made significant strides on many stewardship efforts. These include habitat enhancement projects, wildlife management programs, restoration work, area clean-ups, the management and removal of invasive species, the planting of trees, shrubs, and wetland plants, and much more.

In tandem with these efforts, the Museum continued engaging visitors through its Natural Areas Program—hosting field trips and hikes, reaching new audiences, and engaging the community in conservation efforts. It also engaged numerous volunteers across various projects, significantly contributing to the division's goals. And last summer, the Museum was selected to participate in a video project with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF). Among other projects, the video highlights the vital restoration project at Mentor Marsh State Nature Preserve, which is one of the Museum's natural areas preserves and one of the largest natural marshes remaining along the Lake Erie shoreline. Once devastated by industrial waste dumping, Mentor Marsh is now an encouraging example of an ecosystem in recovery. NFWF provided generous funding to this project through their support of the Sustain Our Great Lakes Program, one of Mentor Marsh's key early supporters. The video is an astonishing tribute to the critical restoration efforts happening in Northeast Ohio and across the country.







## **RALPH PERKINS II WILDLIFE CENTER & WOODS GARDEN—PRESENTED BY KEYBANK**

Home to mammals, fish, and birds, Perkins Wildlife Center offers visitors an unparalleled opportunity to learn about Ohio's native species first-hand. Each animal that calls Perkins home has come to the center as part of a rescue-and-rehabilitation effort, and none can be successfully released into the wild. In their home at the Museum, they serve as animal ambassadors for the natural world—representing their species and helping Museum visitors to connect with nature.

This year, Perkins Wildlife Center received several upgrades, including all-new handrails, a new overhead trailway for its resident raccoons, and completely renovated its coyote yards. The Wildlife team also launched a Perkins Stewardship Program that schedules staff for dedicated time to interact with guests. During the fiscal year, the Wildlife team contributed a collective 234 hours to this program. And currently, the Museum is participating in a spotted turtle program with Ohio Department of Natural Resources, temporarily housing 22 animals for future release back to nature in addition to our 135 permanent residents.

# 3

## **NEW ANIMALS ADDED TO PERKINS WILDLIFE CENTER IN FY24**

**TUMBLE THE VIRGINIA OPOSSUM,  
REMI THE RACCOON, AND  
THE AMERICAN TOAD**







135

ANIMALS INCLUDING  
MAMMALS, FISH,  
AND BIRDS



453


GUESTS ATTENDED 12  
AFTER DARK TOURS OF  
PERKINS WILDLIFE  
CENTER DURING FRIDAY  
NIGHT LIGHTS



782

KEEPER TALKS  
PRESENTED BY  
WILDLIFE STAFF TO  
15,470 GUESTS





OUR

# MUSEUM

STAFF, BOARD, INTERNS & VOLUNTEERS



# MUSEUM LEADERSHIP



**SONIA WINNER**  
President & CEO



**MEENAKSHI SHARMA**  
Senior Vice President  
Chief Strategy Officer



**MELISSA SANTEE**  
Chief Philanthropy Officer



**GAVIN SVENSON, Ph.D.**  
Chief Science Officer  
Curator of Invertebrate Zoology



**PATTY LOHISER**  
Senior Director of Finance





## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

AS OF SEPTEMBER 2024

### Board Chair

Susan Donlan

### Board Chair Emeritus

Sally Z. Sears

### Vice Chair

James L Hambrick

### Vice Chair

Alayne L Reitman

### Secretary

Douglas McCreery

### Treasurer

Kenneth Outcalt

### Active Directors

Ames, Richard S.  
Aryapadi, Manikantan  
Baco, John A.  
Barksdale, Edward  
Bright, James R.  
Brown, Barbara  
Buchholzer, Frances S.

Cunningham, Kari A.  
DaSilva, Byron A.  
Donlan, Susan, *Chair*  
Esposito, Michael  
Gallagher, Michael  
Green, Albert M.  
Grimm, Jonathon L.  
Hambrick, James L., *Vice Chair*  
Hamilton, Thomas A.  
Hellman, Peter  
Hlavin, William  
Insul, Donald  
King, Woods, IV  
Kohl, Kristie T.  
Lambo, James  
McCreery, Douglas, *Secretary*  
McHale, Stephen J.  
McMillan, Judith K.  
Moore, Marjorie L.  
Morley, Thomas M.  
Murch, Maynard H., V  
Outcalt, Kenneth, *Treasurer*  
Reitman, Alayne L., *Vice Chair*  
Sears, Sally Z., *Chair Emeritus*  
Shafran, Joseph M.  
Shiverick, Reginald C.

Stueber, Frederick G.  
Voudouris, Elizabeth  
Vranich, Ronald M.  
Weiss, Michael A.

### Life Directors

Anderson, A. Chace  
Neary, Janet E.  
Rankin, Claiborne R.

### Honorary Directors

Bolton, William B.  
Christ, Diane D.  
Crowley, Amos H., III  
Fratianne, Richard B.  
Kinder, Gordon D.  
Lincoln, G. Russell  
Moore, Dan T., III  
O'Neill, William J., Jr.  
Tejada, Maria Teresa  
Tormey, Thomas A.

### Ex-Officio Directors

Sonia Winner, President & CEO  
Natalie Sones, Friends of CMNH



## STAFF



107

FULL-TIME  
POSITIONS AT  
THE MUSEUM



28

NEW HIRES  
IN FY24



14

INTERNAL  
PROMOTIONS  
IN FY24

## VOLUNTEERS



14,720

VOLUNTEER HOURS  
CONTRIBUTED BY  
250 ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS



9,555

HOURS IN RESEARCH  
AND COLLECTIONS  
ROLES, INCLUDING:



2,634

HOURS IN VISITOR  
ENGAGEMENT ROLES



2,336

HOURS IN  
BIOLOGICAL  
ANTHROPOLOGY



2,096

HOURS IN THE  
NATURAL AREAS PROGRAM



1,972

HOURS IN  
EARTH SCIENCES

## INTERNS



10

KIRTLANDIA  
INTERNS



24

SCIENCE 4 SUCCESS  
INTERNS



2

UNPAID  
INTERNS



11

WORK STUDY  
STUDENTS





OUR

# FINANCIALS

ECONOMIC IMPACT & PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT

PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT

 <b>\$1,675,570</b> RECEIVED IN CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE MUSEUM'S ENDOWMENT	 <b>\$146M</b> MILESTONE REACHED IN FUNDS RAISED FOR THE \$150 MILLION <i>TRANSFORMING THE WORLD OF DISCOVERY</i> CAMPAIGN	 <b>\$3,000,240</b> ANNUAL FUND DOLLARS RAISED THANKS TO 1,367 DONORS	 <b>174</b> LEADERSHIP CIRCLE DONORS, THE HIGHEST NUMBER EVER AND A 56.7% INCREASE OVER LAST YEAR
 <b>\$600,000</b> IN ENDOWMENT PLEDGES	 <b>\$16,763,541</b> NET ENDOWMENT EARNINGS	 <b>\$169,334,748</b> TOTAL ENDOWMENT	



## FY24 FINANCIALS

**\$15.4M**

TOTAL REVENUE

**A3 RATING**

SIGNIFYING OUR SOLID CREDIT STANDING

Every part of the Museum's mission is made possible through the philanthropic support of dedicated individuals, foundations, and partners. The Museum is deeply grateful to all who have contributed in the past fiscal year. The Museum has also been fortunate to receive generous support from the State of Ohio for both our educational programming and transformation project. Additionally, the Museum is generously funded in part by the residents of Cuyahoga County through a public grant from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture.

This year, the Museum was honored to receive several major contributions. This included a monumental gift from Larry Sears and Sally Zlotnick Sears in support of its \$150 million transformation project—a gift that brings the Sears' total campaign contributions to more than \$10 million. In recognition of their outstanding support, the Museum will name one of its two new wings, the Larry Sears and Sally Zlotnick Sears Dynamic Earth Wing, in their honor.

In addition, the Museum received a transformative \$3 million gift from Robert "Bob" and Linnet Fritz. This remarkable gift funded the creation of the Robert J. and Linnet E. Fritz Endowed Chair of Human Origins, supports the Museum's transformation project, and sponsors the Museum's exhibit of Lucy. In June, the Museum hosted a special charring ceremony recognizing Associate Curator Dr. Emma Finestone as the Museum's inaugural Robert J. and Linnet E. Fritz Endowed Chair of Human Origins, our first charring in more than 20 years.

**“We are happy to be joining with a lot of other people in Cleveland in making this museum's transformation possible. It will become one of the real jewels in the University Circle campus.”**

—Stephen Hoffman, Chairman of the Mandel Foundation





# THANK YOU

From all at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, thank you for your unwavering support.

Your remarkable contributions are instrumental in not only sustaining the vital, everyday work of this Museum, but also ensuring that future generations will have the opportunity to explore, learn, and be inspired by the wonders of nature. As we approach our Grand Opening in the coming year, we are filled with pride and gratitude, knowing it is your commitment and passion that have made these milestones possible. Thank you for continuing to be the cornerstone of our success—and for your continued dedication to our shared mission.



