

Press Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Nicholson Foundation Grant Brings *Creative Play* to Newark Museum, Community

NEWARK, NJ – A grant from the Nicholson Foundation will enable the Newark Museum to offer new educational programs to young learners (ages 3-5) and their families in Newark and the surrounding communities. The Museum is the only institution in Newark that provides access to works of art, a natural science collection, and cultural and historic artifacts that stimulate curiosity and learning.

"We are very pleased to launch this new partnership with the Newark Museum. The Creative Play project will provide many parents and young children with mutual art and science discoveries and enhance parents' engagement in their children's early learning," said Charles Venti, Executive Director of The Nicholson Foundation.

The new series, Creative Play enhances the Museum's weekend educational programs, with a focus on at-risk children ages 3-5. The Museum will also offer off-site programs at the Weequahic Branch of the Newark Public Library in Newark's South Ward, and provide free transportation from the South Ward to the Museum in partnership with the Library.

"Museums offer wonder-filled learning experiences where young children make discoveries, develop language and knowledge, and connect their natural curiosity with the wider world. The Nicholson Foundation grant enables us to reach and inspire even more students, families and caregivers with our collections," said Sonnet Takahisa, Deputy Director of Engagement and Innovation at the Newark Museum.

Working closely with the Offices of Newark Mayor Ras Baraka and Early Childhood, the Museum's renowned art and science collections will give young learners opportunities to grow and achieve, and help them prepare for Kindergarten.

"The Museum has been a pioneer in children's programming since its founding in 1909 and it is devoted to providing educational programs for children and families in its community." said Steven Kern, Director and CEO of the Newark Museum. "Each year, more than 100,000 children, families and adults participate in initiatives that include more than 60 different on-site and school outreach programs for students from Pre-K through 12th grade."

In 2010, the Museum began in-depth program development and implementation with the early childhood school community of Newark through its Museum Beginnings programming. As a result of this partnership with Newark schools and expansion to other northern New Jersey school districts, the number of 3-8 year olds who participate in the Museum's programs has more than quadrupled over the past three years. In June, 885 children and their caregivers attended the annual family preschool "Night at the Museum" to learn about high quality early learning programs. The Nicholson Foundation grant will expand the programming in the 2015 Preschool Night, incorporating new art and science collection-based activities.

"We truly value the partnership and believe that bridging the gap between cultural and community-based early learning institutions is the secret ingredient to achieving academic success," said Nayibe Capellan, Early Childhood Specialist at Newark Public Schools.

Creative Play is based upon the idea that play—pretending, using stimulating tools and toys, exercising mind and body, doing something silly, acting in a game, being curious—is an essential part of children's development. The Newark Museum's program will share its world-class collections of use art and science to engage children and their caregivers, modeling the kind of creative play that will sustain early learning both at home and through continued visits to cultural institutions.

For further information about the Newark Museum, visit www.newarkmuseum.org.

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ABOUT THE NEWARK MUSEUM

The Newark Museum is located at 49 Washington Street in the Downtown/Arts District of Newark, New Jersey, just 3 blocks from NJPAC and 10 miles west of New York City. The Museum is open all year round: Wednesdays through Sundays, from Noon – 5:00 p.m. Suggested Museum admission: Adults, \$12.00; Children, Seniors and Students with valid I.D., \$7.00. Newark Residents and Members are admitted free. The Museum Café is open for lunches Wednesday through Sunday. Convenient parking is available for a fee. The Newark Museum campus, including its collections, facilities, and other resources, is accessible to accommodate the broadest audience possible, including individuals utilizing wheelchairs, with physical impairments, other disabilities, or special needs. For general information, call 973.596.6550 or visit our web site, <http://www.NewarkMuseum.org>.

Newark Museum, a not-for-profit museum of art, science and education, receives operating support from the City of Newark, the State of New Jersey, the New Jersey Council on the Arts/Department of State — a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, the New Jersey Cultural Trust, the Prudential Foundation, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the Victoria Foundation, the Wallace Foundation and other corporations, foundations and individuals. Funds for acquisitions and activities other than operations are provided by members and other contributors.

The Newark Museum is just a few steps from the new NJTransit Light Rail Washington Park Station. Direct connection with the Light Rail at the Broad Street Station and through Penn Station makes the Museum a convenient ride from all points in the region.