



News Release

For Immediate Release

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World Class Children's Museum Receives Huge Boost

Winchester, VA 10/04/07 – The Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum's *Discovery in the Park* capital campaign received \$500,000 from Frederick County, Virginia toward the construction of a new building in Jim Barnett Park. This contribution matches a portion of the funding from the Commonwealth of Virginia, and completes efforts to acquire support from all local public sources: federal, state, city and county. The total raised now, including this contribution, is \$6.1 million in combined cash and gifts-in-kind pledged, and pushes the Museum's capital campaign to the next phase.

"This is a deeply appreciated vote of confidence from our community leaders," said Peggy McKee, Executive Director. "Frederick County joined the City of Winchester and our state and federal governments as public entities that want to see families in our region have a world-class children's museum. It is a huge boost to the efforts of everyone involved."

The next phase of the capital campaign includes pending and new requests for contributions from individuals and corporate supporters, and will move the project toward the much anticipated commencement of construction. On three and one-half acres in the Jim Barnett Park leased to the Discovery Museum by the City of Winchester, the new building will be an expansion from its confining 6,000 square feet of gallery and public space to approximately 25,000 square feet of public space, with additional environmental science and arts exhibits planned for outdoors. Designed by local award-winning architects Reader and Swartz, Inc., the new museum will both enhance educational opportunities for our local families and schools, and attract visitors from a wide region who are searching for an excellent leisure-time destination.

Capital campaign steering committee member J.J. Smith explained, "The Frederick County contribution instantly bumps up the capital campaign to the next phase. In all capital projects, you have to cross the hurdle of proving that the project will actually happen. The early contributors act on faith. Those who have been waiting to be sure now have an undeniable green light."

George Ohrstrom of Clarke County, a long time Museum patron, praised the Frederick County funding decision saying, "From my perspective, the community is really just awakening to the remarkable value of the new Museum. This contribution is an investment in families and children, is unique in our region, and shows true vision and leadership."

"Frederick County is pleased to be fiscally postured to be able to support this excellent community resource and vital element of our economic development package," said Dick Shickle, Chairman of the Frederick County Board of Supervisors.

The Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum is dedicated to preserving childhood, promoting lifelong learning through play, and building social capital in its community. The components of nature – sun, wind, earth, and water – influence buildings in the environment and will be interpreted in this project. The new building itself will be a teaching tool. The sustainable features, such as the sod roof, the photovoltaic cells, and the cellulose insulation will be exposed and explained. The project has wide community appeal for all those who support learning for children and families. The new Museum will provide unparalleled opportunities for children to explore in exciting, safe, innovative learning environments.

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