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## **THE RACE TO THE TOP BEGINS AT CHILDREN'S MUSEUMS**

—*InterActivity 2010: Invest Early • Inspire Growth Conference Showcases*

*Solutions that Spark Lifelong Learners* —

ARLINGTON, VA — To solve the problem of public education in America, school reform is not enough. Early learning is the foundation for lifelong learning. Children's museums are places where children ages 0-12 learn through play and exploration in environments designed just for them. The Association of Children's Museums' (ACM) annual meeting, *InterActivity 2010: Invest Early • Inspire Growth*, is hosted by the nationally recognized Minnesota Children's Museum and runs May 6-8 at the Crowne Plaza Saint Paul–Riverfont Hotel. The conference will highlight the best education, outreach, research and exhibits that support a solid foundation for children.

"Through play, children learn to solve problems, cooperate and negotiate — all important in building cognitive, social and emotional skills that are critical for success in school and life," says Janet Rice Elman, executive director of the Association of Children's Museums.

More than 60 sessions are described in the *InterActivity 2010 Final Program*, available at [www.ChildrensMuseums.org](http://www.ChildrensMuseums.org). Contact ACM or Minnesota Children's Museum for media passes.

### **Conference Highlights**

- Members from the Nanoscale Informal Science Education Network will present a pre-conference workshop on providing age-appropriate activities for very young children around the concepts of nanotechnology. [Wed, May 5, 8:15 a.m.-4:00 p.m.]
- Johnnetta Cole, Ph.D., anthropologist, director of the National Museum of African Art and former Spelman College president, will speak on strengthening diversity and inclusion at the opening plenary session sponsored by Target. [Thurs, May 6, 9:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m.]
- Institute of Museum and Library Services and museum representatives will share results from the report *Museums, Libraries and 21st Century Skills* and insights on the Obama administration's education reform priorities. [Thurs, May 6, 10:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m.]
- Reach Advisors will provide top-line results from its January 2010 Museum Advocates Research survey examining the fundamental motivations of museum visitors and what triggers these visitors to become museum advocates. [Thurs, May 6, 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m.]
- Museums across the country are receiving requests to open full-time schools within their facilities. Roto Studio and Miami Children's Museum will discuss this trend in *The Pros, Cons and Process of Opening a Museum School* session. [Thurs, May 6, 4:15 p.m.-5:30 p.m.]
- Dan Pallotta, author of *Uncharitable: How Restraints on Nonprofits Undermine Their Potential* and founder of Pallotta TeamWorks, will deliver a keynote speech on how nonprofits can grow by challenging conventional wisdom. [Fri, May 7, 9:00 a.m.-10:15 a.m.]
- MetLife Foundation and ACM will distribute \$30,000 to children's museums through the 2010 *Promising Practice Award*, which recognizes innovative green practices, and the 2010 *Replication Award*, which funds a previous *Promising Practice Award* winner to develop an online toolkit so other museums can replicate the program. [Fri, May 7, 9:00 a.m.-10:15 a.m.]
- More than 60 exhibitors — from museum architecture and exhibit design firms to museum product manufacturers — will present creative, playful and eye-popping ideas for children's museums in the ACM MarketPlace. [Fri, May 7, 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.]

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- Panelists from *American Journal of Play*, University of Minnesota's Center for Early Education and Development, Montessori Training Center of Minnesota and the originator of the PBS documentary, "Where Do the Children Play," will debate the value of structured and unstructured play in a Nature, Nurture & Play salon. [Fri, May 7, 2:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m.]
- Peter L. Benson, Ph.D., president & CEO of Search Institute, will accept ACM's 2010 *Great Friend to Kids Award* on behalf of his organization. Dr. Benson will provide a keynote speech about sparking positive development in children and the long-term benefits of doing so. [Sat, May 8, 9:00 a.m.-10:15 a.m.]

InterActivity 2010: *Invest Early • Inspire Growth* is sponsored by Target, Best Buy, F. R. Bigelow Foundation, The Saint Paul Foundation, 3M, VEE Corporation, Travelers and Greater Twin Cities United Way. Additional support is provided by Architects & Exhibits iN Design; Argyle Design, Inc.; Ballard Spahr LLP; ConsultEcon, Inc.; Ecolab; Haizlip Studio; Jack Rouse Associates; K&K Insurance; Kraemer Design + Production; Lexington Design + Fabrication; Loop Capital Markets, LLC; MindSplash; New West Technologies, Inc.; NorthStar Museums; RedBox Workshop; Roto Studio; Sparks; and Superior Exhibits & Design, Inc.

InterActivity 2010 will draw more than 600 participants from the United States, Australia, Canada, China, Egypt, Indonesia, Mexico, Norway, Qatar, the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom.

### **About the InterActivity 2010 Museum Host**

Minnesota Children's Museum is a non-profit community institution committed to sparking children's learning through play. Grownups and children from infancy to ten years old find a fun gathering place designed for families to learn and play together while enjoying creative, interactive exhibits and programs. Located in downtown Saint Paul, the 65,000 square-foot museum features five permanent galleries: "OurWorld," "Habitot®," "WorldWorks," "Rooftop ArtPark" and "EarthWorld" as well as two changing exhibit spaces. In addition to the galleries, families can take part in drop-in programs such as Big Fun! physical play, Story Time and more. Although the museum's innovative traveling exhibits and signature daily programs are well-known throughout the community, the mission of the museum extends far beyond downtown Saint Paul. As a leading traveling exhibit developer for children's museums nationwide, Minnesota Children's Museum sparks learning in young children across the continent. Please visit [www.MCM.org](http://www.MCM.org) for more information.

### **About Association of Children's Museums**

ACM is a professional service organization for children's museums around the world. ACM's mission is to build the capacity of children's museums to serve as town squares for children and families where play inspires creativity and lifelong learning. There are approximately 400 children's museums internationally. Children's museums annually reach more than 31 million children and families. For links to ACM's international list of museums and more information about InterActivity 2010, visit [www.ChildrensMuseums.org](http://www.ChildrensMuseums.org).