



2016 Annual Report

***Spark!***

Imagination and Science Center

Mission: To inspire people of all ages to explore science and the arts through hands-on exhibits and programs that spark a lifelong love of learning.

## Staff

Julie Bryan  
Executive Director

Tiffany Martin  
Education Coordinator

Christy Thompson  
Operations Coordinator

Liz Fort  
Intern

Amy Loomis  
Intern

## Board of Directors

Michael Howell  
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Vice President/Secretary

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Karl Bramer

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Emily Dennis

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Lauren Seiler

Don Trisel

## Dear Friends,

2016 was an amazing year! With your support, the Children's Discovery Museum went through an entire remodel and re-opened as Spark! Imagination and Science Center.

**New exhibits.** During the remodel, every exhibit received some much needed TLC. The Dinosaur exhibit is bigger than ever with a great place to dig for fossils and a 3 dimensional dinosaur puzzle (on loan to us from Harrison County Parks and Recreation). Thanks to a generous sponsorship from Cardinal Pediatrics, our doctor/dentist area has been refurbished with a whole new look. New percussion instruments can be found in the Imagination Station and some great new exhibit components filled out the Engineer It! exhibit. Thanks to a generous grant from NASA, the Space Weather exhibit was enlarged to include a model, created by students from Paw Paw, West Virginia, of a satellite that studies events that make space weather happen and virtual reality goggles that will make you feel like you are walking through space.

**New Staff.** We welcomed Christy Thompson to our staff who is now doing a great job at the front desk as well as running our social media and membership program and many other things. Through a grant from the United Way, we hired Tiffany Martin as our Education Coordinator. Tiffany will continue holding great makers programs for adults and children and will expand our school outreach and field trip program.

**Award.** In February of 2016, Executive Director, Julie Bryan received the Small Museum Association Hunter-Burley award. The award recognizes an individual's outstanding contributions to the advancement of public access or professional growth for an individual institution. To increase public access to the museum, several outreach and afterschool programs to rural and underserved populations were created and funding was secured to become the first museum in West Virginia to become a "Museums for All" facility in which visitors with an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card receive free admission. To support the professional growth of the museum, Spark applied for and completed the Museum Assessment Program (MAP), a program of the American Alliance of Museums (AAM). As part of the MAP program, the museum completes a self-assessment and a peer reviewer visits the museum to give recommendations. Spark was able to apply for a second visit from the peer reviewer which formed the basis of the 2017 strategic plan.

*Thank you for supporting Spark! Imagination and Science Center.*

Sincerely,



Julie Bryan  
Executive Director



Michael Howell  
Board President

Spark! is encouraging Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM), Healthy Living and Creativity in West Virginia through exhibits, special events and educational programs!

## Educational Programs and Special Events



**Spark!** held an LED holiday card makers event for adults. Participants had the opportunity to create and take home light-up holiday cards.



Visitors to **Spark's!** Annual Science Day event participated in a variety of activities to learn about optics, owls, nanoscience and more.



**Spark!** held many Hands-On Science Area events with new materials purchased through a generous grant from the Women's Giving Circle of Northcentral WV.



**Spark!** partnered with Pop Shop and the Art Museum of WVU for "Inspire your Heart with Art Day".



Students on field trips to **Spark!** enjoy a hands-on science program and free play in the museum.



**Spark!** partnered with the National Informal Science Education (NISE) network for its first Building with Biology event. Visitors learned about the fascinating world of synthetic biology.



At Science Night, **Spark!** brings hands-on STEM activities to schools



**Spark!** brings science to the classroom through our STEM based outreach program.

**Spark! Imagination and Science Center is a non-profit organization! Fundraisers, donations, and grants make it possible for Spark! to inspire people of all ages to explore science and the arts through hands-on exhibits and programs that spark a lifelong love of learning.**



### **Bites and Brews Fundraiser**

**On April 23, 2016 Spark! Imagination and Science Center held our first Annual Bites and Brews Fundraiser. At the sold out event, guests were able to sample craft brews and tasty bites. Spark raised \$10,000 with the event.**

**Thank you to all who came and a special thanks to:**

#### **Our Craft Beer Vendors:**

**Big Timber Brewing**  
(Winner of Best Brews!)  
**Charleston Brewing Company**  
and **Bridge Brew Works** brought from  
**Northern Eagle Distributing**  
**Chestnut Brew Works, LLC**  
**Morgantown Brewing Company**

#### **Our Food Vendors:**

**Alayna's Sweet Treats, LLC**  
(Winner of Best Desserts!)  
**Almost Heaven Cupcakes**  
**Apple Annie's**  
**Dave's Famous T & L Hot Dogs**  
**Hash Browns and New Grounds**  
(Winner of Best Bites!)  
**Jerseys Subs and Pizza**  
**Russ's Ribs**

#### **Our Sponsors:**

**Advantage Health and Wellness**  
**Bad Lizard Granite and Quartz**  
**MVB Bank**  
**Mylan Pharmaceuticals**  
**Northwestern Mutual**  
**Our Donors:**  
**MedExpress**  
**My Bank! First United Bank and Trust**  
**Allan Karlin**  
**Tim Warner**  
**In Kind: Morgantown Printing and Binding**  
**Russ Bonasso of Micro Outdoor Advertising**  
**Jayne Harris Marketing**

#### **Our Celebrity Judges:**

**Nicki and Adam Etris**  
**Sarah McGuire**  
**Gretchen Ross**

## Grants

**United Way:** In 2016, Spark! became a United Way funded partner. With the generous grant from the United Way, Spark! was able to continue the Museums for All program and expand our educational programs.

**Monongalia County Commission:** Spark! received a generous grant from Monongalia County Commission for its Makers Programs.

**Women's Giving Circle of Northcentral West Virginia:** Through a generous grant from the Women's Giving Circle of Northcentral West Virginia, Spark was able to update the Hands-On Science Area activities with exciting new hands-on STEM activities. Many of these activities are geared toward encouraging girls to pursue STEM.

**NASA:** Spark! received a grant to update the Space Weather exhibit with Virtual Reality goggles and a model of the Magnetosphere Multiscale Mission (MMS) Satellite. (Grant NNX16AF60G)

**NASA and National Science Foundation:** These grants allowed the museum to purchase a terrella for the Space Weather exhibit. A terrella is a hands-on exhibit that teaches what causes aurora. (NASA Grant NNX16AL15G awarded to Spark!; NSF Grant AGS-0953463 awarded to WVU).

**West Virginia University Eberly College of Arts and Sciences:** Eberly supported Spark! with one graduate student and one undergraduate student intern as well as funding for educational programming as part of a three-year Memorandum of Understanding. Interns helped Spark! with its remodel and rebranding as well as with educational programming.

**Museum Assessment Program (MAP):** Spark! applied for and completed the Museum Assessment Program (MAP), a program of the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) in 2015. As part of the MAP program, the museum completes a self-assessment and a peer reviewer visits the museum to give recommendations. In 2016, Spark successfully applied for a return visit from the peer reviewer. The MAP reports formed the basis of the 2017 Strategic Plan.

### Spark! gratefully acknowledges our Exhibit Sponsors

Cardinal Pediatrics for the Grow Up Strong: Get Your Check-ups exhibit.

Stafford Rogers for the Imagination Playground exhibit, coming early 2017!

### Spark extends a heartfelt thank you to all of our Generous Donors

Rachel Beach  
Karl Bramer  
Jeffrey Carver  
Paul Cassak  
William Coates  
Amy Cumpston  
Emily Dennis  
Katie Fallon  
Elizabeth Fort  
Jill Glover  
Joy Ice  
Amy and Sean Keese  
Joann Kincell

Nektaria Adaktilou Landenberger  
Members of Diversity, Inc  
Mary Pappert  
Sara Pennington  
Steven and Diane Raque  
Drs. George and Cynthia Seiler  
Lauren Seiler  
The Thrasher Group  
Donald Trisel  
Laura Tuel  
Steve Williams  
Ann Yingling

## Partners and Volunteers

To better serve the community, Spark! Imagination and Science Center partners with other educational organizations and non-profits.

American Alliance of Museums  
 Art Museum of WVU  
 Association of Children’s Museums  
 Avian Conservation Center of Appalachia  
 Blue Star Museums  
 Early Head Start  
 Harrison County Parks and Recreation  
 Mountaineer Country Museums  
 Mountaineer Area Robotics  
 National Informal Science Education (NISE) Network  
 PopShop  
 United Way of Monongalia and Preston County  
 West Virginia Birth to 3  
 West Virginia Botanic Garden  
 West Virginia University Center for Service and Learning  
 West Virginia University Eberly College of Arts and Sciences  
 West Virginia University IGERT  
 West Virginia University Department of Physics and Astronomy

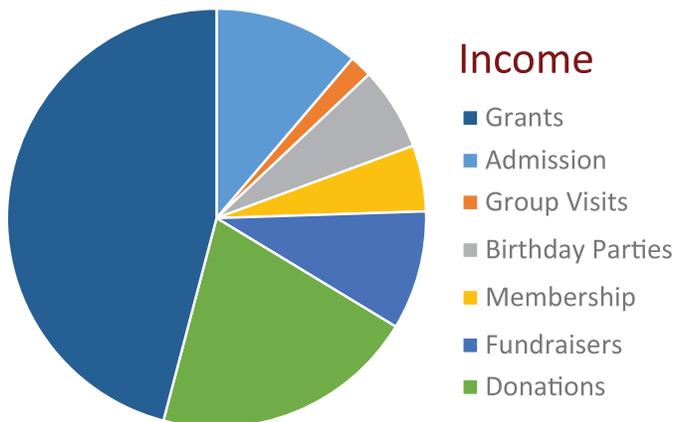
## A special thank you to all who helped with the remodeling efforts:

Cricket Brooks  
 Loren Anderson  
 Jeffrey Carver  
 Jeff LaVicka  
 Paul Cassak  
 John Zugonics  
 Spark! Imagination and Science Center Board of Directors

### 2016 By the Numbers

|                     |                  |
|---------------------|------------------|
| <b>Income</b>       |                  |
| Admission           | \$12,500         |
| Group Visits        | \$1,869          |
| Birthday Parties    | \$7,016          |
| Memberships         | \$5,521          |
| Fundraisers (Net)   | \$10,337         |
| Donations           | \$22,798         |
| Grants (Restricted) | \$49,700         |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>\$109,741</b> |

|                            |                 |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Expenses</b>            |                 |
| Wages & Prof. Development  | \$33,686        |
| Advertising                | \$3,229         |
| Rent & Utilities           | \$8,730         |
| Exhibits & Maintenance     | \$12,147        |
| Office Supplies/Software   | \$3,605         |
| Education Outreach         | \$5,282         |
| Taxes, Fees, and Insurance | \$7,080         |
| Dues & Memberships         | \$1,150         |
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>\$74,909</b> |



**Attendance 2016**  
 11,080 total attendance  
 828 received free admission  
 through Museums for All

What does the future hold for  
**Spark!** Imagination and Science Center?

Our long term goal is to become more financially sustainable and find a new, more permanent building. To reach this goal, Spark has adopted a new 3-year strategic plan. This plan contains a set of Integrated Strategies and goals that will work together in a holistic approach to meeting the long term goals.

Integrated Strategy:  
**STRENGTHENING THE COMMUNITY**

**Goals:** Encourage children towards future technology careers; recruit and retain an excellent workforce in Morgantown through providing a high quality family-friendly venue found in other successful metropolitan areas; and engage young professionals with programs not found anywhere else in Morgantown.

Integrated Strategy:  
**AWARENESS**

**Goal:** Individuals and businesses know who we are, what we do and how a children's museum and science center benefits the business community.

Integrated Strategy:  
**FUNDRAISING**

**Goal:** Raise money for current and future programs (including staffing) and build a loyal donor base.

**Can you help us reach our goals?**

Contact Julie Bryan at [director@sparkwv.org](mailto:director@sparkwv.org) to help!

**Spark!** Imagination and Science Center

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5000 Greenbag Rd  
Morgantown 26501

304-292-4646

[info@sparkwv.org](mailto:info@sparkwv.org)  
[sparkwv.org](http://sparkwv.org)

[www.facebook.com/sparkwv](http://www.facebook.com/sparkwv)

**Hours**

Tuesday-Saturday  
from 10 am to 1 pm

**Admission**

\$6 per child  
\$2 per adult  
children under 12 months/free

**Museums for All**

Spark! Imagination and Science Center continues its commitment to inspiring all children through the Museums for All program. Any visitor with a Women, Infants and Children (WIC) card or Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card can visit the museum free of charge. Spark! also provides free admission to participants in West Virginia Birth to 3 during a therapy session and one dollar off general admission for members of the West Virginia Botanic Garden, and children of active-duty military.





304-292-4646

[sparkwv.org](http://sparkwv.org)

[facebook.com/sparkwv](https://www.facebook.com/sparkwv)