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Grand Rapids Children's Museum Announces Access Program for Low-Income Families Museums for All to increase accessibility of high-quality museum learning resources

Grand Rapids, MI, January 25, 2017- Today the Grand Rapids Children's Museum announced that it has joined Museums for All, a signature access program of the Association of Children's Museums (ACM) and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to encourage families of all backgrounds to visit museums regularly and build lifelong museum habits. The program will enable low-income families to visit the GRCM for a minimal fee of \$1.75 per person with the presentation of an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card, including WIC Bridge Card, along with a valid photo ID. The discounted rate may be applied to up to four guests per card and is valid during any of the Grand Rapids Children's Museum general operating hours, allowing more flexibility for families to utilize the program.

"Play is a right to every child, and we strive to ensure every child in our community has equal access to play," explains Rachel McKay, Profession Development and Inclusion Liaison for the GRCM.

Families can also visit any participating museum year-round for a minimal fee. Museums for All is part of the GRCM's broad commitment to seek, include, and welcome all.

The Museums for All initiative represents a long stride toward the goal of reaching more children and parents, especially those living in poverty, with the valuable learning resources of museums. Children's museums, with their unique focus on bringing children, families, and communities together, are committed to providing access to all. Each year, children's museums host more than 31 million visitors. The Museums for All initiative will allow children's museums to further expand their reach and impact.

About the Institute of Museum and Library Services

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. Our mission is to inspire libraries and museums to advance innovation, lifelong learning, and cultural and civic engagement. Our grant making, policy development, and research help libraries and museums deliver valuable services that make it possible for communities and individuals to thrive. To learn more, visit www.imls.gov and follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

About Association of Children's Museums (ACM)

In an increasingly complex world, children's museums provide a place where all kids can learn through play and exploration with the caring adults in their lives. There are approximately 400 children's museums around the world, which annually reach more than thirty-one million visitors. ACM provides leadership, professional development, advocacy and resources for its member organizations and individuals. To learn more about ACM and to find an ACM-member children's museum near you, visit www.ChildrensMuseums.org

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The Grand Rapids Children's Museum creates minds through play by providing open-ended, creative, interactive play experiences which have been shown to help the cognitive, social, emotional and physical development of children. Children ages 0-10 learn while having fun each time they visit. The Museum is open to the public Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m., Thursdays 9:30 a.m.- 8 p.m. (Thursday Family Night 5-8 p.m.) and Sundays noon-5 p.m. Regular admission is \$8.50 per person, Family Night is \$1.75 and **Pals** Members and children under 1 are *free!* For more information, please visit www.grcm.org.

