



DISCOVERY PARK OF AMERICA

See beyond.

2019 Impact Report



Cover: Three of the children of Discovery Park of America family members, Jessica and Matt Crosson: Maisey, Levi and Norah

Above: Their fourth, Nathan



Discovery Park of America should enhance education for children as well as adults and do it in an entertaining way. I hope it will be a destination that people will visit again and again and walk away each time with an expectation for continued innovation.”

Robert Kirkland,
Founder of Discovery Park of America

Discovery Park of America is a 501(c)(3) public charity funded by generous individuals, corporations and foundations including its principal funder, the Robert E. and Jenny D. Kirkland Foundation.

Dear Friend of Discovery Park,

When Robert Kirkland held his first public meeting in 2007 to explore the creation of a center for learning and inspiration in Union City, Tenn., more than 250 members of the community showed up to declare their desire to be part of his mission to create something that would make an impact throughout this region. Eventually, more than 350 volunteers contributed more than 20,000 hours to the planning and construction of Discovery Park of America.

The dream of Robert and Jenny Kirkland and those hundreds of volunteers has come true, and as of this year, more than 1.7 million guests have been inspired by our unique indoor and outdoor educational experiences throughout the 100,000-square-foot museum and 50-acre heritage park.

As is evident in this report of our impact in 2019, it was a great year of continued discovery and inspiration, and just like those early days, it could not have been accomplished without our community of extraordinarily dedicated staff and volunteers, generous supporters, corporate givers and a board of directors that has believed passionately in Discovery Park's mission to inspire children and adults to see beyond.

In 2019, the board of directors embraced the recommendations of a 3-year strategic planning committee that consisted of a selection of board members, staff and stakeholders outside the organization.

The plan provides structure and guidance that will benefit our organization long-term. Additionally, an analysis of our strengths and opportunities within the communities we serve yielded an even stronger commitment to, and understanding of, the importance of our mission.

We thank all of you for your support, and we look forward to an exciting and inspiration-filled 2020 and beyond.

Warmest regards,

Scott Williams
President and CEO



Al Creswell
Board Chair



These portraits are from the collection of paintings of board members located along the hallway to the heritage park painted by Dr. Paul Marsidi and Pat Wade.

We thank our 2019 Discovery Park of America Board of Directors.

The following served either all or part of 2019:

Johnny Bacon
Bob Cartwright
Ron Cooper
Mike Cox
Al Creswell
Alice Fennel
Lindsay Frilling
Grace Gary
Newell Graham
Terry Hailey
Jenny Kirkland
Dr. Paul Marsidi
Garry Mason
Benny McGuire
Larry Mink
Jack Parker
Tim Shanks
Sam Sinclair
Art Sparks
Betty Ann Tanner
Hugh Wade
Will Wade
Scott Williams

What impact has Discovery Park made on your life?

Throughout the year, we get to hear from students on field trips, individuals visiting with their families and others sharing details about how they were inspired. Their comments are included throughout this report, so you'll get to see a little of what we hear all year long.



Students from Lake Road Elementary, Obion County, Tenn.

Changing the Trajectory of Tennessee

Upon taking office in January 2019, Governor Bill Lee's first executive order was one requiring each of the state's executive departments to provide recommendations for how they can better serve rural Tennessee.

Tennessee has designated 15 counties as distressed and 23 counties as at-risk. Discovery Park has the opportunity to serve students from Obion, Lake, Weakley, Haywood, Carroll and Lauderdale counties, all of which are nearby and deemed at-risk or distressed.

Communities with cultural resources like those provided by Discovery Park have been proven over and over again to be healthier, better educated and safer overall than those in similar communities with fewer resources. Governor Lee believes innovative, creative approaches to economic development, the agriculture industry and embracing technology will change the trajectory for rural Tennessee, and we believe Discovery Park is uniquely positioned to contribute in a mighty way to that trajectory.

“Discovery Park gives back to the community, and the people in it, by participating in different activities for people of all ages. They have given me, along with others in this community, life-changing experiences.”

—Eddie Suiter, English Teacher, Union City High School

Partnering with Educators

We're proud that our mission includes providing support for teachers and administrators in taking history and STEAM teaching out of the classroom and lab and applying it in a hands-on, state-of-the-art experience. By contributing to an interdisciplinary and applied approach, integrated into cohesive learning programs, we are helping teachers ignite and inspire the next generation of critical thinkers, problem solvers and innovators.



STEAM Saturday

In 2019, Discovery Park hosted 12 STEAM Saturdays with a grant from Walmart, giving guests opportunities to experience science, technology, engineering, art and math in fun and unique ways. Partnering with The University of Tennessee at Martin and other organizations, guests shot rockets into the atmosphere, explored the music of the African Diaspora, learned more about wildlife biology and discovered more about archaeology and paleontology. Guests were also encouraged to embrace their creative side with art projects as well as a variety of other hands-on activities.



Field Trips

Currently, thanks to the Kirkland Scholarship, students from all K-12 schools with 75% of the students receiving free or reduced lunches qualify for scholarships that pay for 100% of the ticket price to visit Discovery Park.



Homeschool Days

This monthly program is open to local homeschooled students, who also receive reduced admission on those days. The curriculum covers diverse topics to enrich and enhance their individual learning experiences.



Historical Theater Academy

This unique program designed for students in grades 6-12 takes place at Discovery Park twice each year. Participants receive instruction in multiple aspects of theater and historical research, then stage a performance of the original work they create. In addition to gaining experience in numerous disciplines including acting, set design, costuming, writing and historical research, students learn how to work as a team. In 2019, this program was supported by Warner Law Firm, Third & Church of Union City and the Obion River Regional Library Center.



Exhibitor's Challenge

Partnering with the Northwest Tennessee STEM Innovation Hub and sponsored by Leaders Credit Union, students from this region designed exhibits that they would like to see displayed in our ATA Temporary Exhibit Hall. The students met with members of the Discovery Park team, including professionals from exhibit design and fabrication, graphic design, information technology, education and marketing, to learn all about developing, building and promoting a temporary exhibit.



Pediatric Day

Sponsored by Pediatric Place of Union City, all children under the age of 17 were admitted free to Discovery Park. During the day, 30 different organizations showcased what services they provide to children and families in the region.

“This place taught me to see beyond the normal. It showed me that the crazy world we live in has some of the most beautiful things in the world.”

—Maria Vazquez, twelfth grade, Union City High School



Apollo 11 Anniversary

Discovery Park joined the rest of the nation in commemorating the 50th anniversary of the first humans to land on the Moon. Dr. Lionel Crews, Associate Professor of Physics at the University of Tennessee at Martin, and Russell Orr, a certified NASA Solar System Ambassador and Discovery Park Education Specialist, provided interactive programming. Guests also experienced a live audio feed from NASA's mission control, synchronized to the second so it could be heard just as the astronauts and mission control heard it 50 years earlier.



Canstruction®

Canstruction® is an international charity competition where architects, engineers, contractors, teachers and students they mentor compete to design and build giant structures made almost entirely from cans of food. At the close of the competition, all the food is donated to local food banks near twhere the competitions are held. Discovery Park hosted 10 teams for the Canstruction® Junior competition, sponsored by Allen Searcy Builder Contractors and the Westan Insurance Group, and their work was on display throughout November. Afterwards, 14,000 cans were donated to Chimes for Charity and Pleasant Valley Food Pantry in Union City, Tenn., and We Care Ministries of Martin, Tenn.



LEGO® Competition

Discovery Park of America collaborated with the Obion River Regional Library Center for the second annual LEGO® Competition. Builders from Obion River regional libraries made unique structures ranging from historic architectural replicas to illustrations of famous books or movies.



Earth Science Week

This event featured many activities throughout the week for guests of all ages. Guest presenters included Ed Clement from the Ben E. Clement Mineral Museum and Dr. Michael Gibson, Professor of Geology at the University of Tennessee at Martin.



Read Across America

Discovery Park of America and the Obion River regional libraries joined together in celebrating Dr. Seuss's birthday. Families participated in games, songs, stories, snacks and prizes.



Art Classes

Led by local artists, the monthly Pottery Workshop and the Wine & Paint art classes allowed guests to learn a new skill.



Independence Day Celebration

Samuel Adams, John Stow, Betsy Ross, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison were special guests on July 4, 2019, when the celebration of America's independence became a great opportunity for interactive history and civics programs for children and adults.



Stargazing

Dr. Lionel Crews from The University of Tennessee at Martin joined Discovery Park staff in this quarterly program focused on astronomy. Children and adults used some of the more powerful telescopes in the Discovery Park collection to get a close-up view and learn more about the stars and planets in the Northwest Tennessee night sky.



“Discovery Park truly transformed my narrow view of the world and has much to offer for those aspiring to see beyond.”

—Kobe Terrell, tenth grade, Union City High School



Earth Day

Members of the Agronomy Club from the University of Tennessee at Martin set up stations around the grounds of Discovery Park to teach about soil science. Guests made their own soil necklace, created paintings made from clay and more.



TN History for Kids Fall Retreat

More than 30 history teachers from all over West Tennessee attended the 2019 TN History for Kids Fall Retreat at Discovery Park. It featured standards-based sessions and provided six hours of professional development training for teachers throughout the region.



Ag Literacy Day

Discovery Park invited farmers and others working in agriculture-related fields to share with the more than 900 students who attended. The students heard about the importance of innovation in agriculture, the need to provide food, fuel and fiber for the world and possible careers they could consider in the field.



Senior Citizens Month

Discovery Park teamed up with Davis Wealth Services to celebrate Senior Citizens Month with classes and discounts during the month of August. Guests learned about regional history, gardening or social media.



Brain Awareness Day

Students from the University of Tennessee at Martin set up stations around Discovery Park to interact with families. Guests learned more about brain safety and health in a fun and entertaining way.



**TORNADO
ALLEY**
NOW PLAYING IN THE STARDOM THEATER

ENTRANCE TO
MUSEUM AND PARK

I DISCOVERED:
Family time

Members
& VIP Pass Holders
Express Line
↓

MOCC

The Best Museum

“**It’s thoughtful, creative, intelligent, diverse, and, perhaps most importantly, fun. It’s a curated collection of breadcrumbs from all of America’s most interesting and important sites that’s been dropped in a field in Union City, Tennessee. It’s like your favorite millionaire uncle took a trip through time and around the world and built you a living postcard in your backyard to tell you the story.”**

—The Frenetic Peripatetic, travel blogger and educator

Discovery Park continues to increase in popularity as a destination as the word spreads about everything we have to offer. In 2019, Discovery Park was voted by readers of the Tennessee Magazine as “The Best Museum” and “The Best Place to Take the Kids” in all of West Tennessee.



The Sound of Music

Songwriter Phillip Coleman brought Roxie Dean and Brice Long to the always-a-sellout Singer/Songwriter event that explores the stories behind some of country music’s biggest hits. It was sponsored by Commercial Bank and Trust Company.

This was our first year of a new partnership with the University of Tennessee at Martin Music department that brought special musical performances from students and their teachers. The David Johnson Chorus and The Youth and Children’s Choir of the Paducah Symphony Orchestra all joined us for special performances.

For our first Christian Music Weekend, choirs, worship bands and singers from around the region performed a variety of styles of Christian music for guests.



Wildlife at Discovery Park

The Wildlife department hosted a series of nine programs throughout the year. Guests experienced interactive programming on topics like regional birds of prey, bats and reptiles, celebrated World Snake Day and World Turtle Day and even participated in a nature scavenger hunt on National Wildlife Day.

We also held the museum’s first overnight summer camp, sponsored by Final Flight Outfitters Inc. Participants engaged in outdoor activities and learned how to set up tents, practice archery, shoot BB guns and canoe in Discovery Park’s lake. There was a campfire dinner with storytelling and an opportunity to get up close to a live owl before lights out.



**“Reelfoot Forward:
A West Tennessee Podcast”**

In 2019, we launched a new weekly podcast, “Reelfoot Forward: A West Tennessee Podcast.” The topic and guest of each episode aligns with our mission and celebrates our region’s culture, spirit, accomplishments and history. The episodes received more than 10,000 downloads in the first eight months.

Beth Cochran, farmer and technician with the Obion County Soil Conservation District as a guest on “Reelfoot Forward: A West Tennessee Podcast.”



Smithsonian Museum Day

For the first time, Discovery Park joined 27 other Tennessee museums in participating in Smithsonian Museum Day. This annual “celebration of curiosity” hosted by Smithsonian Magazine encourages museums and cultural institutions across the country to provide free entry to anyone presenting a Museum Day ticket.



Civil War Days and Military Living History Weekend

We combined two of our biggest history-related weekends into one huge exploration of the past. Guests experienced a great weekend for professional and amateur historians, students, lifelong learners or those who just love unique, one-of-a-kind experiences. The weekend was filled with interpreters in period clothing, encampments, examples of military transportation, reenactments of actual battles and cannon fire. This event was sponsored by Dixie Gun Works and Union City Coca-Cola.



Rhythm on the Rails Concert Series

Discovery Park’s first Rhythm on the Rails family-friendly concert series was a hit, and in addition to performances by popular entertainers like singer-songwriter Clark Beckham from Season 14 of American Idol and Keith Paluso from Season 15 of The Voice, Discovery Park partnered with the University of Tennessee at Martin Music department. UTM brought a variety of performers to share new types of music with the audiences. Proceeds were used to refurbish a 1916 Ford Model T that is now on display in the Transportation Gallery. This event was sponsored by Blue Bank Resort, the Citizens Bank, Volunteer Distributors and Williams Sausage Company.



6th Annual Cardboard Boat Regatta

It was a beautiful sunny day on the South Lake for this popular annual event. Teams must build watercrafts with only cardboard and duct tape, then race each other on the lake. Participating teams included local school groups, businesses and families. Each team competed to win one of several trophies: Best Team Spirit, Best Sinking Award and the Most Creative Boat Award.

“This place is top notch when it comes to family-oriented parks. So much to see, do, and learn.”

—Eaten, Memphis, Tenn.



Memorial Day

Discovery Park hosted a memorial ceremony honoring those who have given their lives for our freedom. All veterans, military and dependents enjoyed free admission on this special day, sponsored by Baptist Memorial Hospital of Union City and Vincent Outfitters in Martin.



Antique Tractor Show

The popular two-day event sponsored by Mahindra of KenTenn that celebrates agricultural machines of the past returned for the third year with more than 100 tractors on display.



Southern Heritage Arts and Crafts Festival

In September, Discovery Park held the annual festival where over 30 authentic craftsmen set up inside Discovery Center, demonstrating and selling their wares throughout the weekend.



11 - Jack and Sean Bowlin enjoying the "Astronaut" exhibit



“Towers of Tomorrow with LEGO® Bricks”

The world’s most famous skyscrapers engineered and built out of LEGO® bricks were on display at Discovery Park all the way from Melbourne, Australia. LEGO® brick lovers were particularly captivated, not only by the towers, but also by the 200,000 LEGO® bricks available for building on the open display islands. Inspired by the towers, visitors used their imagination to build their own spectacular architectural creations. This exhibit was supported by WLJT.

“Hot Wheels: Race to Win”

Guests experienced a dynamic testing environment participating in a quest for cars of record-breaking speed, precision and design. In addition to being fun and immersive, the exhibit also supported STEAM learning goals and provided rich opportunities for learning as students experimented with all aspects of racing design. This exhibit was supported by WLJT. The opening weekend celebration was sponsored by Blue Steel Tool, Inc., Buddy’s Wrecker Service, Simmons Bank and Subway with a Cruise-In sponsored by Jerry Ward Autoplex.



“You know, there’s so much of contemporary art that’s very cold and metallic, but Red is really about humanity and warmth.”

Elisabeth Hodermansky, Curator, Yale University Art Gallery



“Southern Artist Showcase: Red Grooms”

The work of internationally acclaimed pop artist Red Grooms is on display at Discovery Park Oct. 18, 2019 through April 30, 2020. Born in Nashville in 1937, Red Grooms stands among Tennessee’s cultural icons. A performance artist, filmmaker, printmaker and cartoonist, he is best known for colorful pop art that captures both the grotesqueness and humor of everyday life. The show at Discovery Park features color lithographic print sculptures, lithographic prints, paintings and mixed media pieces.

New in the Starship Theater

Using the magic of immersive sight and sound technologies, two films shown at Discovery Park in 2019 provided guests with an inspiring perspective on the world presented on the museum's giant state-of-the-art screen in the Starship Theater. "Titans of the Ice Age," an action-packed immersive portal to the great Pleistocene Ice Age, included the story of a female woolly mammoth calf exposed in 2007 by the melting Siberian permafrost, while "Tornado Alley," narrated by Bill Paxton, brought nature's most dramatic weather phenomenon to Union City, Tenn.



Fixed Timber Trestle Bridge

T. Joe Walker of Martin, Tenn., donated a model of a WWII-era fixed timber trestle bridge to Discovery Park, and it represents just one of many bridges that he helped build while serving in the 163rd Engineer Combat Battalion of the U.S. Army during WWII. It is now on display in the Military Gallery.

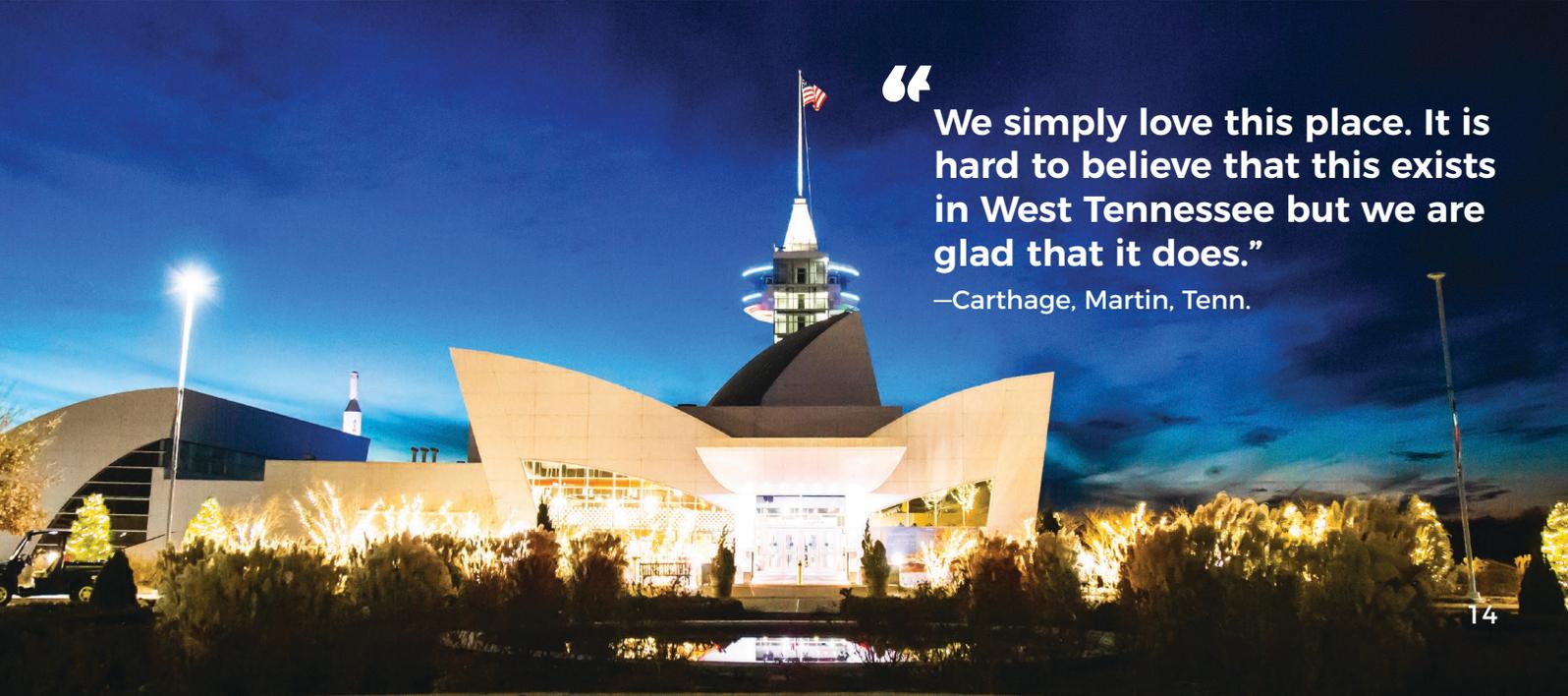
Heritage Garden

Historical interpreter Mike Ramsey began a heritage garden that will serve as a long-term educational and demonstration project. A labor of love for those who work in many different departments at Discovery Park, the multipurpose garden displayed samplings of traditional heirloom plants used for produce, flowers for dyes and even medicinal herbs for Ramsey to utilize in future demonstrations.



Christmas at Discovery Park

The holidays are a special time of the year. In 2019, Polar Express, sponsored by ATA, provided a unique theatrical reading of the holiday classic at the train. The "Let it Glow Lightshow," sponsored by McDonalds, was bigger, better and brighter than ever with more than a million lights, a new nativity scene and lots of holiday surprises around every corner.



“ We simply love this place. It is hard to believe that this exists in West Tennessee but we are glad that it does.”
—Carthage, Martin, Tenn.

TOO ELUSIVE
TO BURY...
TOO DYNAMIC
TO FORGET

OBION COUNTY
SERVICEMEN
MISSING IN ACTION
WHILE SERVING IN
VIETNAM



RICHARD C.
"TITO" LANNOM

"DEDICATED
& WOMEN
IN OUR
ESPECIAL
SERVED IN VIETNAM"

Longtime MIA Memorial at Discovery Park

Governor Bill Lee declared March 2 a day of mourning for Lieutenant Richard C. "Tito" Lannom, missing in action since March 1, 1968. As state flags flew at half-staff across Tennessee, his memorial service at Discovery Park was attended by family and friends who waited 51 years and a day to finally lay to rest the hometown high school athlete, University of Tennessee at Martin graduate and Naval commander who they now know was killed in action in Vietnam when he was only 27 years old. As a part of the day's activities, Discovery Park worked with White Ranson & White Mahon Funeral Homes and Magnolia Place Assisted Living, donors of the Vietnam War Memorial stationed in the park's Armed Forces Memorial Garden, to update the monument that had listed Lannom as Obion County's only MIA in a manner similar to updates on the nation's Vietnam War Memorial in D.C.

Left: Lannom's widow, Charlotte Shaw, and Magnolia Place administrator, David Johnson



Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Tennessee

The Education department of Discovery Park hosted a Trivia Night, sponsored by Center Point Business Solutions and Williams Sausage, and raised \$3,888 that was used to provide tickets to the museum and heritage park for the club members in Northwest Tennessee.



Sabin's Café

Sabin's Café managers, Connie and Johnny Babb, have had success hiring people with disabilities through St. John's Community Services. Thanks to them, Donald, Levi and Chris are now an important part of the team serving Discovery Park's guests.



Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board

In 2019, Discovery Park partnered with the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board on filling several open positions. This organization helps eliminate barriers for those in our community seeking employment.

“As a community, we are truly blessed to have such a superb museum that gives a gaze into the past and a glimpse into our future.”

—Carter Bondurant, tenth grade, Union City High School



9/11 Memorial Climb

More than 60 firefighters and first responders around the region gathered at Discovery Park to participate in the 2019 9/11 Memorial Climb, an event held around the country by the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation. Firefighters each climbed all 13 floors of the 199-foot Barbara Lynn Tanner Cooper Tower – the tallest structure in Northwest Tennessee – 10 times, wearing all their gear and carrying all the lifesaving equipment used in an actual emergency.



Discovery Dash 5k/10k

This official Cornfest event sponsored by CrossFit AutoBody allowed runners and walkers to experience a one-of-a-kind run/walk through our 50-acre heritage park.



Tourism Works for West Tennessee Summit

Discovery Park sponsored and hosted a summit where 100 attendees, including those working in tourism and government, explored ways to collaborate to increase revenue from tourism for rural communities. This event was in partnership with the Jackson Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Obion County Chamber of Commerce.



Easter Egg Hunt

Once again, Discovery Park partnered with Crosswind Church on the largest Easter egg hunt in West Tennessee. More than 30,000 eggs were hidden on the Great Lawn for hunts divided by age groups, with a “Special Edition” hunt held at the Settlement for children with special needs.



“Discovery Park will let you live your wildest dream, if just for a moment.”

—Lillie Virden, twelfth grade, Union City High School



Saying Goodbye to Our Friend

Jenny Kirkland

October 31, 1942 - August 19, 2019

Although we still mourn the loss of our kind and generous friend who passed away in 2019, everyone affiliated with Discovery Park of America, her community in and around Union City, Tenn., and her close friends and family continue to celebrate her remarkable legacy.

To pay tribute to and memorialize Jenny Kirkland, Magnolia Place Assisted Living paid for admission for all children age 17 and younger in the month of January 2020. All of us at Discovery Park and the family of Jenny Kirkland are grateful for this thoughtful and generous way of both paying tribute to the legacy of this wonderful individual and providing access to the museum and park to many children who otherwise may not get to visit.

Jenny was born on October 31, 1942, daughter of the late Dr. Robert Madison Darnall and Frances Wheman Darnall. She married Robert Edward Kirkland on May 29, 1964; he preceded her in death on April 11, 2015.

Jenny was a 1960 graduate of Union City High School and a graduate of the University of Tennessee at Martin. She was active in the Arts Council of Union City and was a long-time member of St. James Episcopal Church, where she served faithfully on the Altar Guild.

Along with her husband, she established the Robert E. & Jenny D. Kirkland Foundation, where she served as President until her death.

She also served on the Board of Directors of Discovery Park of America and Promethean Foundation and was a founding contributor to the Union City Rotary Club's European Trip for local high school students. In 2017, she was honored as a recipient of the Jackson, Tennessee-based Sterling Award honoring outstanding women of West Tennessee.

The legacy Robert and Jenny Kirkland left behind will continue to inspire creativity, learning and a celebration of living that will continue for decades to come.

Member Spotlight: The Dozier Family

"We have been members of Discovery Park from the beginning. We continue to be impressed with our experiences here whether it is a stroll through with our daughter Magnolia Lane, or if we're attending a special event. This park provides a safe, fun and educational place for her to play and learn."



Member Spotlight: Rita Gierling Hussey

"Every visit to Discovery Park is a new moment of wonder. From early access to traveling exhibits to discounted rates for special events, my membership has opened endless discoveries for my family and myself."

Member Spotlight: The Cooper Family

"We feel so blessed to have such a great family friendly park right here in our town. And it feels like every time we come we see something new or they've added a new exhibit! We never get bored and always look forward to our next outing at Discovery Park! Our membership has proved to be an excellent investment for our family."



2019 Donors

We gratefully acknowledge the individuals, corporations, foundations and organizations whose generosity and goodwill provided critical support for Discovery Park of America in 2019.

Some donors gave in multiple categories and recognition is included in each.

Up to \$99

Judy and Wayne Barker
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Carolyn and Ron Bloebaum
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Delphian Review Club
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Al Creswell

Alice and Marcus Fennel
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Elaine and Cliff Houser
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Jane B. Huffstettler
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Belinda and Jimmy Mathis
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Betty Smith
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Charlotte and Jerry Sullivan
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Annie Trost
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Tammy and David Ursery
In Memory of Kaye Bondurant

Eva, Cindy, Chris and Heidi Virgin
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Carol and Jimmy White
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Michelle and Scott Williams
In Memory of Kaye Bondurant

\$100 to \$249

Patti and Rance Barnes
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Stephen Barron

Homrich Berg
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Edith C. Botts
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Rita and Larry Buckles
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Mr. and Mrs. Howard Carman
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Class of 1960, Union City High School
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Michelle and Al Creswell
In Memory of Kaye Bondurant

Paula and Brooks Duncan
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Alice Dunlap
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Randy Eller
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Floral Friends Garden Club
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Connie and Lee Fry
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Cile Crasfeder
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Dotty and Hardy Graham
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Linda Graham
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Barbara and Steven Harpole
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Patricia and James Hibbler
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Jeanine and Dave Hopewell
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

David Howell

Virginia Ann Jernigan Jonsson
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Lou and Rob Joyner
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Steve Massanelli
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Mary Mathis
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Lisa Mills
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Debbie Shidler
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Debra Spaduzzi
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Pam Steinke
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

The Union City Daily Messenger
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Kim and Will Wade
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Lelia and John Warner
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Gisela and Robert Wuench
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Lelia and John Warner
In Memory of Jenny and Robert Kirkland

Michelle and Al Creswell
In Memory of Jim Isbell

Michelle and Al Creswell
In Memory of Julius Falkoff

\$250 to \$499

Kathy Sanger
In Memory of Robert Young

Pat Wade
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

\$500 to \$999

Diane and David Black
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Brenda and Bob Cartwright
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Rogelio Escarcega
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Edith Kirkland
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Randy Porter
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Simmons Bank
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Michelle and Al Creswell
In Honor of their Grandchildren

\$1,000 to \$2,499

Michelle and Al Creswell

ATA
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

John Clark
For Dresden Schools

Katie and Phillip Creswell
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Michelle and Al Creswell
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Patricia and Woody Cunningham
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Ben Escarcega
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Tammy and Art Sparks
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Betty Ann and John Tanner
In Memory of Jenny and Robert Kirkland

Michelle and Scott Williams
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Dr. George W. Cunningham
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

\$2,500 to \$4,999

Pat Wade

\$5,000 to \$9,999

Lannom Charitable Gift Fund

The Bill & Carol Latimer Charitable Foundation

\$10,000 to \$24,999

Elbrun and Peter Kimmelman
In Memory of Jenny and Robert Kirkland

Magnolia Place Assisted Living
In Memory of Jenny Kirkland

Kim and Will Wade
In honor of Pat Wade

Tosh Farms
For the AgriCulture Exhibit

Special thanks to the Robert E. and Jenny D. Kirkland Foundation for their significant ongoing support for the mission of Discovery Park of America.

Discovery Park of America wishes to extend appreciation to our annual gallery and exhibit partners.

ATA
\$10,000
Traveling Exhibit Hall

Union City Coca-Cola
\$20,000

Magnolia Place Assisted Living
\$30,000
Liberty Hall

Southern Machinery Repair
\$30,000
Cooper Tower

2019 Event Sponsors

Up to \$999

Jackson Convention and Visitors Bureau
Obion County Chamber of Commerce

\$1,000 to \$2,499

Baptist Memorial Hospital
Blue Steel Tool, Inc.
Center Point Business Solutions
Commercial Bank & Trust Company
CrossFit AutoBody
Crosswind Church
Final Flight Outfitters Inc.
Jerry Ward Autoplex
John Warner Law Firm
Vincent Outfitters

\$2,500 to \$4,999

ATA
Blue Bank Resort
Buddy's Wrecker
Davis Wealth Services
Dixie Gun Works
Simmons Bank
Subway
The Citizens Bank
Volunteer Distributors
Williams Sausage
Union City Coca-Cola

\$5,000 to \$9,999

Allen Searcy Builder Contractor
Leaders Credit Union
Mahindra of KenTenn
Pediatric Place of Union City
Westan Insurance Group

\$10,000

McDonald's

2019 Grants

Tennessee Arts Commission
Tennessee Department of Agriculture
Walmart
The Tom and Kathleen Elam Fund at the University of Tennessee at Martin

In-kind Donors

E & H Refrigeration
Reelfoot Lake State Park
Reelfoot Animal Hospital
The University of Tennessee at Martin
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services

2019 Silent Auction

The 2019 Cork and Fork Silent Auction at Discovery Park raised \$3,215 — enough to provide free admission and lunch for every student at Sharon School. Thanks to all our item donors and winning bidders.

Winning bidders:

Bentley Beard
Dr. Selena Dozier
Roger Dudley
Karl Johnson
Macy Kirkland
Susanne Marsidi
Phillip Sherman
Scott Williams
Jock Johnson

Item donors:

Blue Bank Resort
Dr. Dylan Bondurant
Buddy's Wrecker Service
Calla Lilly
Burt Chandler
Davis Wealth Services
Dynamix
Sabin's Café
Tammy and Art Sparks
The Chocolate Bunny
Pat Wade

Volunteers

Special thanks to our many volunteers. They greet visitors to the museum, work with students during learning lessons, demonstrate crafts and perform many duties that help us ensure everyone who comes through the door leaves having been inspired to see beyond. Below are those volunteers who contributed the greatest number of hours in 2019.

Janie Alexander
Bill Austin
Kenneth Byrd
Tommy Carpenter
Jerry Cheatham

Kenny Crews
Kathy Davis
Marti Doss
Alice Fennel
Linda Lu Harding

Christopher Lane
Cherry Pyron
Carol Whitmore

If you are interested in joining the volunteers at Discovery Park, email Polly Brasher at pbrasher@discoveryparkofamerica.com or call 731-885-5455 for more information.

In Jan. 2020, Magnolia Place Assisted Living in Union City sponsored free admission for all children age 17 and younger as a way to pay tribute to and memorialize Jenny Kirkland. Their gift resulted in a dramatic increase in students able to visit Discovery Park. In Jan. 2019, two school groups visited the park. In Jan. 2020, more than 110 school groups had visited or scheduled a visit to take place by the end of the month. Thanks to their gift, Discovery Park welcomed 18,000 guests in January – a 367% increase over the previous year.



2019 Volunteer of the Year

Alice Fennel was presented with the 2019 Volunteer of the Year Award. This award recognizes one outstanding Discovery Park volunteer for their valuable and selfless commitment to our mission. Fennel has been volunteering with the organization since Robert Kirkland first began exploring the idea of an educational facility. She currently works at the information table, assists with educational classes, is a board member and has been a passionate advocate for the upcoming exhibit, "AgriCulture: Innovating for Our Survival."



Planned Giving to Discovery Park of America

Discovery Park of America is able to serve the community because of the generosity of many donors, supporters and advocates including a generous annual gift from the Robert E. & Jenny D. Kirkland Foundation.

In order to best ensure the long-term sustainability of Discovery Park so we will be able to continue our important work, we ask that you consider including Discovery Park in your will or as a life insurance beneficiary, as several of our supporters have already done. Including Discovery Park in your estate planning is simple and flexible.

If you have made a bequest intention or other planned gift arrangement to benefit Discovery Park, we'd love to know so we may thank you.

For more information or to alert us about your own plans, please contact Mary Nita Bondurant, director of development, at 731-676-3556 or mbondurant@discoveryparkofamerica.com.



War Remembrances Theater

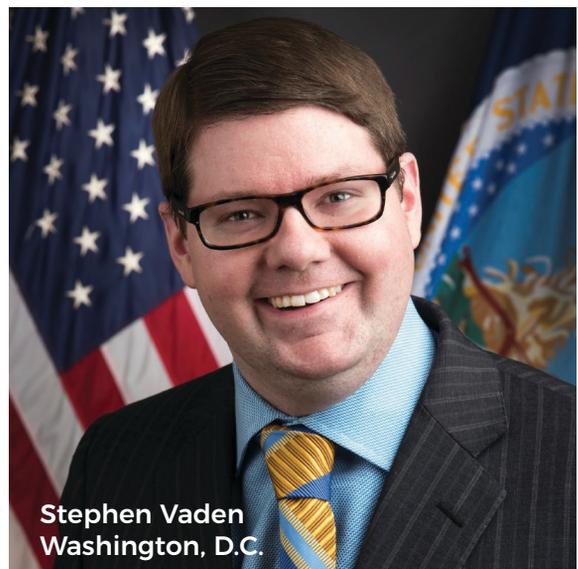
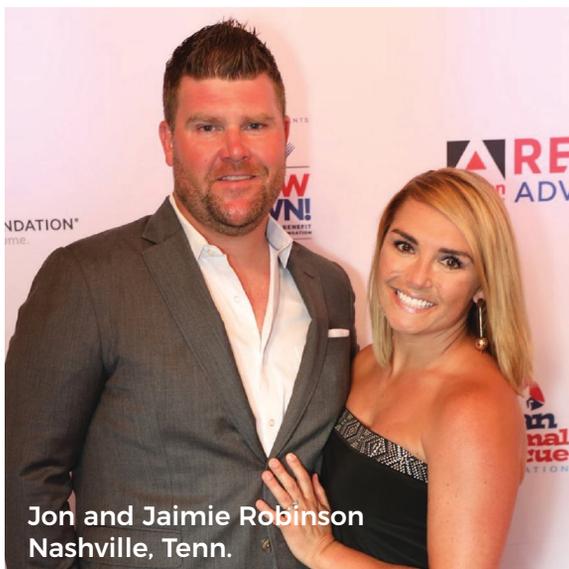
This year, Discovery Park utilized an incredibly generous gift of \$30,000 from the late Jimmy Rickman of Murray, Ky., to support improvements to the museum's War Remembrances Theater.

The theater, located in the Military Gallery, features a video presentation of local residents, like Rickman, sharing first-hand wartime stories about their military service experiences. Rickman's gift was used to upgrade the seating, technology and audio-visual equipment in the theater and to add more stories for Discovery Park's guests to view.

The 2020 Robert E. and Jenny D. Kirkland Discovery Awards

In 2019, Discovery Park announced an annual award that will recognize individuals from West Tennessee whose work, like that of the museum and heritage park, brings enlightenment, awareness and education to those whose lives they've touched.

The inaugural award gala and fundraiser, to be held on March 7, 2020, will bring together thought leaders, policymakers, philanthropists and others to celebrate the winners, all of whom have deep roots in West Tennessee. The 2020 Robert E. and Jenny D. Kirkland Discovery Award winners are:



The Robert E. and Jenny D. Kirkland Discovery Awards Gala and Fundraiser was held on March 7, 2020. Hosted by Badgett Playhouse Director Bill Minihan, the elegant event featured a silent auction, live auction and entertainment as we honored these heroes inspiring children and adults to see beyond.

AgriCulture

Innovating for Our Survival

Discovery Park of America announced an exciting, new exhibit in 2019. "AgriCulture: Innovating for Our Survival," the permanent exhibit dedicated to telling the story of innovation in agriculture, will open Oct. 22, 2020 and will be located in the 8,900-square-foot building that currently houses the museum and heritage park's antique tractor exhibit. The building will be renamed the Simmons Bank Ag Center.

Because innovation in the field of agriculture is always changing, an important part of the exhibit will be a state-of-the-art main stage sponsored by Nutrien Ag Solutions. In addition to being used by Discovery Park's educators on a regular basis, the space will be made available to others in the community for agriculture-related teaching, programs and special events.

"We believe this exhibit will be a wonderful tribute to agriculture's rich history while also celebrating the innovations taking place in the field today."

— Tony Gregory, Executive Vice President and Tennessee division president, Simmons Bank

"Innovation is core to Nutrien Ag Solutions," says Brent Smith, Vice President of Marketing + Innovation at Nutrien Ag Solutions. "We are excited to be part of Discovery Park's agriculture exhibit, as they work to educate park goers on our industry and the importance of agricultural innovation to feed the world now and in the future."

"A top 40 farm lender in the United States, Simmons Bank has been committed to supporting farmers and helping our communities prosper for more than 100 years now," said Tony Gregory, Executive Vice President and Tennessee division president. "We believe this exhibit will be a wonderful tribute to agriculture's rich history while also celebrating the innovations taking place in the field today."

In addition to Simmons Bank and Nutrien Ag Solutions, other confirmed major sponsors of the exhibit are the Tennessee Corn Promotion Board; Tennessee Farm Bureau; Tennessee Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom; and the Tennessee Soybean Promotion Board.

Supporting sponsors currently confirmed include AgLaunch Initiative; Obion County Farm Bureau; Danny Larcom Heating & Air; Tennessee Department of Agriculture; Tennessee Tractor; Tosh Farms; and Will Wade and Pat Wade.

Currently, in-kind sponsors include FarmSpace Systems, LLC; The University of Tennessee at Martin; and WCTE, Upper Cumberland PBS.

Louisville, KY-based Solid Light, a leader in the exhibit design and fabrication field, has been working on the content of the exhibit since being selected to head the project in August.

For more information on "AgriCulture: Innovating for Our Survival," visit discoveryparkofamerica.com/agriculture.



Simmons Bank leadership from throughout the West Tennessee region enjoyed a behind-the-scenes tour of the planning for the agriculture exhibit currently underway at Discovery Park of America. While there, they presented a check for sponsorship of this important, new initiative that will educate the public about innovation in agriculture. (left to right) Jennifer McClure, Jackson; Danny Watson, Dyersburg; Kara Nicodemus, Union City; Shane Dodson, Troy; Brooke Carson, Kenton; Regen Thornton, Brownsville; Mary Nita Bondurant, Discovery Park of America; Christy Johnson, Union City; Joe Emery, Dyersburg; Scott Williams, Discovery Park of America; Jennifer Chandler, Union City; David Spencer, Kenton; Tony Gregory, Goodlettsville; Jeff Capps, Martin; Justin Stokes, Union City; Lisa Isbell, Union City; Chuck Newell, Jackson; Andrea Hughes, Martin and Regina Vickers, Martin.

Champions of Agriculture

Families and individuals who are passionate about agriculture are being asked to pledge to contribute to the funding of the exhibit. Everyone who provides a gift of any amount will be included as a "Champion of Agriculture" on the exhibit's partnership wall.



Discovery Park of America Director of Exhibits, Jennifer Wildes (left) and CEO, Scott Williams (right) share agriculture exhibit plans with Nutrien Ag Solutions General Manager of the Tennessee/West Kentucky Division, Todd Theobald.

Response to Press Release is Huge

If the response to our recent press release about our exhibit partners is any indication, there is a lot of interest in the topic. Our media monitoring service picked up 154 outlets around the world running the release with a potential audience of more than 90 million individuals – the most of any press release in our organization's history. Our Facebook post received nearly 500 likes, 130 shares and reached an audience of 82,000.

Coming in 2020

We have a lot to look forward to in 2020.

Coming Jan. 17 – May 3 is “Astronaut,” an exhibit that features hands-on interactive displays that allow guests to investigate the reality of what it takes to be a space explorer. Beginning in March, the Starship Theater will feature two new enhanced films from Giant Screen Films, a leader in the large format/IMAX® industry: “Journey to Space” and “Wild Africa.” The “Southern Artist Showcase: Works by Southern Self-taught Artists” will be open May 14 – Sept. 28. Finally, we’re all very much looking forward to “AgriCulture: Innovating for Our Survival,” the new permanent exhibit dedicated to telling the story of innovation in agriculture that will open Oct. 22. These are just a few of the exciting ways we’ll be serving our community this year.



“The Fascinating World of Murray Hudson’s Globes and Maps” will be on display June 12 – Sept. 14

Special Events 2020

March 7

Robert E. and Jenny D.
Kirkland Discovery Awards

April 11

Easter Egg Hunt

April 24 – 26

Military Living History and Civil
War Days

May 16

Cardboard Boat Regatta

May 21-22

Singer Songwriter Night,
Two Performances

May – June Friday Nights

Rhythm on the Rails

July 4

Independence Day
Celebration

Aug. 7 – 8

Antique Tractor Show

Sept. 12

Discovery Dash 5K and 10K

Sept. 26 – 27

Southern Heritage Arts &
Crafts Festival

Oct. 10

Cruise-In

Nov. 20 – Dec. 30

Let It Glow Light Show

Dec. 11 – 13

Polar Express

Exhibits and Films 2020

Oct. 17, 2019 – April 30, 2020

“Southern Artist Showcase: Red
Grooms”

Jan. 17 – May 3

“Astronaut”

March 2, 2020 – March 1, 2021

Starship Theater
Film: “Journey to Space”
Film: “Wild Africa”

May 14 – Sept. 28

“Southern Artist Showcase: Works by
Southern Self-taught Artists”

June 12 – Sept. 14

“The Fascinating World of Murray
Hudson’s Globes and Maps”

2019

By the Numbers

250,000+

Visitors

1,044

Programs

431

School Groups

3,895

Volunteer Hours

38,000

Youth Visitors (not in school groups)

2,031

UTM Intern Hours



DISCOVERY PARK OF AMERICA

See beyond.

Discovery Park of America

830 Everett Blvd, Union City, TN 38261

731-885-5455

info@discoveryparkofamerica.com

The mission of Discovery Park of America, a premier world-class museum and 50-acre heritage park located in Union City, Tennessee, is to inspire children and adults to see beyond. Included is a 100,000-square-foot museum featuring 10 interactive exhibit galleries with additional space for temporary exhibits from around the world and a 50-acre heritage park. Discovery Park of America is a 501(c)(3) public charity funded by generous individuals, corporations and foundations including its principal funder, the Robert E. and Jenny D. Kirkland Foundation. For more information, visit discoveryparkofamerica.com, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.