

Official Press Release

May 31, 2017

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***Junior League of Jackson Presents Final \$600,000 of \$1 Million Gift to the Mississippi Children's Museum***

**Jackson, Miss. (May 31, 2017)** The forget-me-not flower is often given as a sign of faithfulness and enduring love. As the original founders of the Mississippi Children's Museum (MCM), in 2015 the Junior League of Jackson (JLJ) established the "Forget Me Not" Fund, a \$1 million pledge designed to ensure the resources and facilities of MCM would endure for those children and families yet to come.

During the early stages of the museum's development, the JLJ recognized the importance of not only opening a one-of-a-kind museum, but also securing dedicated resources to maintain the museum for future generations. The League's pledge of \$1 million to establish this fund provided a strong foundation for MCM to continue to build on. "We are so grateful to the leadership of the Junior League of Jackson for their principal gift in the establishment of this crucially important fund. Not only was the League there for us in our very inception, but they have continued to provide unwavering support as our needs grow and change." said MCM President Susan Garrard.

This fund allows MCM to meet the museum's ongoing needs from improving the physical campus, to repairing and replacing its exhibits, to making enhancements which will not only keep the museum vibrant and cutting-edge, but also addresses the ever changing needs of Mississippi's children. MCM has begun the process of reimagining exhibits by rethinking not just what is important for learning now but also by considering what concept and skills our children will require in the future. MCM's Patti Reiss reflects on the significance of the gift, saying, "As the Assistant Director of Programs, I spend each day on the museum floor. It is crucial that we maintain reserve funding to make repairs and do maintenance on our much-loved exhibits to ensure each child has an inspirational experience. We are so grateful to the League for establishing this fund."

The Mississippi Children's Museum has far exceeded its original attendance projections, consistently seeing more than 200,000 visitors each year since opening. 2016-2017 League President Melanie Hataway notes, "The League is so pleased to see our pledge of one million dollars fulfilled in such a timely manner. We know this gift helps to ensure the future of our

beloved signature project for the children of Mississippi and we look forward to seeing all the wonderful things done in and through the museum in the years to come."

### **About the Mississippi Children's Museum**

The Mississippi Children's Museum (MCM) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that provides unparalleled experiences that ignite a thirst for discovery, knowledge, and learning in all children. MCM is dedicated to inspiring Mississippi's children from all backgrounds to discover and achieve their potential. The museum features 40,000 square feet of exhibit space designed around five primary initiatives: Literacy, STEM, Health and Nutrition, Cultural Arts, and Mississippi History. The museum's exhibits, programs, and outreach opportunities provide engaging, explorative, hands-on educational activities for children of all ages. To learn more about MCM visit [www.mschildrensmuseum.org](http://www.mschildrensmuseum.org).

### **About The Jackson Junior League**

The Junior League of Jackson is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. The Junior League of Jackson is a charitable organization whose purpose is to improve the quality of life of those in our community. The Junior Auxiliary of Jackson was organized in 1927 by a small group of women who wanted to better their community. In January of 1941, the Junior League of Jackson was born. Today, the Junior League of Jackson is one of the larger Leagues in the Association of Junior Leagues International, with our membership numbering more than 2,300 Provisional, Active and Sustaining members.

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