



MISSISSIPPI CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

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Mississippi Children's Museum Empowers Future Leaders at 2026 Youth Summit

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Jackson, Miss. – The Mississippi Children's Museum (MCM) will host its annual Youth Summit on **Saturday, April 25, 2026, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**, bringing together high school and college students from across the region for a morning of leadership development, inspiration, and connection.

Designed to empower the next generation, the Youth Summit will provide participants with direct access to universities, businesses, city officials, and community leaders. Through engaging sessions and meaningful conversations, students will gain valuable insights and practical tools to help navigate their academic and professional journeys.

The program will focus on key areas essential to personal and professional growth, including leadership, influence, and managing stress through effective coping strategies. Attendees will also hear from keynote speaker **Kayla Thompson of WJTV**, who will deliver an inspiring address titled *"Unleash What's Already Inside of You!"*

"At MCM, we believe our greatest investment is in our young people," said Monique Ealey, Director of Education and Experiences at the Mississippi Children's Museum. "The Excellence Unleashed Youth Summit reflects our deep commitment to youth development by creating spaces where students can build confidence, explore career pathways, develop leadership skills, and connect with peers and mentors from across the city and state. We are proud to provide opportunities for young people to serve as volunteers, expand their networks, and gain the real-world experiences that prepare them for success in the workforce and in life."

In addition to the educational and networking opportunities, students can also earn service hours by attending the event. During the Youth Summit, awards will be presented to recognize exceptional leadership and service through the President's Leadership Circle Member Awards, the Outstanding Volunteer Award, and the Volunteer of the Year Award.

The Youth Summit is open to all high school and college students interested in personal growth, leadership development, and community engagement.

For more information or questions about the event, please contact **Aundreus Patterson** at aundreus@mcm.ms or visit www.mschildrensmuseum.org.

About the Mississippi Children’s Museum

The Mississippi Children’s Museum (MCM) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with a mission of creating unparalleled experiences to inspire excellence and a lifelong joy of learning in all children. MCM’s two award-winning museums in Jackson and Meridian collectively offer over 100,000-square feet of exhibits and educational programming designed around five primary initiatives, Literacy, STEAM, Health and Nutrition, Cultural Arts, and Mississippi Heritage – the keys to helping our children mature into healthy and productive adult learners. MCM offers exceptional resources for children, families, and educators through the LIFT, traveling exhibits and programs, community outreach, *Launch into Learning* afterschool program, professional development for educators, and innovative literacy and language development programs: *Talk from the Start and Reach Out and Read*. MCM is honored to have received an Institute of Museum and Library Services National Medal, the Mississippi Tourism Association Governor’s Award for Travel Attraction of the Year, and USA Today’s 10Best Travel Award for Best Children’s Museum. To learn more about MCM visit www.mschildrensmuseum.org.

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