



Press Release

For Immediate Release

Contact: Stephanie Lenox
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Children's Museum Kicks-Off National Foster Care Month

Salem, OR—A.C. Gilbert's Discovery Village kicks-off National Foster Care Month with free admission for all members of foster families on May 4, 12 – 5 p.m. Visit the museum's hands-on children's exhibits and peruse a mini-version of the Heart Gallery of Oregon, which will be on display through the end of the month and includes compelling photographs of children available for adoption with the intent to increase the number of foster and adoptive homes.

The museum will also offer over \$2,000 in summer camp scholarships for foster families as the first step of a yearlong foster support program thanks in part to grants from the Jubitz Family and Gannett Foundations and donations from Dick and Gayle Withnell and other individuals.

Starting immediately, foster families will be able to register at no charge for one of over forty weeklong summer camps offered at A.C. Gilbert's Discovery Village. Registration is open to both foster children and their siblings, ages 2-12. To register your child for a summer camp, contact the museum at 503-371-3631.

Programming for foster children at the Village will continue in September with "Foster Family Fridays." The program provides fun, educational instruction for children ages 5-12, both biological and foster, who live with foster families. The goal of the program is two-fold, explained Executive Director Pamela Vorachek. While the program will provide free access to

A.C. Gilbert's Discovery Village

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workshops at the children's museum for foster children and their siblings, it will also offer respite time for their foster parents.

In Marion County at any time, there are approximately 1,000 youth in foster care. To address the needs of these youth and their parents, A.C. Gilbert's Discovery Village has cultivated partnerships with the Marion-Polk Foster Parents Association, the Oregon Department of Human Services and the Marion County Foster Care Action Team. As part of this program, foster children and their siblings will participate in supervised "Discovery Time" and explorations of Ancient Egypt, Japanese Cultural Art and Slime Science among other topics in the museum's kid-approved curriculum. The program will be offered Fridays, from 3:30-5:30 p.m., throughout the school year.

In thanks to the families who open their homes and provide stability and compassion for children in need, A.C. Gilbert's Discovery Village is pleased to be able to offer yearlong educational programming and scholarships for foster families. Contributions to the museum's "Buddy for a Buck" scholarship program in May will go toward supporting these programs. Additional individual donations can be made by calling the museum at 503-371-3631.

A.C. Gilbert's Discovery Village is a private nonprofit children's museum located in downtown Salem's Riverfront Park. Founded in 1989, A.C. Gilbert's Discovery Village provides innovative and stimulating educational experiences that spark children's natural curiosity. The Village's mission is to provoke curiosity, inspire awe, awaken interest, foster enjoyment, encourage learning, and enable understanding in all youth.

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