



PRESS RELEASE  
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## OMAHA CHILDREN'S MUSEUM TO LAUNCH ITS FIRST EVER, LOCALLY-MADE NATIONAL TOUR, FOREVER FOREST

*Exhibit Runs In Omaha October 14 Through April 15, 2018 Before Starting Multi-Year Tour*

**(Omaha, Neb.)** - SEPTEMBER 15, 2017 - Omaha Children's Museum, 500 S. 20th St., will open its first-ever, locally-created national touring exhibition, Forever Forest, on October 14, 2017. The exhibit will run through April 15, 2018 at the museum and then begin its national tour. The national tour of Forever Forest is presented by Union Pacific Foundation.

"With the opening of this exhibit, a new business venture has been realized," said Lindy Hoyer, Executive Director of Omaha Children's Museum. "Omaha Children's Museum is leading an important development in the creation of S.T.E.A.M.-based exhibits designed to travel around the U.S." By creating an exhibit that introduces S.T.E.A.M. (or science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics) to young children in a way where they can see and touch things, the learning experience is enriched. These experiences can teach careful looking skills that are critical for everything from reading to researching. Critical thinking is one of the executive brain functions that this exhibit has been designed to assist in developing. The others are: Taking on challenges, perspective taking, self-control, self-directed engaged learning, communicating, and making connections.

An official partnership with the Hardwood Forest Foundation and Omaha Children's Museum was established to help transform the educational kit, The Truth About Trees, into an immersive and engaging learning experience designed to travel across the U.S., making stops at children's museums, science centers, natural history museums, and other informal learning institutions. Among the tour's stops are The Magic House in St. Louis (2018); Scott Family Amazeum in Bentonville, Ark., and Minnesota Children's Museum in St. Paul, Minn. (2019). The tour will run for 10 years.

With support from the Omaha community and lumber industry partners all across the U.S., Omaha Children's Museum designed and fabricated this exhibition. Heartland Scenic Studios in Omaha manufactured the exhibit pieces that will tour the country – about 2,000 square feet of interactive exhibits – and the Omaha Children's Museum's exhibits team built additional elements that will only be seen in Omaha.

The Forever Forest exhibition is designed to teach children and adults how their everyday lives are connected to forests, through the ways they live, work and play. Forever Forest includes areas focused on forest life and responsible harvesting; lumber transportation with a realistic kid-sized replica of a Union Pacific engine to show how products move across the country, and mini grapple skidders that children can race; a lumber yard; and a mini home under construction in which children can help finish by adding siding, molding and other details. Covering nearly 10,000 square feet, the exhibit also includes a climbing structure with a slide, an over-sized bird's nest, and an area for daily educational programming called Camp Cottonwood. Additional programming will be offered on certain weekends, including opportunities to encounter and learn about live animals who call the forest home.

*Media inquiries can contact Kim Reiner, marketing and PR manager, at 402-930-2356 or [kreiner@ocm.org](mailto:kreiner@ocm.org). Please contact Kim to arrange a tour to see the exhibit under construction—it is a good photo opportunity before it opens to the public. Artist renderings of the exhibit are available upon request.*

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### **About Omaha Children's Museum**

Since its inception in 1976, Omaha Children's Museum has been a special place where children can challenge themselves, discover how the world works and learn through play. The mission of Omaha Children's Museum is to engage the imagination and create excitement about learning. The museum's permanent exhibits include Charlie Campbell Science & Technology Center, Art Smart Center including the Karen Levin Artist-in-Residence Studio, Imagination Playground and Walker Tire & Auto Service Center. In addition to its permanent exhibits, Omaha Children's Museum offers educational programs, traveling exhibitions, field trips, outreach programs, summer camps and early childhood programs.

For more information visit <http://www.ocm.org>.

### **Museum Information**

500 S. 20th St.  
Omaha, NE 68102  
(402) 342-6164

### **Museum Admission**

Members: FREE  
Adults & Children: \$12  
Adults 60+: \$11  
Under 24 months: FREE

### **Museum Winter Hours** (Now until Memorial Weekend)

Monday: Closed  
Tuesday - Friday: 10 a.m.- 4 p.m. (Tuesday - Friday 9-10 a.m. Member Hour)  
Saturday: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Sunday: 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

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