



WESTCHESTER CHILDREN'S MUSEUM AWARDED GRANT OF \$824,000 FROM NEW YORK STATE FOR FACILITIES EXPANSION AND IMPROVEMENT OF HISTORIC SITE

Thursday, December 14, 2017, Rye, NY...Today Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced an award of \$824,000 to the Westchester Children's Museum at the National Historic Landmark North Bathhouse at Rye Playland. The funds will be used to expand exhibit and operational space. The grant, administered by the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council, is funded through the New York State Council for the Arts/Empire State Development Arts & Cultural Facilities Improvement Program. The grant will be matched by donations from private individuals, businesses, and foundations.

"Over the past seven years, the Regional Economic Development Councils have successfully brought together the most innovative minds in economic development, fostering collaboration between state and local leaders to invest in New York's regional resources from the ground up," **Governor Cuomo said.** "These awards are critical to building the foundations for New York's future and ensuring that our economic momentum continues. I congratulate each of the Councils on their awards and look forward to continuing to partner to keep our communities vibrant and thriving for years to come."

"We are pleased to see the investment in the Westchester Children's Museum awarded by the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council. Once again, this process has proven to focus on projects which meet the Region's focus on Live Work Play... economic strategies which reflect the diverse needs of our region. The Museum meets the educational and cultural needs of our children, especially meaningful to the future of Westchester and the Hudson Valley," stated Dr. Marsha Gordon, President/CEO, The Business Council of Westchester.

"We are most grateful to Governor Cuomo and the Mid-Hudson Economic Regional Development Council for recognizing the role our facility plays as an educational, social, cultural, and economic driver," stated Tracy Kay, Executive Director of the Westchester Children's Museum. "This milestone grant recognizes the Museum's significance in meeting the growing demand for fun-filled, interactive learning experiences for children in our region, now and for generations to come."

The Museum's grant was awarded in the category of Arts & Cultural Facilities Improvement Program. To be selected, the Museum's application was reviewed at the regional level by the Mid-Hudson Economic Regional Development Council and recommended to the State for consideration. The intention of the NYSCA/ESD Arts & Cultural Facilities Improvement Program is to strengthen tourism, promote business development, and improve the quality, efficiency and accessibility of New York State arts and culture. The Westchester Children's Museum, which opened year-round to the public in mid-2016 in a fraction of its full site, has already become

integral to Westchester's cultural and educational landscape and has had more than 60,000 visitors to date. With the ability to expand and improve its facility through the grant, the Museum anticipates reaching 250,000 annual visitors when fully completed.

The Bathhouses are owned by the County of Westchester and leased by the Westchester Children's Museum which is responsible for the architectural development of the interiors, including plumbing, electrical, ventilation and heating, and life safety systems. The Campaign for the Westchester Children's Museum is a not-for-profit organization that raises funds to support operations, programming, and facility improvements.

The Regional Economic Development Council initiative (REDC) oversees the competitive grant process and is a key component of Governor Cuomo's program for State investment and economic development. In 2011, Governor Cuomo established 10 Regional Councils to develop long-term strategic plans for economic growth for their regions. The Councils are public-private partnerships made up of local experts and stakeholders from business, academia, local government, and non-governmental organizations. The initiative empowers community, business, and academic leaders, as well as members of the public, to develop strategic plans specifically tailored to their region's unique strengths and resources in order to create jobs, improve quality of life, and grow the economy.

For a full list of the 2017 grant awardees, follow this link

<https://www.ny.gov/sites/ny.gov/files/atoms/files/2017AwardsREDCRound7Bookletdjunys.pdf>

ABOUT THE MUSEUM:

The Westchester Children's Museum is a light-filled, colorful, vibrant learning space for children age 0-13, filled with interactive exhibits not found anywhere else in this region. The Museum offers experiences in physics, science, art, technology, design, with places to create, build and explore. For further information, visit www.discoverWCM.org

For press inquiries, contact:

Corinne L. Zola

Westchester Children's Museum

917-991-9499

corinne.zola@gmail.com