



Dear Friends,

Over the last three years, Montana Science Center's board and staff have taken big and thoughtful steps forward in service to our members, visitors, program participants and broader community. We have expanded our exhibits and educational offerings in new and improved facilities, added dedicated staff members to our team and, in an increasingly competitive market for talent, made intentional investments to improve staff compensation and benefits.

We made these investments with a clear desire to keep access to the Montana Science Center affordable and a plan to realize increased membership revenues, program fees, philanthropic gifts and sponsorships to help offset those growing costs at the same time. Unfortunately, despite successes we've realized on the revenue front, even our best laid plans have not come together in the ways we had hoped. This leaves us, today, in a challenging but not insurmountable position as an organization.

As a board and staff, our collective challenge is clear: can we make the right decisions - now - and do the right work - now - to continue to welcome our visitors, sustain our valued programs and ensure MSC never finds itself at this crossroads again? The answer to this question is a resounding "yes, we're up to the task."

With an eagerness to be transparent and a hope to navigate through this time with a collaborative, "all-hands-on-deck" approach, we've already taken key, future-focused steps for the benefit of Montana Science Center and more will surely follow in the coming weeks. We've engaged Stillwater Strategy Partners, a highly-regarded local non-profit strategy and consulting firm to provide us with interim executive leadership. Faye Nelson, a highly experienced non-profit CEO, has taken up this temporary, part-time leadership role. Stillwater is also conducting a comprehensive financial review to help us fully understand the decisions and trends that led us to where we are today. This allows us to defer our search for our next full-time executive director until we know we've set them up for success. We're grateful to Erica Dungan for her grace, understanding and shared belief that this would have been a challenging time for her to continue serving in this role at this time. We're pleased to share that she's returned to her former leadership position with Montana State University and we wish her great and continued success.

Driven by passion for and personal commitment to the organization, the board of directors also intends to quickly initiate a special fundraising campaign, inviting long-time and new supporters to invest in the short-term durability and long-term growth of Montana Science Center. Knowing that those supporters will want to see us make thoughtful financial choices, we've also made the difficult but important decision to suspend Sunday operations, allowing for immediate cost savings by closing on the day when the center sees its fewest visitors.

Together, we're committed to learning from the present situation and taking the next, necessary steps not just to survive these short-term challenges but to grow and thrive for years to come.

Sincerely,

Lauri Moss  
Board of Directors, President

Faye Nelson  
Interim Executive Director