



Empowering youth through technology

The transformative power of aha!

A museum nurtures the development of creative leaders

Children's Creativity Museum

Making a music video; meeting a creative challenge using only the materials in a "mystery box"; creating an animated movie starring your own clay figures and fashioning your fantasy self-portrait: Sound like fun?

It is fun, and those are just a few of the activities that help children and their families develop their creativity in ways that have lifelong impact. A donation from Microsoft is giving 500 Peninsula and South Bay students those interactive art and technology experiences with field trips to the Children's Creativity Museum in San Francisco.

"Our mission is to nurture what we call the three C's of 21st century skills: creativity, collaboration and communication," says Michael Nobleza, the museum's executive director. "We like to describe ourselves as a next-generation children's museum because of our hands-on, project-based aspect. The kids here are creating, not just consuming. It's really families coming together and supporting that creative development together." A staff of working artists, educators and interns act as "creative coaches" for visitors in the technology-rich environment.

"The magic and the power of what we do is in what I call the transformative power of 'Aha!'" explains Nobleza. "It's a certain moment when you're able to see that you can

create something from nothing. That's a gift that is transferable to all other parts of critical thinking and creative problem solving."

Impacting multiple generations

Though its activities and exhibits are geared toward children in preschool up to age 12, the museum has an impact on all its visitors. Children and their families practice manipulating digital media to express their opinions and ideas, and explore how they can generate solutions to problems and change the world through creative leadership.

Since the program's inception in 1998 when it was known as Zeum, the museum has also nurtured the development of interns from communities of need in San Francisco. This effort reflects a commitment to "opportunity for all" that Microsoft supports. "We recognize that there are digital "haves" and "have-nots," says Nobleza. He believes that access to the museum's resources serves as "a real opportunity to fill that void and even the playing field a little bit."

Over the years, more than 500 interns have been drawn from high schools for a two-year program. They gain employment skills, digital media skills, and learn about youth development. "The beautiful thing is that kids relate more to the teens because they're closer in age," says Nobleza.

Family members of all ages can explore their creativity together in many ways at the Children's Creativity Museum.





At the Children's Creativity Museum, young visitors use their own clay figures to produce claymation movies that they can bring home on DVD.

Nobleza reports that through a strategic partnership being developed with Stanford University, the museum is extending its reach to foster creativity for current and future generations. "We want to become what we call a global thought leader on creative development of youth in the digital age. We can be a resource particularly for classroom teachers and for parents, providing them with tips and tools to support that creative development early-on."

Visit the Children's Creativity Museum with your family or young friends! Learn more at creativity.org.

"We like to describe ourselves as a next-generation children's museum because of our hands-on, project-based aspect. The kids here are creating, not just consuming."

—Michael Nobleza, Executive Director, Creative Children's Museum.

Catalyst Magazine

Microsoft Silicon Valley
1065 La Avenida Street
Mountain View, CA 94043



Learn more about our citizenship work:
microsoft.com/citizenship

Read stories from around the world:
microsoft.com/localimpactmap

Follow us on Twitter:
[@microsoftSV](https://twitter.com/microsoftSV)