



DISCOVERY PARK OF AMERICA

Organization Profile

March 2020

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Discovery Park of America is a one-of-a-kind, a 501(c)(3) non-profit museum and heritage park first envisioned by Robert Kirkland.

Getting his start at his parents' Ben Franklin five-and-dime store in Nashville, Kirkland acquired a local retail store and launched a chain of Kirkland's stores that eventually expanded to three hundred locations.

His business portfolio expanded to include commercial real estate properties and community banking, as well as CBK Ltd., which sold gift items and home décor throughout the country and around the world, all shipped from a Union City, Tenn. distribution center.

In the late 1990s, he and his wife, Jenny, sold their business holdings to concentrate on philanthropic efforts, including leading his community of Union City, Tenn. in the building of a museum and heritage park.

The museum and park was intended to, in Kirkland's own words, "enhance education for children as well as adults and to do it in an entertaining way."



He added, "I hope it will be a destination that people will visit again and again and walk away each time with an expectation for continued innovation."

The combined efforts of experts, novices and volunteers were fully realized on Nov. 1, 2013 as Robert and Jenny Kirkland cut the red ribbon.

The public was impressed from the start. Not only had there never been anything like this in Obion County, there had never been anything quite like Discovery Park in the world.

Although Robert Kirkland died in April 2015, his vision has been realized and, since opening, more than 1.3 million guests have experienced this 100-million-dollar masterpiece now sitting in what was once a quiet cornfield.

The Robert E. and Jenny D. Kirkland Foundation continues the work of their founder with a commitment of a support gift to Discovery Park each year.



PURPOSE, MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

Purpose

Since the organization was first organized, the stated purpose has been:

To serve the public as a premiere museum and educational institution with an emphasis on assembling, displaying, preserving and/or protecting important and interesting artistic, cultural, historic and scientific items, collections, works and exhibits.

These items should be dedicated to and celebrating the human experience; specifically, our culture, our spirit, our accomplishments and our history, with an emphasis on the region's unique cultural heritage and natural history.



Mission

To inspire children and adults to see beyond

Vision

We are a sustainable museum and heritage park where creativity, critical thinking and exploration of new ideas are sparked in an entertaining way in guests of every age, gender, level of education or socioeconomic status, and the quality of their lives is made better because of it.

Values

Service to our guests; service to our teammates

What makes us unique?

- The size and scope of the experience in the 100,000-square-foot museum and 50-acre heritage park.
- The multisensory aspect of the whole place inside and out, including encouragement to touch the artifacts, walk on the grass and to have an entertaining experience using all your senses
- The museum and park include nods to the things Robert Kirkland envisioned because of personal passions and interests including the arts, international travel, business and agriculture
- Rather than being designed by museum professionals and presented to the community, Discovery Park was designed by the community and then turned over to museum professionals for building

MUSEUM AND PARK OVERVIEW



Inside

Discovery Park of America's iconic 100,000-square-foot museum showcases ten exhibit galleries focused on topics like science, space, technology, the military, natural history, regional history, art, transportation and more. Guests experience:

- 4-D simulation of the early 1800s earthquakes that created the beautiful landscape in this region
- 20,000-gallon aquarium revealing the underwater life of the region's lakes
- Dinosaurs, fossils and prehistoric artifacts
- Military equipment, vintage automobiles and an actual Titan missile ready to launch
- Interactive displays focused on science, technology, engineering and math—and dozens more hands-on experiences
- Unique state-of-the-art meeting spaces for groups ranging in size from ten to thousands
- Gourmet southern meals prepared by Sabin's Café Catering

Outside

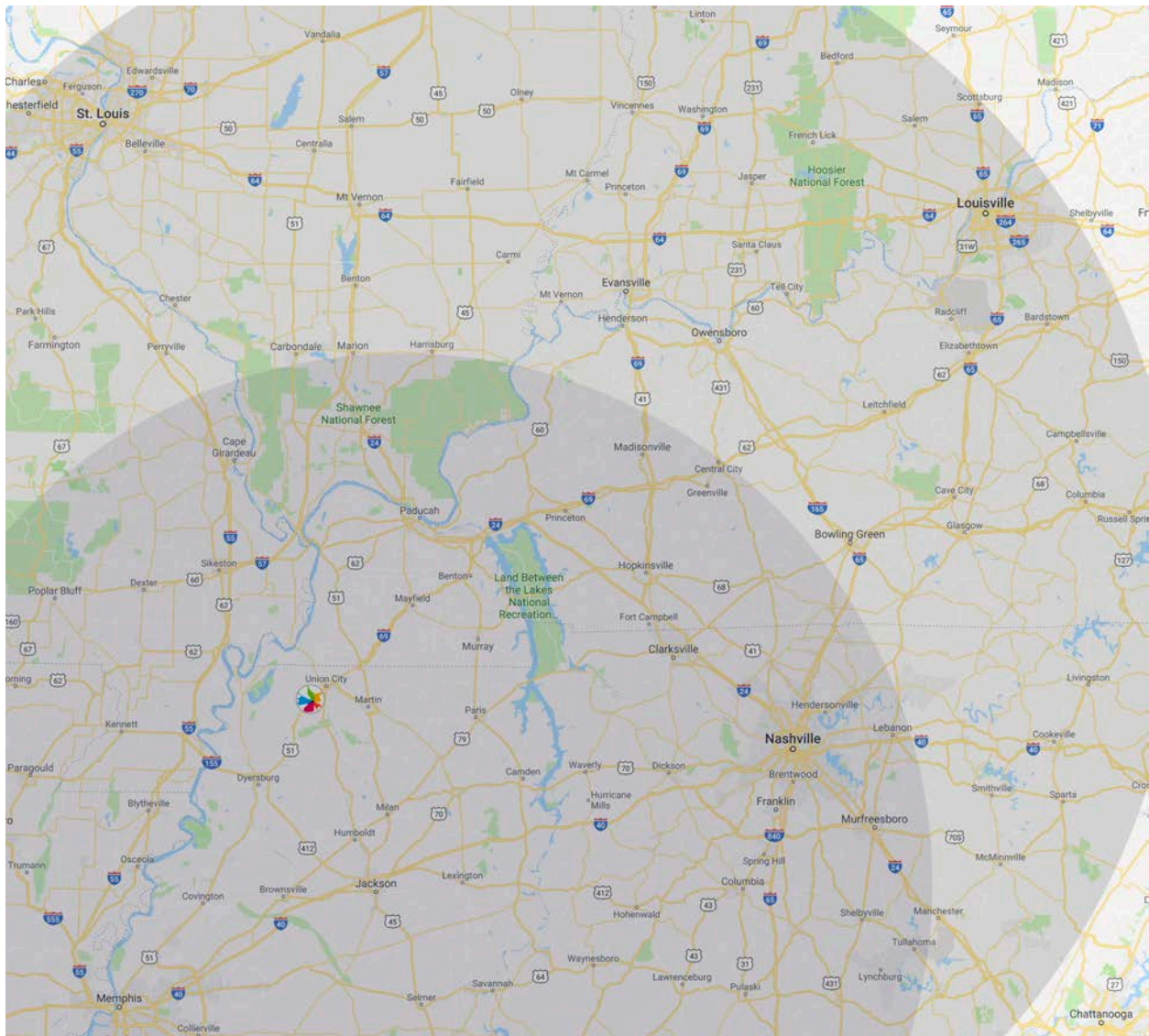
The 50-acre outdoor heritage park includes a man-made river flowing through the extensively landscaped property, along with waterfalls, bridges and other water features. Guests experience:

- Reproduction of an early 19th Century town with a working gristmill, windmill, one-room school house and more
- Japanese, European and American gardens
- Reproduction of an entire mid-19th Century frontier settlement
- 120-year-old church moved from a cotton field and restored to its original glory at Discovery Park
- Turn-of-the-century train station and depot with locomotive, cars and caboose to explore inside and out
- Liberty Hall including a replica of the Liberty Bell and exhibit on American freedom
- One-of-a-kind nature-inspired playground experience featuring a PlayOdyssey Tower, log steppers, log balance beams, hillside climbers, slides and a mini zip line
- Ag Center showcasing the agricultural traditions and heritage of this region

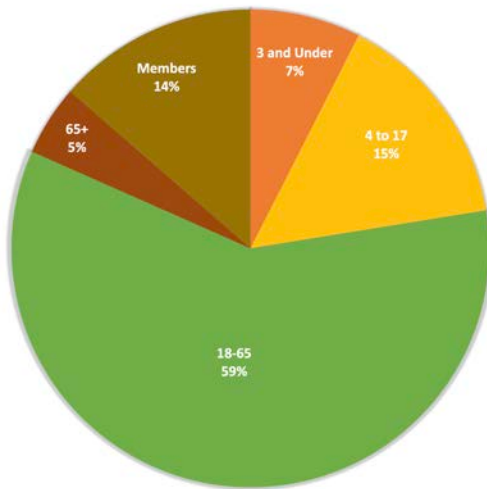
VISITOR PROFILE

Each year since opening, Discovery Park has welcomed an average of 250,000 visitors. Although Discovery Park has visitors from all over the world, the primary feeder markets are from the areas surrounding Paducah, Kentucky; Memphis, Tennessee and Nashville, Tennessee. Secondary feeder markets are from the communities around St. Louis, Missouri and Louisville, Kentucky.

With education being one of the primary goals the organization, students in groups are a significant part of the marketing and outreach each year.



DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF 250,000 VISITORS



On average:

- Among non-members, 78% of Visitors are visiting for the first time
- Member visits account for 14% of visits and most are coming 4 or more times per year
- 15% of visitors or 37,500 are considered students with more than half of those coming as part of a student group

When determining some aspects of our visitor profile, we use the demographics of Obion County which mirrors most other counties in this region. The median income for a household in the county is \$32,700, and the median income for a family is \$40,500. 83% of residence have a high school degree or better and 16% have a bachelor's degree or better.

We do factor in the fact that museum visitors tend to have a slightly higher median income and are slightly more educated than the population as whole. Our primary target audience in marketing is female as they are typically the decision maker in attending museums and attractions.



GROWTH

Several factors are currently underway that will lead to explosive growth in the next few years:

- New leadership with a background in the museum and tour and travel industries



- Three new hotels being added right next door to the park
- The new Tennessee governor and tourism commissioner have included “rural tourism” as an important part of the new administration, and Discovery Park leadership is serving on multiple committees for the state
- Discovery Park has committed resources to increasing exposure to the group sales business both in the education and tour and travel categories, and is working that category like never before
- When completed, the extension of I-69 from Indianapolis, Indiana, to Memphis, Tennessee, via Evansville, Indiana will send travelers right to Discovery Park’s front door.



The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 included two high-priority corridors that would later become parts of I-69. Corridor 18 from Indianapolis, Indiana, to Memphis, Tennessee, via Evansville, Indiana runs behind Discovery Park of America in Union City, Tenn. As you can see, much of the work has been completed, including exit ramps on each side of the park. The section you see here that runs alongside Discovery Park from a little northwest of the former Wingfoot Golf Course to Reelfoot Avenue was the first of three projects (the middle project) that encompass the I-69 loop around Union City. The section to the southwest down to US 51 was the second section. Both segments have been completed up to final grading (ready for paving). Currently in the construction phase is the section a little northwest of the former Wingfoot Golf Course to US-45 & US 51 about halfway to Fulton. We anticipate that all three segments will be completed and paved by fall of 2023. This will open the entire Union City loop. The remainder of the project including the exchange in Fulton, Kentucky and the section south of Union City all the way to Dyersburg is currently in various phases of development.

LEADERSHIP



Scott Williams joined the team of Discovery Park of America as president and CEO in 2019.

Previously, Williams served as president and COO of the Newseum in Washington, D.C. where he managed many of the activities taking place in a seven-story museum on Pennsylvania Avenue between the White House and the Capitol.

Williams earned his degree in journalism from the University of Memphis.

He then held positions at several advertising agencies and other organizations, including ServiceMaster, Inc., Baptist Memorial Health Care and Elvis Presley Enterprises, Inc.

While taking care of business for the king for twelve years, he managed annual events like Elvis Week, the Elvis birthday celebration and the Graceland Christmas lighting, while contributing to initiatives like the Elvis Cruise, the Ultimate Elvis Tribute Artist Contest, the Elvis Cirque du Soleil show, Viva Elvis and the Elvis Broadway play.

He's worked extensively on partnerships with a large number of companies in multiple industries including journalism, music, tourism and entertainment.

Williams has served on the boards of the Memphis Chapter of the March of Dimes and Hope House Day Care for Children Impacted by HIV and AIDS. He served as president on the board of the D.C. chapter of the American Advertising Federation and as co-chair on the board of the Historical Society of Washington, D.C.

In 2017, Williams' published his second book, "An Odd Book, How the First Modern Pop Culture Reporter Conquered New York." His first book, "The Forgotten Adventures of Richard Halliburton: A High-Flying Life from Tennessee to Timbuktu," was published in 2014.

He was honored with the Charles E. Thornton Outstanding Alumni Award from the department of Journalism and Strategic Media at the University of Memphis in 2018.

While at the Newseum, Williams led the team that produced a number of powerful exhibits including:

ANCHORMAN: THE EXHIBIT

Nov. 14, 2013 through Aug. 31, 2014

The Newseum, in partnership with Paramount Pictures, presented "Anchorman: The Exhibit," featuring props, costumes and footage from the 2004 hit comedy "Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy."

ONE NATION WITH NEWS FOR ALL

May 16, 2014 through Jan. 4, 2015

Created in partnership with the Smithsonian Institution, the Newseum's "One Nation With News for All"

exhibit told the dramatic story of how immigrants and minorities used the power of the press to fight for their rights and shape the American experience. Ethnic newspapers, radio, television and online publications helped millions of immigrants to America become part of their new country while preserving their ties to their native lands. Today, one in four Americans turns to ethnic media for news.

REPORTING VIETNAM

May 22, 2015 through Sept. 12, 2016

The provocative “Reporting Vietnam” exhibit marked the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War, America’s first televised war. The exhibit explored the dramatic stories of how journalists brought news about the war to a divided nation.

40 CHANCES: FINDING HOPE IN A HUNGRY WORLD — THE PHOTOGRAPHY OF HOWARD G. BUFFETT

Sept. 18, 2015 through Jan. 3, 2016

This powerful photo exhibit featured 40 of Buffett’s photos documenting the world hunger crisis as part of a global awareness campaign.

CNN POLITICS CAMPAIGN 2016: LIKE, SHARE, ELECT

April 15, 2016 through Jan. 22, 2017

Created in partnership with CNN Politics, the interactive exhibit “CNN Politics Campaign 2016: Like, Share, Elect,” told the story of the 2016 presidential campaign in real time. The exhibit offered an immersive experience that allowed visitors to explore the ways big data and social media have transformed how candidates campaign, how journalists cover elections and how the public participates in the political process.

LOUDER THAN WORDS: ROCK, POWER AND POLITICS

Jan. 13, 2017 through July 31, 2017

(Partnership with the Rock ‘n’ Roll Hall of Fame) “Louder Than Words: Rock, Power and Politics” showcased the intersection between rock and politics and examined how artists exercise their First Amendment rights, challenge assumptions and beliefs, stimulate thought and effect change. Through iconic artifacts and photographs, and multimedia experiences, the exhibit explored music’s influence on civil rights, the Vietnam War and gender equality, and covered such artists as Bob Dylan, U2 and Rage Against the Machine.

The mission of Discovery Park of America, a premier world-class museum and 50-acre heritage park located in Union City, Tennessee, is to inspire children and adults to see beyond. Included is a 100,000-square-foot museum featuring 9 interactive exhibit galleries with additional space for temporary exhibits from around the world and a 50-acre heritage park. Discovery Park of America is a 501(c)(3) public charity funded by generous individuals, corporations and foundations including its principal funder, the Robert E. and Jenny D. Kirkland Foundation. For more information, visit DiscoveryParkofAmerica.com, [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

For more information, contact our