



CAMPAIGN FOR THE SOUTH FLORIDA MUSEUM

CONNECT.

CREATING PATHWAYS

Update: Fall 2018

From the Chairman of the Board

Since joining the Board of the South Florida Museum and more recently becoming Chairman, I've been pleased to be able to share my financial expertise to help ensure that the Museum is doing all it can to help the community thrive and, at the same time, is being a good steward of the resources entrusted to us by our supporters to help us carry out our mission.

I've also had the opportunity and pleasure of working closely with the Museum staff and other Trustees and have seen the time, the effort and the thoughtfulness they put into the development of a new vision for the Museum — a part of which we are now watching come to life as the **North Education Center** and the **Mosaic Backyard Universe (MBU)** take shape.

Along the way, I learned a new acronym and an interesting concept developed by the Museum's experts — **PLIC** — that is central to all we are striving to share with our audiences today. The concept behind PLIC is actually pretty simple: **P**lace matters, **L**ife adapts, **I**nteractions happen and everything **C**hanges.

These ideas — of the importance of place, certainty of change and the fact that life adapts over time — are the interpretive guide we use for our programs, exhibitions and collections management and, especially, in the development of the **Mosaic Backyard Universe**.

It's been nearly a year since we broke ground on our expansion, and the **MBU** itself has evolved tremendously thanks to our many supporters and the teams in place who are bringing this universe to life. We've already introduced Fawley Bryant Architecture as our architects and designers, dmdg2 as the designers of the interior space and Willis A. Smith Construction, Inc. as our Construction General Contractor and builder.

We're also excited to be bringing some new experts on board to help with the build-out of the interior space in the **MBU**: Brilliant Creative Fabrication and NatureMaker Steel Art Trees. Brilliant Creative has been dazzling concert goers and Broadway stages with fabulous sets for more than two decades, but their talent also includes theme park design and building interactive, engaging spaces that provide the perfect backdrop for learning. NatureMaker will be building the central element in the MBU: a massive, realistic live oak that will provide the perfect perch for exploration.

I'd also like to offer my thanks to those who have supported the **North Education Center** — helping us to move from concept, to design and groundbreaking to the phase we're in today: build out. Willis Smith is making a generous financial contribution. Woodruff & Sons is providing support for our climbable rock pile, Founders Garden Club of Sarasota the raised planting beds and the family of Gail Sweeney the butterfly garden and chrysalis condominium. These gifts, and those still arriving, will allow us to finish the **MBU** and bring this unique space to the community!

With warmest regards,

Brian Carter
Chairman
South Florida Museum Board of Trustees



From Concept to Construction:

Your first nature expedition probably took place in your own backyard — the first place you were allowed to explore on your own. Now imagine if you stepped off your back porch into a yard that held a mighty oak to explore, a pond with tadpoles and toads, your very own time machine and telescopes that took you to Pluto.

These are just some of the elements that the Museum's new *Mosaic Backyard Universe (MBU)* will hold when it opens in 2019 as a learning laboratory where children — and adults — can explore the key elements of the natural world: land, water, air, life and how humans interact with the environment.

And the best part? Every visit will be different, says Jeff Rodgers, Museum Provost and COO. "We knew from the beginning that we didn't want to create yet another children's exhibit with single-use interactives — with things that would be the same every time you came for a visit. Instead, we envisioned a learning laboratory that provided the setting for learning experiences, but that did not dictate the experiences themselves. There won't be signs directing you to do X, Y or Z. Instead, our *Universe* will have all the tools for exploration and you can focus on what interests you the most — on this visit. Then, on your next and every visit after that, there will be different things to explore."

The Museum began working on the concept of a backyard-learning laboratory in 2014 and it's taken a team of staff working with outside experts to bring it to fruition. Education 4 Innovation, a local educational consulting group, helped map out developmental and content learning progressions based on Florida and national learning standards. Doug Mund and design team dmdg2 incorporated the ideas into the first conceptual drawings for the MBU. Today, under the direction of the Museum's Chief Facility Officer Jack Balkan, Willis Smith Construction is bringing the building to life.

The MBU is part of the *North Education Center*: a Museum expansion that includes 4,000 square feet of new multi-purpose classroom space and a new lobby area. To make way for the new wing, the administrative offices moved upstairs and the "brain" of the Museum — the computer systems for the Bishop Planetarium, *Pathways* and the rest of the Museum's networks, as well as the fire suppression system, the security system and phones — also had to be moved.

"This has been such a unique project of integration and collaboration — not just with the Museum, but with exhibit designers and artists," said Willis Smith Superintendent Eddie Plante. "And our goal from the beginning has been to undertake construction with minimal disruption to guests and staff. We didn't want to close the Museum and staff needed to continue working."

Willis Smith and Fawley Bryant have shown a true commitment to being part of the Museum's team, said Museum CEO Brynne Anne Besio.

"Not only have they kept the project moving forward, they've been true partners both before construction and as the building has moved forward. We're grateful to work with such a supportive, communicative team that truly believes in and supports the Museum's mission — from sponsoring our annual Gala, to donating to our Annual Fund and *Connect Capital Campaign* to helping us realize our goal of developing a place where visitors can immerse themselves in new experiences and gain a new appreciation of science and nature. Our transformation will enhance the community's ability to explore the universe, will allow us to serve new audiences and further connect us with the Riverwalk as an anchor in Bradenton's reinvigorated downtown."

In the picture below, Willis Smith Superintendent Eddie Plante, Martha Wells, the Museum's Chief Community Engagement Officer, and Jack Balkan, the Museum's Chief Facility Officer, discuss the project.



Building a New Universe

The building designed by Fawley Bryant Architecture and Doug Mund that will house the interior portion of the *Mosaic Backyard Universe (MBU)* is 32 feet tall and 47 feet wide by 70 feet long for a total of 3,290 square feet.

Pictured to the right, Eddie Plante, site Superintendent from Willis Smith stands in front of the new north-facing wall of the *MBU*. The brown nichiha panels — some 96 of them — are a concrete composite with a wood finish designed to be impact and fade-resistant.



Left, the new classrooms in the *North Education Center* are being built as multi-purpose spaces that can be changed as needed based on group size. Audio-visual capabilities have been built into the design of the rooms.



Above, a new control room houses the “brain” of the Museum, including the all-digital, state-of-the-art projection system for the Bishop Planetarium. With its amazing multi-media capabilities, the Planetarium has its own servers. Such a high-tech system also needs high-tech fire suppression capabilities and the chemical system at the Museum is designed especially for places heavy on electronics. **Left**, 350 pieces of glass have been used in the *MBU*’s exterior walls. The glass is UV-blocked and insulated to keep down heating and cooling costs. They’re also impact resistant.



Progress in Pictures

We kicked off construction of the North Education Center during a groundbreaking ceremony in January with help from community leaders and some of our future *Mosaic Backyard Universe* visitors. Construction has been moving right along, with work beginning in earnest in February, foundations laid by May, the steel structures going up in June. By October, the window framing was in place and the windows were in place in November. Today, the new building is nearly fully enclosed and we're on track for the grand opening of this exciting new space in mid-2019!

January



February



May



June



October



November



December

