

WHERE **SCIENCE****HISTORY****AND****ART** CONNECT

To: Raven Hill friends
From: Cheri
Date: November 9, 2024
Re: celebrating youth

Raven Hill Discovery Center has a rich history of youth-led contributions that enhance its mission to connect science, history, and art through hands-on learning, so it is with great excitement that Raven Hill Discovery Center announces a new collaboration with the **Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum**. The **2025 YIRA (Youth Innovation in Rural America) Project** will bring a new twist on youth innovation experiences for northern Michigan young people early in the new year. Upper elementary students will be invited to meet at their local libraries or schools or at Raven Hill weekly from January to May of 2025. Working with Raven Hill staff, they will learn the innovation design process, plus some background skills, like problem-solving, creative and critical thinking skills. Students will then identify a

challenge at Raven Hill Discovery Center and choose an innovative solution to that challenge, which they will present as a rendering, model, prototype or storyboard at an Open House on Sunday, May 18, 2025. Perhaps one of their projects will become yet another exhibit at Raven Hill in the near future!

It's amazing to look back over the past 34 years or more and think of the variety of projects that youth have designed and created for Raven Hill. Even before the Center opened, 12 Boyne City eighth grade students designed, blueprinted, problem-solved and constructed a magnetic can mover. The machine illustrates how magnets are used in factories, from moving items along a magnetic rail, across tapering fields, around magnetic pulleys and through magnetic separators. It can be found at the Center in the hands-on Discovery Room and is a favorite of visitors young and older!

Can mover



In 1988, pre-Raven Hill, students worked with two Industrial Magnetics, Inc. engineers in Research & Development. They built this magnetic can mover machine of cardboard, balsa wood and aluminum flashing and then each week, IMI machinists recreated the student work in steel. The machine is even designed to come apart for storage!

Jurassic Park Walk



*In 2004, high school classes helped lay the brick pathway as the beginning of the Center's **Exploring Beyond Jurassic Park** exhibit. **Jurassic Park** has expanded several times over the years. Textural signs were added in 2007. A coral reef was built in 2011. Then, this past summer, the pathway was widened with a brick border, making it even more accessible.*

In 2005, middle school girls worked with artist Lori Hough to create a Moai or Easter Island Head replica. The head was carved of Styrofoam, covered with chicken wire and 5 coats of cement and raised to a standing position. The girls learned the chemistry of cement and the physics of simple machines during the project.

Stone Throne



*The Stone Throne is a favorite exhibit in Raven Hill's **Ancient World** exhibit, no matter how you approach it!*

contribute to an **Ancient World** exhibit that also includes a pyramid, sphinx, Roman arch, and obelisk. All of the installations provide insights into ancient civilizations and their architectural achievements, thanks in part to our local youth.

The **Exploring Beyond Jurassic Park** pathway at Raven Hill guides visitors through Earth's geological history, from the Earth's formation to the emergence of modern humans. It displays real rocks, fossils and trees, as well as sculptures of extinct species. The 350-foot brick walkway was laid by area students working with two landscapers. Thanks to over 150 youth, Jurassic Park offers a beautiful brick path and an engaging journey through time that enhances visitor understanding of our planet's past.

Moai - Easter Island



*Raven Hill's Moai celebrates its 25th birthday next summer. The Center is planning a celebration as part of the current **Under Michigan & Beyond** exhibition, since the "actual" Moai are carved stone sculptures.*

Youth also designed and created miniature sculptures as part of a competition among over 175 school students. A jury of community members chose three sculptures. Those three were recreated as full-sized sculptures during the 2012 **Blurred Boundaries Project**. The stone throne, twin towers and sleeping bear sculptures are all found in the Ancient World. The Moai and these stone sculptures

Demonstrating a commitment to inclusivity, young volunteers, led by Eagle Scout Dylan Clapp, constructed **Dylan's Dock**, an accessible platform that allows all visitors, including those with mobility challenges, to explore the pond area. This addition ensures that all guests can engage with the Center's natural surroundings.

All of these projects exemplify the Center's dedication to fostering youth engagement and education, allowing young individuals to leave a lasting impact on their community. We look forward to a new generation of youth, participating in the **2025 YIRA Project**—once again identifying and innovating at Raven Hill—thanks to the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum. Watch for details coming soon!

Franklin D. Roosevelt said, "We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future." Young people play a vital role in forging a better tomorrow. It is critical that we work to nurture their development today.

Just a reminder that the Main Museum is now open regular **fall/winter hours—12pm to 4pm on Saturdays and 2pm to 4pm on Sundays, plus other times by appointment.** Due to the bridge construction on Fuller Road, access is **via the detour**—C-48 to Bergman to Rogers to south Fuller Road. Plan a visit soon to explore the youth-created exhibits in the Main Museum and outdoors on the Main Campus and in the Ancient World. Raven Hill staff is also available for onsite classes, as well as educational outreach programs that come directly to schools and libraries. Call Cheri at 231.536.3369 or email info@miravenhill.org with questions, for more information or to book a day and time for a family visit, class, field trip or outreach program.



Cheri

