



## **- An Open Letter to Our Community, Staff, and Volunteers -**

At Great River Children's Museum, we believe that diversity is not only a strength but also an essential part of who we are as a community. As an organization dedicated to inspiring curiosity, creativity, and learning, we recognize the incredible richness that comes from embracing and celebrating differences. From the strong rural landscapes of Central Minnesota to the vibrant suburban centers, our community is diverse in culture, background, ability, identity, and experience. We are committed to ensuring that every child, caregiver, and community member feels a true sense of belonging within our museum walls.

**Our values are rooted in inclusion, respect, and curiosity.** We celebrate diversity in all its forms, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender identity, disability, socioeconomic status, religion, family structure, and lived experiences. We believe that play is universal and transformative, fostering connections across differences and nurturing empathy and understanding. Our mission is to create a space where everyone – from our youngest visitors to their caregivers and beyond – can explore a world of possibilities, learn from one another, and leave with a deeper appreciation for our shared humanity.

**We are committed to continuous reflection and action.** We are creating programs and exhibits that reflect the diverse stories of our community. We believe our staff and volunteers should reflect the community and participate in ongoing learning opportunities to deepen connection to our neighbors. We collaborate with local organizations to ensure our museum is physically, functionally, and financially accessible and welcoming to all. Through intentional design and partnerships, we aim to ensure that everyone can find themselves – and learn about others – in the experiences we offer.

**We cannot do this work alone.** We invite you to join us in fostering a culture of inclusion and celebration at Great River Children's Museum. Whether you are a visitor exploring our exhibits, a volunteer sharing your time and talents, or a community partner helping us expand our reach, your involvement is essential. Together, we can hold space for children and families to feel welcome and empowered to carry these values of respect into their own communities, and throughout their lives.

**We believe there will always be more to learn.** We welcome your feedback, ideas, and participation in this journey. We invite you to share your voice and help us grow by joining the conversation with our board, staff, and community members. Let's continue striving together toward a future where every child and family in Central Minnesota feels seen, heard, valued, and celebrated.

Thank you for being part of this important journey. You Matter. Your Voice Matters. Together, we create a museum – and a community – where everyone belongs.

*The GRCM Board of Directors*