LSA COLLEGE OF LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND THE ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

Bringing science and research to Michigan and beyond

The U-M Museum of Natural History is a dynamic hub of scientific exploration and engagement. Housed within the state-of-the-art Biological Sciences Building, the museum offers the public a unique opportunity to access current research by U-M scientists.

When visitors enter the museum's dazzling five-story atrium, they're greeted by the world's only mastodon couple on display and the ancient whale skeletons suspended overhead. The space is designed to inspire wonder and curiosity, setting the stage for the museum's innovative exhibits and programs.

The museum's many attractions include two interactive public labs, a public forum for multimedia presentations, and two working research labs where visitors can observe and interact with scientists at work. The Planetarium & Dome Theater, a landmark on Washtenaw Avenue, uses state-of-the-art technology to offer immersive journeys through time and space. With its versatile design, the planetarium serves as a venue for educational shows, performances, presentations, and more.

The museum's galleries offer a rich tapestry of experiences, from the immersive dioramas depicting Michigan ecosystems to the evolutionary journey through billions of years of life on Earth. Inspired by research in the Biological Sciences Building, the museum's Under the Microscope exhibits delve into cell biology, gene expression, and developmental biology, providing a glimpse into cutting-edge scientific discoveries.

In addition to the U-M research showcased throughout the galleries, the museum connects researchers with the public through faculty outreach programming. It offers science communication training for scientists at all levels, ensuring they can effectively convey complex ideas to diverse audiences. This training benefits both the public, who gain insight into current research, and the scientists, who refine their communication skills through interactions, events, programs, media, and exhibit design.

One of the museum's most impactful and enduring programs is its innovative student docent program. Not only do our 50 to 60 U-M students provide friendly, enriching interactions for visitors, they also receive extensive training in science communications, inspiring many to pursue careers in science, education, museum studies, and related fields.

The U-M Museum of Natural History provides exhibits and programs that make scientific research and exploration accessible to the public. Your gift supports not just the scientists of today, but also the scientists of tomorrow.

PROMINENT SPACE NAMING OPPORTUNITIES

NAMED MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

A Museum Building Endowment of $30M would support infrastructure, programming, and exhibits, and it would also promote accessibility by updating technology, equipment, fixtures, furniture, as well as performing necessary maintenance such as painting and patching in high traffic areas to accommodate our annual visitorship of 150,000. This gift would be recognized with the naming this beloved venue at the university.

NAMED PLANETARIUM & DOME THEATER

The golden dome of the Planetarium & Dome Theater is a landmark on Washtenaw Avenue, a major thoroughfare in Ann Arbor. Inside the planetarium, the tilted projection dome, sloped floor, and reclining seats provide a comfortable and immersive viewing experience. Visitors—including the general public, K-12 and university classes, and private groups—are transported through our solar system into the vastness of the Universe, thanks to the planetarium's Digistar projection system. The planetarium also gives specialized training to student docents; many planetarium docents have gone on to successful careers as planetarium directors and science educators. An endowed gift of $2.5M to support Planetarium & Dome Theater programming, equipment, and undergraduate internships will be recognized with a naming opportunity.

Group visits inspire curiosity. Lab experiences, docent-led programs, planetarium shows, and self-guided exploration of exhibits get kids of all ages thinking and acting like scientists and researchers.

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COMMUNITY PROGRAMS SUPPORT

The museum leads numerous community outreach programs, including the Science for Tomorrow STEM Careers Program. Science for Tomorrow inspires and empowers middle school students in metro Detroit communities that are underrepresented in STEM fields and on college campuses, giving hundreds of students every year opportunities to receive dynamic, multidisciplinary science lessons from U-M researchers and faculty. Annual gifts of $25,000 or more would provide support for educational programming, encouraging the next generation of scientists.

DEI SUPPORT

Gifts of $10,000 annually support diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility efforts to broaden the museum's reach and impact on the communities the museum serves. Gifts to this fund provide support that would elevate diversity, equity, inclusion and access for museum programs and initiatives.

UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE STUDENT SUPPORT

The museum continues to expand opportunities that provide engaged learning outside of the classroom. A gift of $15,000 annually would help increase student participation from backgrounds and identities typically underrepresented in STEM fields and provide more in-depth training and opportunities for students to communicate science research.

"The best part of being a docent is all the opportunities it comes with. I got to interview Ira Flatow from Michigan Public Radio, which was probably my coolest story, but my favorite stories are about helping kids in the lab and having them go 'Oh, I get it!'"

–Vee Polderman, '25

WAYS TO FUND YOUR GIFT

Your gifts of cash, pledges, or appreciated securities change lives. Wills, estate, and planned gifts allow you to create a lasting legacy that will enable the best and brightest minds to experience a liberal arts education, solve problems in a changing world, and yield ideas and innovations that will make a difference in Michigan and around the globe.

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