

STEP RIGHT UP AND
ENTER THE BIG TOP FOR

IMAGINATION BALL

THE GREATEST GALA ON EARTH!

A circus-themed evening of entertainment
and fun surprises benefiting

PLEASE TOUCH MUSEUM

Tuesday, April 29, 2025
6-9 pm



The Liem Family enthusiastically congratulates

Please Touch Museum's honorees for championing our children's future:

Vanguard's *Strong Start for Kids Program*
(Portia and Otto Sperr Award)

Philadelphia Union Foundation
(Corporate Philanthropy Award)

Settlement Music School's *Kaleidoscope Preschool Arts Enrichment Program*
(Children & Families Impact Award)

WELCOME

Please Touch Museum's Imagination Ball is many things.

It is a time of celebration, bringing friends and supporters together to honor Philadelphia's gem of a children's museum in one of the City's most historic buildings.

It is a time to shine a spotlight on community partners who share our vision, mission and commitment to enriching the lives of the children and families across the region.

Tonight, we honor Vanguard's Strong Start for Kids Program, Settlement Music School's *Kaleidoscope Preschool Arts Enrichment Program*, and the Philadelphi Union's *Safe Streets Program*. We thank them for their long commitment to enriching the lives of the youngest among us, and to creating supportive communities in which they can thrive.

And, importantly, it is a call to action, reminding all of us of the need to continue to support and nurture the Museum so that it remains a beacon of hope and safety and community for all children and all families – today and every day.

During this year of leadership transition at the Museum, we are especially grateful for the support you have provided. Your continued investment ensures continuity and stability during a time of change and helps us to ensure a successful next chapter for the Museum.

Thank you for joining us tonight to celebrate the power of play. Together, we can create wonder, discovery and endless possibilities for each child and family that visits Please Touch Museum.

Wishing you a magical night!

Melissa Weiler Gerber
Interim President & CEO

Tracey Santilli
Chair, Board of Trustees

EVENING SCHEDULE

6:00 P.M. | COCKTAIL HOUR | SOUTH FOYER

Circus performers and stage acts, plus inspired hors d'oeuvres
from Rhubarb Hospitality Collection

6:50 P.M. | WELCOME

David Darwin, *Ringmaster*

Tracey Santilli, *Chair, Board of Trustees, Please Touch Museum*

Melissa Weiler Gerber, *Interim President & CEO, Please Touch Museum*

7:00 P.M. | 3-RING CIRCUS OF FOOD AND ENTERTAINMENT

Food stations and passed food from Rhubarb Hospitality Collection in
River Adventures, Carousel House and Imagination Playground

Entertainment: Duck Pond Stage (River Adventure);
Ramp Stage to Alice in Wonderland; Carousel

8:00 P.M. | HONOREE PROGRAM AND RAFFLE DRAWING | HAMILTON HALL

Children and Families Impact Award
Settlement Music School's *Kaleidoscope Preschool Arts Enrichment Program*

Corporate Philanthropy Award
Philadelphia Union Foundation

The Portia & Otto Sperr Legacy Award
Vanguard's *Strong Start for Kids Program*

8:30 P.M. | DESSERT RECEPTION | SOUTH FOYER

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Your presence at Imagination Ball makes you part of the Please Touch Museum family, a family that knows we need to invest in the education and wellbeing of the youngest members of our society. Thanks to your being here this evening, the Museum is able to further pursue its vision of a more playful, inclusive and wonder-filled world.

Funds raised for Imagination Ball support the Museum's commitment to providing access for all families through various community benefit initiatives. **In FY2024, 31% of visitors enjoyed the Museum for free or at a reduced rate of $2 per person, the value of which is comparable to more than $2.45 million in ticket sales.** Every bit of that expansive community benefit is thanks to the generosity of supporters like yourself!

Private funds raised from partners like you are critical to ensure that we remain financially resilient and mission-centered as we work to protect, preserve, and expand play-based learning in the lives of all children in our community.

The Museum is, without question, a critical place for families to engage their children in developing the social, emotional and cognitive skills needed to excel in life. It has become the third place of learning for our community.

With so much division in the world around us, the role of PTM in the community is more needed than ever.

The Museum has been, and remains, a place where children and families from diverse backgrounds and lived experiences play and learn together.

The Museum has been, and remains, a welcoming place and safe space for all children, all families, all people - whether staff or visitors.

Your tickets and donations to Imagination Ball and the Museum support every element of this critically important work. Your support, and that of countless others, allows Please Touch Museum to welcome all children and families, regardless of socioeconomic status, to take part in all the Museum has to offer.

TONIGHT'S ENTERTAINMENT

ERIC GEOFFREY

Eric Geoffrey is a man of many talents including but not limited to juggling, tight wire walking, stilt walking, flying trapeze, unicycle riding, and circus performing coach. And Eric is no stranger to Please Touch Museum. He and his wife Allison have performed here many times and entertained our visitors with audience participation and great fun. That's why Eric was the perfect person to engage with us to create a spectacular circus for Imagination Ball!



Eric began his performing journey as an apprentice with the award-winning Give & Take Jugglers in 1984 at the age of 14 and became its active manager in 2016. He graduated from the legendary Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus Clown College in 1988 and toured with their Blue Unit in 1989 as a trapeze clown. Eric is also an accomplished tight wire walker with the Funicular Circus, as well as the tight wire instructor at the Philadelphia School of Circus Arts.

For Imagination Ball, Eric has assembled circus performers to dazzle guests from the moment they arrive until they leave at the end of the evening. Entertainment will keep the magic alive throughout the cocktail and dinner hours, on stage in South Foyer, the Duck Pond in River Adventure, from the rafters of the Carousel, and roaming throughout the Museum.

TONIGHT'S ENTERTAINMENT

RINGMASTER, DAVID DARWIN

Every circus needs a ringmaster, and David Darwin invites you to step inside a world of his own creation, a place where the chains of technology can be broken by the spectacle of inspired live performance. He has evolved past sideshow into a new age of vaudeville – the one man guaranteed to astound audiences of all ages!



David is a child of the world, but Philadelphia natives can feast on his remarkable performances in their natural habitat: at a local library, theater, or bar. He has explored far and wide in his quest for the unusual, performing in venues across the land, and some of you may recognize his unique spark from NBC's, "America's Got Talent".

Each of David's performances is specifically adapted to captivate the audience at hand. From death-defying stunts to clean comedy and juggling, David does it all. He is the juggling contortionist who can astound you with song, skill and captivating surprises. David will share his 16 years of experience and astonishing command of his craft to delight you. He is the natural selection for your needs – entertainment evolved!

PLEASE TOUCH MUSEUM'S PORTIA AND OTTO SPERR LEGACY AWARD

As a Montessori educator, Portia Sperr understood the learning opportunities inherent in play and sought to create a nurturing and inclusive environment devoted to it. From her vision, dedication, and tireless efforts along with her husband, Otto, Please Touch Museum was born in 1976.

The Portia & Otto Sperr Legacy Award recognizes those in our community whose contributions build on this transformative legacy. Recipients of this award pave the way for Please Touch Museum to introduce every child who passes through our doors to the life-changing power of play.

HONORING OUR 2025 RECIPIENT:

Vanguard's *Strong Start for Kids Program*

Vanguard's *Strong Start for Kids Program* supports early childhood development by improving school readiness for children in high-need communities. The program invests in young children so they can *"grow, thrive and learn, improving school readiness for children growing up in poverty."*

This is a value that lies at the center of Please Touch Museum's mission. Our strategic priority as a Third Place of Learning and our deep engagement with marginalized children and families was foundational to our thinking when we began Kindergarten Readiness.

Vanguard's support of our Kindergarten Readiness programs since 2018 has enabled PTM to think deeply about our role in the Philadelphia educational ecosystem and build an approach to programming that is supportive of children and their caregivers as they prepare for critical early learning years and beyond. Their support has been crucial to our own understanding of how we partner with families and help young children build social emotional skills that contribute to their academic success.

Vanguard's contributions to early childhood development exemplify the legacy of the Museum's Founder Portia Sperr and her husband Otto in transforming the lives of children and their families.

We are honored to put a spotlight on ***Strong Start for Kids*** and its support of our groundbreaking work happening at the Museum. The investment and leap of faith that Vanguard took has resulted in a program that continues to demonstrate impact and has positioned PTM as a leader in advocating for early learning preparedness.

Accepting the award is Chinwe Onyekere, Program Officer, *Strong Start for Kids*.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IMPACT AWARD

One of Please Touch Museum's guiding values is community. We provide year-round free and low-cost programming opportunities to welcome all families, regardless of socioeconomic status, to take part in the magic of play.

The Children and Families Impact Award recognizes an individual or organization that is tirelessly advocating on behalf of children in our Philadelphia community. Recipients of this award are working toward true equity by supporting children and by enabling families to put their children first.

HONORING OUR 2025 RECIPIENT:

Settlement Music School's *Kaleidoscope Preschool Arts Enrichment Program*

As we thought about our honorees for 2025, there was no doubt that **Settlement Music School's *Kaleidoscope Preschool Arts Enrichment Program*** was the clear choice for this award. The Kaleidoscope Program develops skills and knowledge in literacy, math and social awareness through learning in music, creative movement and visual art.

Both Please Touch Museum and the Settlement Music School share some of the same goals and mission, which make honoring this program so compelling. Both institutions help children develop early skills through active, developmentally appropriate learning, based on and improved by solid research. Both institutions also focus on assuring that all children have access to our programs, no matter the challenges they may face.

The Museum's values of curiosity, community, engagement and excellence are also imbedded in the work of Settlement Music School and the **Kaleidoscope Program**. Together, our institutions are having a deep, meaningful impact on young people's lives.

The Imagination Ball presents the Museum with a wonderful opportunity to honor this work. We are pleased to award Settlement Music School the 2025 Children and Families Impact Award for the critically important work they do through their Kaleidoscope Program.

Accepting the award is Tarrell Davis, Executive Director of Early Childhood Programming.

CORPORATE PHILANTHROPY AWARD

Since 1976, Please Touch Museum has created meaningful experiences for children and their families that will have a lasting impact and help lay the foundation for a lifelong love of learning.

The Corporate Philanthropy Award recognizes an outstanding business that values the vital importance of play in the earliest years. These organizations partner with the community and make significant and wholehearted investments in our most prized and precious priority: our children.

HONORING OUR 2025 RECIPIENT:
Philadelphia Union Foundation

There was no doubt this year that the Philadelphia Union Foundation's ***Safe Spaces Program*** was the best choice for the Corporate Philanthropy Award, which recognizes an outstanding business that understands the vital importance of play in a child's life.

The **Foundation** is deeply dedicated to harnessing the power of soccer as a catalyst for transformative change in the community. Through its *Safe Spaces program*, the Foundation is committed to building new, state of the art, full-sized turf soccer fields in Philadelphia and mini pitches across the Philadelphia region. This investment has brought new life to neighborhoods and opportunities for children to play.

Their work, as well as the Museum's, is dedicated to improving the lives of our youngest learners, and to providing opportunities for early childhood development.

Their passion for soccer is matched only by their commitment to community. Together, our institutions are having a deep, meaningful impact on young lives.

For their philanthropic efforts in the Greater Philadelphia region, and their unwavering support of childhood opportunity and community, Please Touch Museum is thrilled to present the Philadelphia Union Foundation with our 2025 Corporate Philanthropy Award.

Accepting the award is Alyssa Radu, Executive Director, Philadelphia Union Foundation.

PAST AWARD HONOREES

PORTIA & OTTO SPERR LEGACY AWARD

2016: Gie & Lisa Liem

2017: Albert M. Greenfield Foundation

2018: Sally Stetson

2019: Sylvester Mobley

2022: Stanford Thompson

2024: Hallee Adelman

CORPORATE PHILANTHROPY AWARD

2016: PNC Grow Up Great

2017: PECO

2018: Bank of America

2019: Tierney

2022: The GIANT Company

2024: Independence Blue Cross

YOUNG PHILANTHROPY AWARD

2017: The Spruce Foundation

2018: Garrett Snider

2019: Nick Bayer

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES PHILANTHROPY AWARD

2022: Christine DiBona Lobley

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IMPACT AWARD

2024: Mighty Writers

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Please Touch Museum — We're proud to support you

Thank you for your continued commitment to providing free and low cost educational programs to ensure all children can participate in experiences that will help them develop skills to succeed in school and life.

Congratulations to all honorees. We applaud you for all that you do.

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When Curiosity Grows, Communities Thrive.

At Carmichael Lynch, we know that when kids dream big, the future gets even brighter. That's why we're proud to support the Please Touch Museum and its mission to spark creativity, learning, and discovery for all families. Together, we're building a world where curiosity leads to endless possibilities.

Deloitte.

Deloitte is proud to support the Please Touch Museum and the honorees of the Imagination Ball!

At Deloitte, our purpose is to make an impact that matters in our communities. We proudly support organizations dedicated to creating meaningful progress by unleashing the potential of children through the power of learning through play.

www.deloitte.com

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high five & much love to the Please Touch Museum for all the imagination & fun you inspire! It's a joy to share the journey with you.

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Congratulations to the honorees
and to the Please Touch Museum
for another year of play.

– The Adelman Family



WE SALUTE

Vanguard, Settlement Music School, and the Philadelphia Union Foundation

Imagination Ball 2025 honorees

Independence Blue Cross (IBX) is proud to support the **Imagination Ball**. We recognize the honorees for their commitment to engaging and supporting children and families in our region.

IBX remains steadfast in its support of individuals and community organizations dedicated to improving the lives and health of the people in our region.

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Being your power company means so much more than keeping the lights on and natural gas flowing. It's about helping our communities thrive. That's why we're proud to sponsor the Please Touch Museum's Imagination Ball—a gala that supports the Museum's free and low-cost community benefit programs and educational initiatives. This is our home, too. And neighbors like you inspire us to make our communities even more vibrant, every single day.

Learn more at **peco.com**

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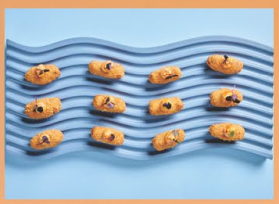
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The PTM Board and friends of the PTM Board would like to thank the dedicated STAFF of PTM. Your leadership, commitment to the mission, passion and unwavering focus on the children are a North Star for us all. Thank you for all that you do.

– Kathleen Sweeney

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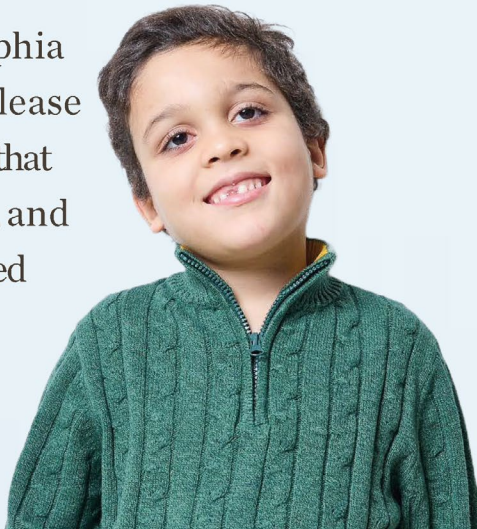
& THE ANNUAL IMAGINATION BALL AND ITS HONOREES.

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We shine brighter together.

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia is proud to partner with the Please Touch Museum on initiatives that encourage curiosity, creativity, and imagination to help kids succeed in school and in life.



Children's Hospital of Philadelphia®

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Congratulations to Please Touch Museum for continuing to be the greatest museum on Earth, and to our 2025 Honorees for supporting countless children in our communities and beyond.

– Sharon and Kevin Coghlan





Thanks to Please Touch Museum for making ALL families feel welcome!

– Laurie and Maury Harris

Please Touch Museum has been open for nearly 50 years!! From its inception, children have been enthralled and inspired learners! Hats off and thanks to Portia Sperr and all the staff, board, and funders who have contributed to our success. Imagine that our first visitors and many of those who followed are now bringing their children and grandchildren to experience great learning opportunities and FUN!!

– Nancy and Roy Kolb





Thanks to Please Touch Museum for supporting children and families in our community and for reminding us all to reach for the stars.

– Lisa and Greg Millhauser

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Thank you to the Please Touch Museum staff for your dedication to inspiring children through the power of play and hands-on learning. Your hard work creates joyful and enriching experiences that make a lasting impact on young minds!

- Jason and Christyn Poore

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On behalf of your friends at Signature 57, congratulations to the honorees of Please Touch Museum's 2025 Imagination Ball: "The Greatest Gala on Earth."

Vanguard | Strong Start for Kids
Portia and Otto Sperr Award

Philadelphia Union | Philadelphia Union Foundation
Corporate Philanthropy Award

Settlement Music School | Kaleidoscope Preschool Arts Enrichment Program
Children and Families Impact Award

Thank you for embracing the power of learning through play, and for your ever-positive impact on the children of Philadelphia.



You make things better. That's worth celebrating.

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To the Please Touch Museum family, our sincere thanks for creating moments of wonder and sparking a love of learning. Congratulations to this year's Imagination Ball honorees! Your dedication to enriching children's lives in our community is truly humbling, and we are honored to support your important work.

– The Tuli Family



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pleasetouchmuseum.org/imaginationball