



**For Immediate Release**

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**BETTY BRINN CHILDREN'S MUSEUM TO CELEBRATE 30 YEARS OF PLAY AT BE A KID BALL GALA**

*The Museum's re-branded annual fundraising event will take place June 5, 2025 at the Pfister Hotel*

**MILWAUKEE, WI (March 26, 2025)** – The Betty Brinn Children's Museum invites the community to play, explore, and celebrate its 30 year history at the Be A Kid Ball fundraising gala on June 5, 2025 from 5-9 p.m. at the Pfister Hotel. The Be A Kid Ball is generously hosted by co-chairs Matthew and Meredith Drvaric, Andy and Sara Keller, and Heather Turner and is presented with leadership support from David Herro and Jay Franke, Fiduciary Management, Inc., and JP Morgan Chase. See a full list of event sponsors at [www.bbcmkids.org/gala](http://www.bbcmkids.org/gala).

The Be A Kid Ball will generate crucial support the Betty Brinn Children's Museum needs to continue providing a safe and equitable space in Milwaukee for play-based, hands-on learning. Research reveals that 90% of brain development happens before age five and unstructured play is essential for growth and development during these early ages. Yet, children's environments are increasingly structured and tech-focused, limiting the traditional sense of learning and growth fostered by play. Play is the agency through which children make their own decisions, understand relationships and teamwork, explore interactions, build self-confidence, and foster creativity.

"For three decades, the Betty Brinn Children's Museum has been a place where play and learning spark endless possibilities for children and families," said Tina Quealy, CEO of the Betty Brinn Children's Museum. "The Be A Kid Ball is not only a celebration of our history, but a moment to look ahead and ensure that we continue to inspire curiosity, creativity, and community for generations to come. We are deeply grateful to our sponsors and supporters who make this work possible, and we hope you'll join us for this milestone event."

Be A Kid Ball attendees will have the unique opportunity to unleash their inner child with event experiences that bring the magic of play to life. The evening's cocktail reception will highlight what play-based learning has looked like over the years and feature nostalgic toys, games, and Museum exhibits that guests can interact with. The formal dinner program will include entertainment by the Betty Brinn Children's Museum's 2025 Artist in Residence, cellist Malik Johnson, a live auction, and the presentation of three inaugural awards: Little Learner's Biggest Advocate, Betty Brinn Legacy Award, and Playmaker Partner.

The Little Learners' Biggest Advocate Award is granted to an individual or small group of individuals who has provided considerable leadership and support to advance the success of Betty Brinn Children's Museum. This honoree has given personally of time, talent, and treasures to ensure that all children can have access to vital play-based learning and early childhood education at the Museum.

The 2025 recipient is Betty Brinn Children's Museum former Board of Directors member Greg Nickerson.

The Museum's namesake, Betty Brinn, was a Milwaukee resident who dedicated her life to securing healthcare for underprivileged women and children. The Museum carries on her legacy by creating a community gathering place that offers programming and experiences where children and families of all cultures, abilities, and socioeconomic statuses belong—where they feel welcomed to learn and play together in a space that is specially designed for them. The Betty Brinn Legacy Award is granted to an outstanding individual, group, corporation, or community partner whose long-standing commitment and impact on the Betty Brinn Children's Museum exemplifies the legacy of Betty Brinn and her passion for early-childhood education. The 2025 recipients are Rick and Barb Wiederhold, who have been instrumental in the Museum's founding and 30 years of impact.

The Playmaker Partner Award is granted annually to a corporate or philanthropic community partner who exemplifies consistent and extraordinary commitment to the Betty Brinn Children's Museum mission. This honoree has played a key role in providing generous investments, vision, and collaboration to ensure all children can have access to vital play-based learning and early childhood education at the Museum. The 2025 recipient is Northwestern Mutual Foundation, who has significantly supported the Museum's mission for many years.

A table of eight is \$1,600 and individual tickets are \$200 per person. Select sponsorships are also still available. Visit [one.bidpal.net/beakidball](https://one.bidpal.net/beakidball) for additional event information and to secure your seats. This event is expected to sell out.

### **About Betty Brinn Children's Museum**

The mission of the Betty Brinn Children's Museum (BBCM) is to inspire all children to wonder and explore their world through play and innovative, hands-on learning experiences. The Museum opened in 1995 and serves almost 200,000 visitors each year at its downtown Milwaukee location. BBCM is dedicated to ensuring that all children have access to its interactive educational exhibits and programs designed to promote the social, emotional and intellectual growth of children from birth through age 10.

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