



BERKSHIRE MUSEUM

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Berkshire Museum takes its Collection to the Community in 2025, will Offer New Experiences During Construction

| *Museum "Goes Mobile" while renovations are underway, will deliver a robust calendar of events and programs throughout the Berkshires* |

Pittsfield, Mass – Berkshire Museum is excited to announce that it will begin the major renovations of its first-floor spaces and galleries beginning Monday, January 6th, 2025.

Starting with the construction kick-off in January, the museum will shift its activities outside of the four walls of its South Street home, partnering with community organizations to offer a variety of off-site events and educational programs, plus behind-the-scenes content, and digital conversations with museum staff featuring works from the collection. During this time, the museum will not be open for admission.

Of note will be the museum's use of their Mobile Museum Units (MoMUs), the 11 STEAM-curated displays drawn from their collections. The beloved MoMU displays – or “mini-exhibitions” – feature science, technology, engineering, art and math components that complement the K-12 curriculum. To date, the MoMus have already been displayed at local school's, libraries, and community centers, along with other Berkshire-based organizations interested in offering these to their audiences.

“MoMUs have been at the forefront of the Berkshire Museum’s education philosophy since re-opening from the pandemic three years ago, and we continue to expand their reach,” said Berkshire Museum Curriculum Developer Joseph Mastronardi. “As they were designed to offer engaging and differentiated field-trip experiences outside the museum walls, we are thrilled to be able to partner with locales throughout the Berkshires to continue showcasing our collection while our building gets its exciting upgrade.”

“While our staff is already thinking about the innovative ways the Berkshire Museum will live in its new space, it was equally important to reimagine the museum experience during the height of construction,” said Jesse Kowalski, Berkshire Museum Chief Curator. “It was a unique experience for our staff to think



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'outside the walls' to deliver a host of new viewing opportunities to all members of the community, and we are grateful for the many partner organizations and educational institutions who have enabled us to be creative in showcasing the collection in new ways."

Along with a new lobby, gift shop, family activity center, lecture hall and conference room, the new first-floor galleries will feature curated displays drawn from the museum's extensive collection of historical objects, rocks and minerals, natural history specimens, art and taxidermy. The heart of the new space will be a new aquarium, currently set to open in 2026. This family-friendly addition to the museum will be located on the first-floor of the building and will feature tanks holding fresh and saltwater aquatic life, as well as terrestrial animals such as snakes, toads, lizards, and insects.

"After years of preparation, we are ready to launch the final component of planned upgrades to the 1903 building, focusing on all the first-floor spaces, as well as unveiling a new aquarium," said Kimberley Bush Tomio, Berkshire Museum Executive Director. "The outcome will be a fresh look at the museum's treasures and opportunities for programs and exhibitions for people of all ages."

Kowalski added, "This final update to the museum will create engaging and immersive experiences for visitors. We'll have something for everyone to enjoy."

The public is encouraged to stay up to date with the renovations, the schedule of off-site events and digital programming and other important news and information by visiting the museum's website at berkshiremuseum.org

About Berkshire Museum: Located at 39 South Street in downtown Pittsfield, MA, Berkshire Museum combines art, science, and history to create thought-provoking experiences for the whole family through interactive programs and interdisciplinary exhibitions. The museum is open Monday through Saturday from 10 am to 5 pm and Sunday noon to 5 pm. Admission is \$15 for adults; \$13 for students; \$8 for children 4-18; free admission for children 3 and under, museum members, and EBT cardholders. For more information, visit www.berkshiremuseum.org or call 413.443.7171.