



MUSEUMS of WESTERN COLORADO

CROSS ORCHARDS

DINOSAUR JOURNEY

MUSEUM of the WEST



2025 ANNUAL REPORT

**“AS WE LOOK
AHEAD TO OUR
60TH ANNIVERSARY
AND BEYOND, WE
REMAIN GROUNDED
IN OUR MISSION
AND INSPIRED BY
WHAT WE CAN
BUILD—TOGETHER.”**



SHENNA HAYDEN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A Year of Momentum, Meaning, and National Recognition

2025 was a year of reflection, progress, and intentional preparation for rebuilding the Museums of Western Colorado.

Together with our board, staff, volunteers, community partners, and supporters, we paused to ask important questions about who we are, how we serve our community, and what our museums need in order to thrive for generations to come. Through a comprehensive five-year strategic planning process, we laid the groundwork for a future that is both sustainable and deeply connected to the people and stories of Western Colorado.

At the same time, we continued to show up—every day at three museum sites—for learners of all ages. Thanks to your tremendous support in 2025, we surpassed our Education for All attendance goals, expanded family-centered programming like Story Time at Dinosaur Journey, and reimaged community experiences such as the Cross Orchards Farmers Market to better serve both visitors and local partners. At the Museum of the West, the opening of a new special exhibits gallery allowed us to welcome powerful rotating exhibitions that explored movement, innovation, and identity from regional and national perspectives.

Behind the scenes, we strengthened our operational foundation as well—transitioning to a new ticketing and customer relationship management system, improving how we care for our data, and ensuring we are equipped to steward relationships with transparency and care.

We are especially proud to share that in 2025, the Museums of Western Colorado received re-accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums, the highest national recognition for museums. This honor affirms the quality, integrity, and impact of our work, and reflects the dedication of our staff, volunteers, and board.

None of this progress happens in isolation. It is made possible by the continued generosity of our donors, the commitment of our members, the enthusiasm of our visitors, and the trust of our community. As we look ahead to our 60th anniversary and beyond, we remain grounded in our mission and inspired by what we can build—together.

Thank you for being part of this journey.

MISSION

The Museums of Western Colorado
inspire and connect our community
by **championing the scientific and
cultural heritage of the Colorado
Plateau.**

WHAT GUIDED US IN 2025

- Expanding access to K-12 educational programs
- Strengthening community relationships
- Building long-term sustainability



HIGHEST NATIONAL RECOGNITION

In 2025, the Museums of Western Colorado received re-accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums, **affirming excellence in governance, collections care, education, and community service.**

2025 BY THE NUMBERS

60,808

Total Visitors

4,298

Students and Adults Served through Tours

2,109

Visitors Served through Free Access Programs

3,567

Member Visits

274

Free Museum Passes Checked Out Through
Mesa County Libraries





Education remains central to our mission—connecting classrooms to hands-on discovery across Western Colorado.

EDUCATION FOR ALL: REMOVING BARRIERS

In 2025, we achieved our K - 12 school field trip attendance goals of 3,000, welcoming 4,155 students to our sites. With donor support through our Education for All Fund, 447 of those students were able to participate despite financial barriers.

EDUCATIONAL CHECKOUT KITS

Each kit supports classrooms full of students, extending museum learning beyond our walls.

2025 Checkout Activity -

- **Original Coloradians: 6**
- **Mountain Men: 4**
- **Clues & Landscape: 8**
- **Paleo: 1**
- **Total: 19 checkouts**

STORY TIME AT DINOSAUR JOURNEY

Launched in 2025, Story Time welcomed young learners and families into Dinosaur Journey through storytelling, imagination, & early science exploration.

June – December Attendance

- Children: 82
- Adults: 48
- **Total participants: 130**

Story Time at Dinosaur Journey

A Monthly Reading Adventure
for Little Learners!

Every 3rd Thursday at 10:00 am





MUSEUM OF THE WEST: GJ LIONS CLUB SPECIAL EXHIBIT GALLERY

In 2025, the Museum of the West opened a new special exhibit gallery with grant support from the Grand Junction Lions Club, expanding our ability to bring compelling exhibitions to our region on a rotating basis throughout the year.

2025 Featured Exhibitions

- Great American Odyssey: Sketching the American West
- Ute Leaders and Legacies
- Gear Up: The Science of Bikes



CROSS ORCHARDS: SATURDAY FARMERS MARKET

In 2025, we restructured the Farmers Market at Cross Orchards to support higher vendor participation and increased visitor capacity.

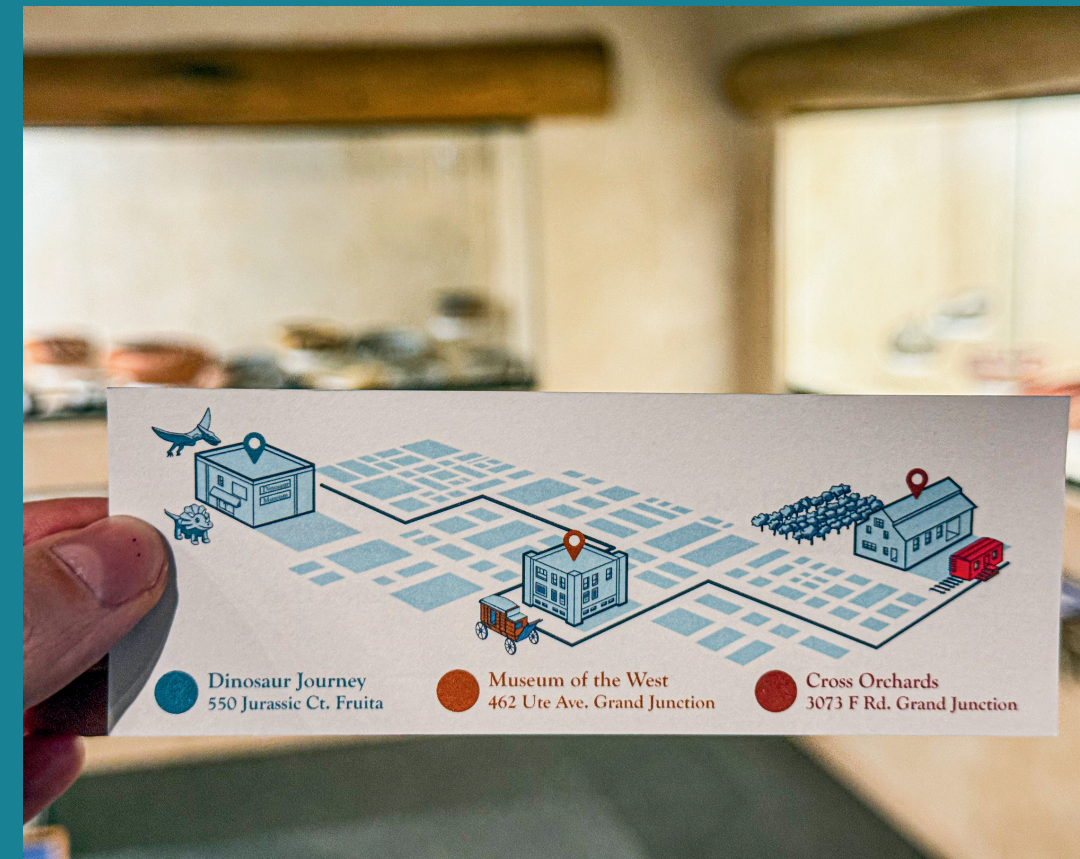
- **6,383** market visitors from June - September
- Improved flow and experience
- Greater opportunity for local producers

STRENGTHENING OUR SYSTEMS

In 2025, the Museums of Western Colorado transitioned to Blackbaud Altru, integrating ticketing, membership, and donor data into one software system.

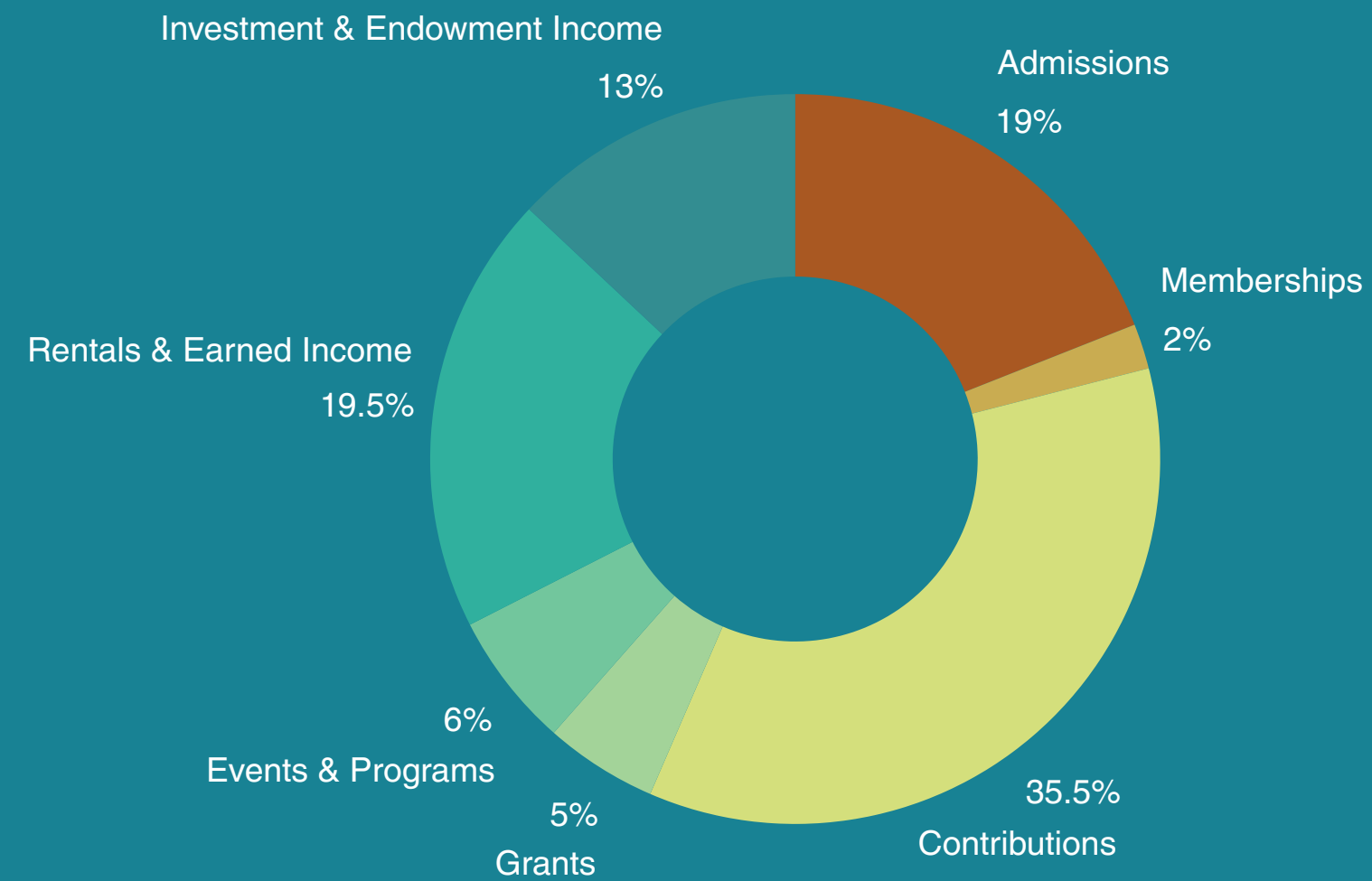
This investment supports:

- Improved visitor experience
- Accurate reporting and transparency
- Stronger donor and member stewardship
- Data-informed decision making

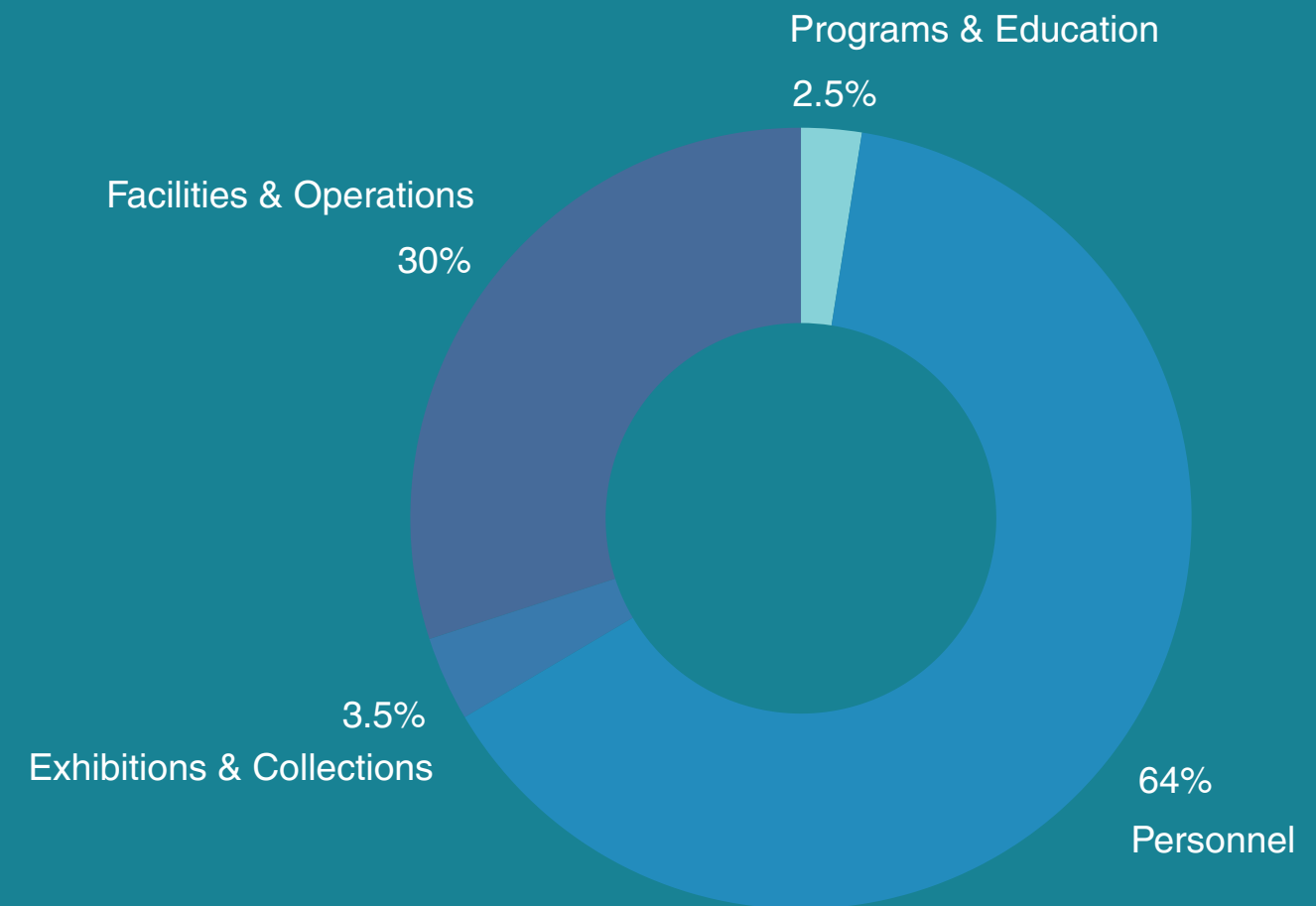


2025 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

REVENUE - \$1,545,982.01



EXPENSES - \$1,529,073.24





SPECIAL CAMPAIGN:

RETURN OF THE ROAR

With support from these three **major campaign partners** in addition to contributing donors, we will bring two new animatronic dinosaur features to Dinosaur Journey in 2026.

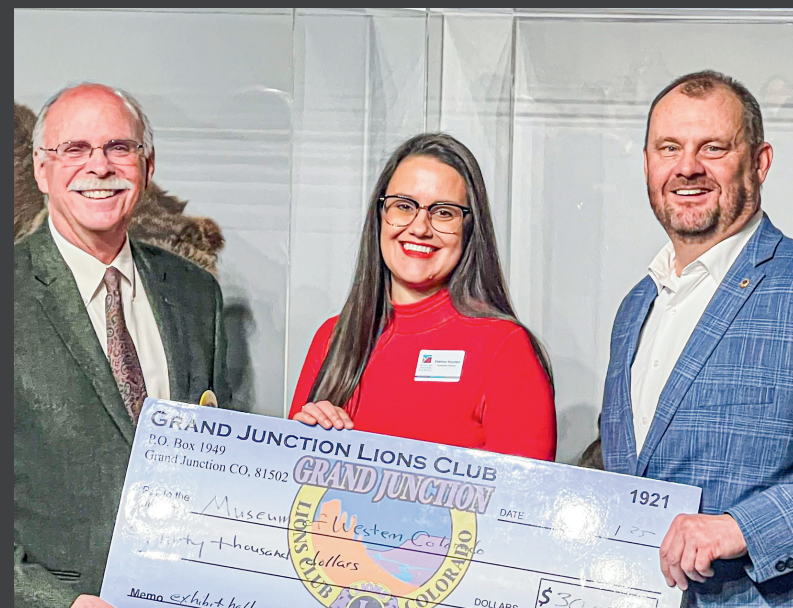
Ed & Lois Gardner - \$20,000

Grand Junction Lions Club - \$11,000

James Ellis - \$500

WITH T-REX SIZED THANKS

We are immensely grateful to the donors, members, volunteers, partners, and staff who make our work possible.



LOOKING AHEAD: WHAT COMES NEXT

In 2025, the Museums of Western Colorado engaged in a comprehensive five-year strategic planning process, bringing together leadership, staff, and community voices to define priorities for sustainability, access, and impact.

This work ensures our museums are prepared to serve Western Colorado for generations to come.





MUSEUMS
of WESTERN
COLORADO

**As we look toward 2026 and beyond, the
Museums of Western Colorado will:**

- Implement priorities from strategic planning
- Expand access to education
- Strengthen exhibits and visitor experience
- Deepen community partnerships
- Build long-term organizational sustainability