In 2021, we overcame incredible challenges to deliver a transformational year of programming. We roared back with camps and school services and created a transformational new program, Cardboard City, despite COVID surges, shifting pandemic guidelines, and untimely staff departures. Many people stepped up to keep our programs running, our finances tidy, our team coordinated, and our community served. Our talented Facilitators worked hard to facilitate camps, community outreach, school workshops, materials donations, classes, and other programs. Our impact was recognized by long standing supporters and by new funders who are making program expansions possible. Looking into 2022, I am excited to work with a crew of experienced educators and incredible newcomers that is full of energy and promise.

COVID relief programs provided key support for a second year, including a generous tax credit that allowed us to temporarily promote 8 part time Facilitators to full time for three months ahead of the summer season.

When we can deploy 12 full time employees, reDiscover Center has incredible capacity to create new and improved programs. It can invent marvels like Cardboard City, transform warehouses into woodshops overnight, launch and refine in-person programs in three locations and four formats simultaneously, all in the midst of a pandemic. It can invent a commercial-grade product for home-based tinkering and get it manufactured at scale. It can create a transformative DEIA Action Plan (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism), affecting every aspect of reDiscover.

There’s a spark at the center of reDiscover that keeps people coming back for more, even when there are barriers in our way. It’s the wonder of making something from nothing, from scraps and bits. It’s the support we give each other to playfully create.
We want to share that spark with everyone. **This year, we launched Cardboard City, a free pop-up art center on the Third St Promenade that served 16,000 people, more than our public engagement programs had reached in 2018, 2019, and 2020 combined.** We showed LA what’s possible when you mix artists, youth, and a mountain of cardboard. The Tinkering Toolkit we prototyped in 2020 for distance learning took on new life with scaled up production and distribution to local students and campers. We published dozens of activity guides and kid-oriented tool training videos, including many produced by our DEIA Initiative and inspired by BIPOC artists. We partnered with leading art education organizations to get reDiscover’s activities to hundreds of after school programs locally and nationwide.

With students’ return to school campuses **this fall, reDiscover’s in-school and after school programs rebounded to near pre-pandemic levels.** Our most intensive school programs, like the makerspace we operated at Coliseum Street Elementary in Leimert Park or the Cardboard Playgrounds we created at Hawthorne Elementary in Beverly Hills, gave students time and space to build real skills. We’re hearing from school partners, old and new, who have learned about Cardboard City and Tinkering Toolkits and want to find out how to bring cardboard-based maker education to their schools. It’s an exciting time, full of promise.

These pandemic years have taught me to expect the unexpected. reDiscover’s triumphs in 2021 let me know that **we thrive when we remain flexible, creative, and ready to build.** We are going to hold on tight to each other, make the best of it, and keep tinkering. I hope you will too.

Jonathan Bijur
Executive Director
2021 BY THE NUMBERS

16,879
PEOPLE SERVED BY FREE PROGRAMMING INCLUDING CARDBOARD CITY AND CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS
6,018 YOUNG MAKERS
10,861 ADULTS

74%
PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN YOUTH SERVED IN-PERSON OVER 2020

60
VOLUNTEERS COLLECTIVELY SERVING 1100+ HOURS

3,000
TINKERING TOOLKITS MANUFACTURED
This summer, reDiscover produced our largest public program ever, Cardboard City. Over eight weeks, we served 16,000 visitors, 5,000 hands-on makerspace participants, 25 artists, 10 artists-in-residence, and 5 teaching artists, all in a beautiful donated 10,000 sf space on the Third Street Promenade in Santa Monica. Cardboard City was a free pop-up art center with a 4,000 sf exhibit, an artist-in-residence studio, a cardboard makerspace with capacity for 40 simultaneous makers, a classroom, and a gift shop. Our audience was a demographically mixed group from every corner of LA County and visitors to the region.

Cardboard City came together quickly! We went from securing a donated space to opening to the public in just 10 weeks. The hard work of our staff, our board’s deep connections to LA’s artistic community, access to mountains of recycled cardboard, and funders like the Herb Alpert Foundation all made this huge endeavor possible. Key community members including Board President Aaron Kramer, Frank Wuts, and reDiscover co-founder Mary Beth Trautwein worked tirelessly to bring it to life, while staff, volunteers, and interns made each day brim with activity and energy.

Cardboard City made a huge splash, attracting regional and national media attention. This program was a truly transformational moment for our organization. What’s more, we’ve already secured anchor funding for Cardboard City 2022. We’ll keep you posted on the details, but we hope you will join us in supporting children’s creativity, promoting sustainability, building community, and showcasing the artistic talent of Los Angeles this coming summer.

Thank you to Cardboard City’s principal sponsors, Starpoint Properties, Herb Alpert Foundation, Downtown Santa Monica, Inc., and the City of Santa Monica Office of Sustainability and the Environment.
The DEIA Committee spearheads reDiscover’s ongoing mission to build an inclusive organization that facilitates opportunities for youth from all walks of life to pursue their interests as tinkerers and innovators. From programs and partnerships to staff training and board recruitment, the DEIA Committee has engaged with almost every aspect of the organization to clarify, refine, and apply the organization’s core values. 2021 was a transformative year for reDiscover and members of the DEIA Committee. The DEIA Committee is a balanced mix of reDiscover staff and board members, advised by Dr. Stephen McCray, an expert in educational equity. Funding for DEIA come from general operating funds committed by a Board of Directors that values this work at the center of reDiscover’s ethos.

In the spring, we approved a detailed DEIA Action Plan that identifies areas that are ripe for growth and change. We understand that racial equity work is not a one-and-done task, it is an ongoing endeavor that requires continuous vigilance, advocacy, and meaningful action.

As an example, to constantly refresh internal awareness of DEIA concepts, committee members rotated giving self-study presentations. During each meeting, one person presented to the group on a topic of interest related to DEIA and the arts. Topics included: anti-racist pedagogy, recent developments in neurodiversity research, the history of racism and sexism in LAUSD, assemblage art and Black LA, using culture decks as a tool for expressing organizational values, and indigenous land acknowledgments. Self-study presentations have led to revising Action Plan items, staff training resources, and new community partnerships.
In its second year, the Tinkering Toolkit program expanded dramatically. Based on the prototypes created in 2020, we worked with a manufacturing partner to create 3,000 branded Tinkering Toolkits. We expanded the accompanying library of Tiny Techniques videos and project guides. We partnered with P.S. Arts to create a 10 lesson unit for 3rd-5th grades that introduces students to Tinkering Toolkit tools and techniques, BIPOC artists and inventors, and Design Thinking. We distributed Tinkering Toolkits in three school districts, two afterschool programs, and to over 180 campers, and sold the kits at Cardboard City and through rediscovercenter.org. We are putting real tools in the hands of children across LA, and beyond.

We learned that the Tinkering Toolkit can be used effectively in home, school, afterschool, and makerspace settings. Through the Tinkering Toolkit’s ongoing development, we dug deep into our love of cardboard. Nurturing that love bore dividends. Our elevated cardboard craft and teaching strengthened hands-on engagement at Cardboard City, influenced our socially distanced Tinkering Camps, and sparked a overhaul of our school and afterschool curriculum. All of these deployments of Tinkering Toolkit have fed back into the materials we provide to teachers and families using Tinkering Toolkits independently.

With reDiscover’s growing leadership in cardboard-based making and STEAM education, we’ve engaged schools nationwide with professional development and afterschool programs with online curriculum co-developed with Mizzen by Mott. Tinkering Toolkit is having a huge positive effect on reDiscover’s in-person programs and sets the stage for regional, national, and international impact.
Served 8,296 children and 11,277 adults.

Conducted winter, spring, and summer Tinkering Camps at reDiscover Center, as well as summer camp at the 9431 Venice pop-up location and Cardboard Camp at Cardboard City and with Culver City Parks and Rec for a total of 53 sessions and 655 campers. Sessions capped at 12 campers due to COVID restrictions. Distributed Tinkering Toolkits to 180 campers.

Provided winter, spring, and fall seasons of in-person afterschool classes at reDiscover Center and 8 partner schools.

Provided 29 online classes and workshop series for the public, schools, and partner organizations such as Dramatic Results.

Distributed Tinkering Toolkits to schools and after school programs in Watts, Pasadena, Santa Monica, Leimert Park, and Brooklyn, NY.

Developed a monthly Activity Guides series linked to picture books featuring BIPOC artists and inventors, complete with webpage, video guide, and PDF.

Partnered with P.S. Arts to create 10 week STEAM unit for 3rd-5th grade that introduces students to tinkering tools and techniques, BIPOC artists and inventors, and Design Thinking.

Partnered with Mizzen by Mott to create 22 activity guides and 5 ProTips on STEAM education using recycled materials for Mizzen’s national community of afterschool programs.

Reopened reDiscover Center to weekend family visitors starting in May, on a new reservation-only system. Restarted in-person birthday parties and private bookings in July.

Developed and delivered Cardboard City at 1231 Third St Promenade, with 16,000 visitors, 5,000 hands-on participants, 25 artists in a 4,000 sf exhibit, 10 artist residencies.

Developed a mass produced branded, customized Tinkering Toolkit, ordering 3,000 units from an overseas manufacturer. Published 24 page bilingual Tinkering Toolkit Guide.

Opened a Tinkering Toolkit-based makerspace at Coliseum Elementary (LAUSD) and piloted the 10 week Tinkering Toolkit Unit curriculum for DK-5.

Produced 6 Tiny Techniques videos.

Provided teacher professional development workshops for 4 schools and at 2 conferences.

Piloted a partnership with Compton YouthBuild, a continuing education high school, to provide on campus workshops assemblage art, maker, and woodworking.

Partnered with Ivy Station September-December to provide weekly free art and tinkering programming adjacent to Culver City Metro station.

Produced live online broadcasts with the American Indian Community Council and Pukuu Cultural Center introducing recycled art activities to an online audience of 7,000 viewers.

Provided pro-bono consulting to The Makers Hub on the development of the Compton Tool Library.

Donated creative reuse materials to PILAGlobal for use in their Tijuana Nest preschool program for migrant families.
CARDBOARD CITY WAS 89% FUNDED THROUGH CHARITABLE DONATIONS

DONATIONS OF APPRECIATED SECURITIES ARE AN EXCELLENT WAY FOR YOU TO PROVIDE LEGACY SUPPORT TO REDISCOVER. GIFTS LIKE STOCKS AND BONDS, DEFERRED GIFTS THROUGH ESTATE PLANNING, AND ENDOWMENTS, EMPOWER US TO CARRY FORWARD WITH OUR MISSION, TODAY AND FAR INTO THE FUTURE.

CONSIDER A LEGACY GIFT TO REDISCOVER CENTER. THIS YEAR, LONG TIME VOLUNTEER FRANK WUTS INCLUDED A BEQUEST TO REDISCOVER IN HIS ESTATE PLANNING. FRANK HAS LONG BEEN DEDICATED TO PROVIDING YOUTH WITH THE MOST INTENSE TINKERING EXPERIENCES POSSIBLE. WITH THIS BEQUEST, THOSE EXPERIENCES WILL HAPPEN FOR YEARS TO COME.

OVER 500 SMALL DONATIONS (<$50) WERE RECEIVED WITH CAMP REGISTRATIONS AND BY APPRECIATIVE VISITORS TO CARDBOARD CITY

MAJOR DONORS, MAKING GIFTS OF $2,500 OR ABOVE, UNDERWROTE KEY PROGRAMS LIKE: ARTIST STIPENDS FOR CARDBOARD CITY, TINKERING TOOLKITS FOR THE PASADENA INNOVATION CLUB, AND THE COLISEUM ST. ELEMENTARY MAKERSPACE
THANK YOU, DONORS!

We have attempted to list all of our donors accurately. Please contact our office if you have any corrections.

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Mira Velimirovic
Brenna Vincent
Keith Wan
Alice Wang
Jill Weinberg
Sean Winograd
Helena Zhang
Income
$850,683

Expenses
$886,038

reDiscover Center operates on a cash basis. End of year financials do not reflect $78,000 of 2021 tax credits received but not yet deposited.
reDiscover Center develops children's creativity through hands-on making with sustainable materials.

ESTABLISHED 2004.