

DISCOVERY CENTER, DA VINCI'S HORSE ANNOUNCE MERGER

Board members from [The Discovery Center of Science and Technology](#) and Leonardo da Vinci's Horse (LDVH) are pleased to announce that their two organizations are merging. The Discovery Center, a hands-on science center in Bethlehem, and Leonardo da Vinci's Horse, a non-profit organization dedicated to developing young people's curiosity, imagination, and creativity, will work together to educate youth in science.

Leonardo has been called the greatest genius of all time. Imagine the potential to develop young scientists who like Leonardo are insatiably curious and think independently and creatively. These young people will be the Renaissance thinkers of our time. They will become leading scientists, accomplished artists, and global entrepreneurs. The new organization will help young people develop their full potential following Leonardo's example.

Background

Collaborating with area corporations, colleges and universities, The Discovery Center offers a variety of educational programs to promote world-class science education in area schools, capturing young people's interest in science at a young age. Programs for teachers, students, and families are offered at the Center and in area schools and community agencies.

Leonardo da Vinci's Horse is responsible for realizing Charles Dent's goal of building the 24-foot bronze "horse that never was," based on the horse Leonardo was not able to complete during his lifetime, and presenting it to the people of Italy as a thank you gift for the treasures of the Renaissance. The horse currently resides in the San Siro section of Milan, Italy. This feat is one of many examples of how scientific thinking and artistic creativity can work hand in hand.

What does this merger mean?

The Discovery Center at 511 East Third St. will assume responsibility for the activities of Leonardo da Vinci's Horse. Lin Erickson will be the executive director of the new organization. Three trustees from Leonardo da Vinci's Horse will join the board of The Discovery Center.

How will the new Discovery Center carry on the vision of LDVH?

Inspired by Da Vinci's unrelenting quest for knowledge, the mission of the new organization will be to provide experiences inspiring curiosity about science and technology, appreciation for its importance, and understanding of the interconnectedness of all things and phenomena. Central to its mission will be the promotion of hands-on, inquiry-based science learning. Using this research-supported approach, students will become scientists like Leonardo investigating the world around them. They will learn to apply the Seven Da Vincian Principles, described in the book *How to Think Like Leonardo* by Michael J. Gelb, to build their understanding of fundamental science concepts while deepening their appreciation for the interconnectedness of all things and phenomena.

Programs started by Leonardo da Vinci's Horse, such as Leonardo's Imagination, an annual outdoor festival featuring art, science, and music, will continue. New programs will integrate science with learning in other disciplines and help develop students' artistic, intuitive, and creative abilities. For example, the design and construction of a 24-foot horse provides endless opportunity for study of mathematical relationships (size, proportion, and scale), materials, heat transfer, engineering, and more.

Leonardo's scientific pursuits included the study of light and optics, flight, hydraulics, mechanics, and the engineering of structures, amongst others. Leonardo's experiments show today's students that deep understanding can emerge from modest technology combined with careful observation and unfettered curiosity. Leonardo's ideas can inspire tomorrow's inventors, scientists and artists.

Leonardo da Vinci was one of the greatest scientific minds in history. A brief examination of his sketches reveals his ability to conceptualize. He made incredible contributions to the development of science in the fields of anatomy, botany, geology and physics. A programmable automaton he developed is said to be the precursor of today's computer, and Leonardo himself encouraged young people to examine their own artistic works in order to find inventions imbedded in them.

What are the goals of this new organization?

In the new organization, the first goal will be to promote inquiry-based science learning in the same hands-on manner The Discovery Center has been doing for years. The principles Leonardo applied in his own life will provide the foundation for inquiry-based science learning. Leonardo's unrelenting quest for knowledge--combined with his commitment to investigating new ideas through observation, testing, and reflection and documenting his findings--demonstrate how he developed understanding of fundamental science principles. This inquiry-based approach is the method used by scientists today and the best way to teach science.

Second, Leonardo da Vinci and Charles Dent will be role models inspiring young and old to achieve beyond what they thought possible. Leonardo will be recognized for his extraordinary contributions to the field of science in the 15th century. Charles Dent will be recognized for pursuing a dream to build Leonardo's horse and give it to the Italian people. Inspired by these two men, young people will gain confidence that they too can become scientists and engineers, develop solutions to the most challenging problems, and pursue dreams that benefit mankind.

Finally, The Discovery Center will recognize "Da Vinci's" in our community of all ages - students, scientists and corporations who are or have made extraordinary contributions in the fields of science and technology.

What will the new organization look like?

Science will remain The Discovery Center's core expertise. New exhibits and programs will draw on Da Vinci's work in the 15th century and highlight the work of Da Vinci's in our community today. Hands-on, inquiry-based learning experiences will build student understanding of fundamental science concepts and increase students' ability to develop creative and integrative solutions to scientific and technological questions. The extensive network of Da Vinci scholars and experts, along with other resources and relationships developed from around the world over a twenty-five year period, will be utilized to support the organization's metamorphosis.

Why does this merger make sense?

According to Bob Lovett, the only member of both the LDVH and Discovery Center boards, "It's obvious to the organizers of this merger that each of our organizations can do much more together than we ever could on our own. Both our capacities for encouraging curiosity and imagination among young people are expanded. As a united force, we have the potential to develop future Da Vinci's who will shape our community in the years to come."