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For Immediate Release

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**Children's Museum of Acadiana Hosts Grand Opening of the
"Itty Bitty Builders" Construction Exhibit to Expose Children to Skilled Trades
Thanks to Grants from the Billeaud Foundation, Rotary Clubs of Lafayette & South
Lafayette, Car Max Foundation, and Wells Fargo Foundation**

Lafayette, LA – Thanks to generous grants from local and national foundations as well as prestigious civic organizations including the Billeaud Foundation, Car Max Foundation, Wells Fargo Foundation, Rotary Club of Lafayette and Rotary Club of South Lafayette, the Children's Museum of Acadiana (CMA) will debut the **"Itty Bitty Builders" Construction Exhibit** at a grand opening event Saturday, March 3rd, 2023.

The purpose of the **"Itty Bitty Builders" Construction Exhibit** is expose children to trade skills, teamwork, and STEM learning with basic construction and engineering concepts as they design and build their own structures.

"The CMA is excited to give children the opportunity to engage in tasks performed by tradespeople, engineers, construction workers, and landscape architects," said Lore Linton, the CMA's Interim Executive Director. **"Itty Bitty Builders"** incorporates educational objectives in all its components such as using logical thinking to install roofing and problem solving to install electrical wiring and plumbing."

On Saturday, March 3rd, 2023, the Museum will host a grand opening event from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. to honor the foundations and organizations contributing to **"Itty Bitty Builders."** The exhibit features a life-size crane children can operate thanks to the Billeaud Foundation and the Rotary Clubs of Lafayette & South Lafayette which also provided volunteers who assisted with the space's renovation. Another exhibit component children will clamor to access is Kaboom's Rigamajig equipment funded by the Car Max Foundation. Finally, the Wells Fargo Foundation's support provides future members of the workforce inspiration and injects a new level of energy into the Museum.

“The CMA has converted its largest exhibit space into the **“Itty Bitty Builders” Construction Exhibit**” to reflect the importance of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) concepts being learned in school and to their application in skilled jobs,” shared Amy Schwarzenbach, the CMA’s Grant Writer & Administrator. The Exhibit address the looming labor crisis in skilled trades. For every five skilled tradespeople retiring, only one is entering the workforce.”

Learn more at <http://www.cmalaf.org/builders> or join the festivities by purchasing admission tickets at <http://www.cmalaf.org>.

About Exhibit sponsors: The **Billeaud Foundation** provides funds to be used exclusively for charitable, educational and scientific purposes, with grants being provided to deserving organizations within these criteria (<https://billeaudcompanies.com/about/martial-f-billeaud-sr-foundation/>). The **Car Max Foundation** promotes the causes our associates care about to impact the communities where we live and work (<https://foundation.carmax.com/>). The **Wells Fargo Foundation** is committed to building an inclusive, sustainable recovery for all through a focus on opening pathways to economic advancement (<https://www.wellsfargo.com/about/corporate-responsibility/community-giving/>). **Rotary district grants** fund small-scale, short-term activities that address needs in your community and communities abroad (<https://www.lafayetterotary.com/> and <https://www.lafayetterotarysouth.org/>)

About the Children’s Museum of Acadiana: With the mission “Learning by Doing,” the Children’s Museum of Acadiana is a private, non-profit corporation that serves over 45,000 children and caregivers annually. It exists to foster a creative environment through “hands-on” exhibits and programs. Children who visit the CMA are delighted with a range of activities that stimulate their creativity and provide opportunities to learn while playing. (<http://www.cmalaf.org>)