



Contact: Maureen P. Mangan

Direct Line: 1-516-224-5828

## **LONG ISLAND CHILDREN'S MUSEUM EXPANDS REGIONAL HISTORY EDUCATION WITH NEW MARITIME EXHIBIT**

### **Funding by the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation Supports Saltwater Stories**

**Garden City, NY** — A \$100,000 grant from the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation will support Long Island Children's Museum's (LICM) launch of *Saltwater Stories: We Need the Sea and the Sea Needs Me*, a new permanent maritime exhibit that brings Long Island's seafaring history to life.

Addressing a critical gap in regional history, the exhibit invites children and families to explore Long Island's deep connections to the sea through immersive, hands-on experiences. Visitors discover how maritime culture continues to shape the region's identity, economy and environment.

"At LICM, we believe in the power of play to spark understanding and connections," says LICM President Erika S. Floreska. "This exhibit invites families to experience Long Island's maritime legacy in meaningful, hands-on ways. With the Gardiner Foundation's support, we're bringing the region's history to life for a new generation."

### **Highlights of the Gardiner Foundation-Supported Components:**

- **Bay House** is a walk-in replica (116 sq-ft) of the traditional structures found along the Great South Bay, where children can imagine life above the water—fishing, crabbing, and working as generations of baymen and women once did.
- **Indigenous Mishoon**, a 10-foot, 500-pound hand-carved dugout canoe, created in collaboration with members of the Shinnecock Nation and other

Indigenous artisans, honors the region's original navigators and their enduring relationship with the sea.

- **Long Island Story Map** is a large-scale, interactive display that immerses visitors in the island's deep connection to its waters. Spanning 20 feet, it uses sensory-rich materials, flip panels, and illustrations to highlight maritime traditions, landmarks, and cultural stories. As an orientation tool, the Story Map helps visitors understand the significance of Long Island's relationship with the water, offering both historical insights and contemporary perspectives in an engaging, accessible way.

*Saltwater Stories* uses dynamic hands-on experiences to present history as a vital, living force that shapes our region and identity. "We want visitors to leave with a deeper sense of pride of place," says Floreska. "The sea is central to Long Island's story. This exhibit honors the people, cultures and traditions that have defined our maritime heritage and continue to influence our communities today."

"The Long Island Children's Museum is first and foremost a vibrant, creative space; engaging its audience in all aspects of culture, science and community. What better place to introduce Long Island's rich and important maritime history and heritage to very young students? This experience initiates a sense of place and cultivates their becoming life learners," said Kathryn M. Curran, Executive Director of the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation.

*Saltwater Stories: We Need the Sea and the Sea Needs Me* opens to the public on **October 11** with an exciting three-day celebration inviting visitors to meet local fisherfolk, explore hands-on activities for all ages and dive into the rich traditions of our bays and beaches. Families will enjoy storytelling, crafts and demonstrations that bring Long Island's maritime history to life! The opening weekend festivities kick off monthly public programs exploring the many ways maritime life has inspired and influenced art, literature, science, history and cultural traditions across generations.

### **About the Long Island Children's Museum ([www.licm.org](http://www.licm.org))**

The mission of Long Island Children's Museum (LICM) is to connect all our communities' children, and those who care for them, to a life of wonder, imagination and exploration. At LICM, children discover their passions and their relationship to the world we share. The 40,000-square-foot museum serves over 300,000 children and adults annually. The private, not-for-profit institution

chartered by the New York State Board of Regents, offers museum-based educational programs and cultural experiences, as well as an extensive community outreach program offered in schools, libraries and youth centers across Long Island.

Recognized with several honors, including the National Medal from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), LICM is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), the gold standard of museum excellence. It is currently the only accredited children's museum in New York State and is one of only 16 accredited children's museums nationwide. LICM has earned 4-stars on Charity Navigator and has Platinum Transparency on Candid.

### **About the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation**

The Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation, established in 1987, primarily supports the study of New York State history, with an emphasis on Suffolk County. Robert David Lion Gardiner was, until his death in August 2004, the 16th Lord of the Manor of Gardiner's Island. The Gardiner family and their descendants have owned Gardiner's Island since 1639, obtained as part of a royal grant from King Charles I of England. The Foundation's mission is inspired by Robert David Lion Gardiner's lifelong passion for New York history. For more information, please visit [rdlgfoundation.org](http://rdlgfoundation.org).