A YEAR OF CHANGE

2017 was a dynamic year of change, bringing two longstanding Fort Myers institutions together to create the IMAG History & Science Center. The merger of the Imaginarium Science Center and the Southwest Florida Museum of History entailed the creation of an independent nonprofit separate from the city of Fort Myers, and a union of the two boards of each institution into one with management oversight of the IMAG History & Science Center.

Matthew Johnson was recruited as the executive director, bringing over twenty years of experience managing a variety of different cultural organizations throughout Fort Myers, with direct experience managing the very entities that merged to create IMAG.

IMAG was officially unveiled at the March 2017 Gala Fundraiser and has been on an upward trajectory ever since!
2017 was a year of change on the inside and outside. The first phase of IMAG’s master plan exterior upgrades began with several improvements giving IMAG an external makeover. From landscaping and a living green wall (vertical garden), to a change in paint color and signage, IMAG has a whole new look!

In addition to the external eye-catching enhancements, IMAG is pleased to be the recipient of a state-of-the-art solar canopy and trees provided by the Florida Power and Light (FPL) SolarNow™ Program. This program is a community-supported solar program designed to provide contributors with an easy way to help advance solar energy in Florida. As a host site, IMAG plays an integral role in contributing space, as well as inspirational engagement that exposes community members to the concept of solar power. The canopy will provide much needed shade for various education programs, while also generating solar energy that will flow back into FPL’s power grid.
HIGHLIGHTS

01. Merger creates IMAG History & Science Center
02. Lee County Human and Veteran Services and Lee County Homeless Coalition Movie Premiere Event
03. IMAG Night at the Museum Gala
04. IMAG launches History and Science Saturday Programs
05. IMAG establishes a STEM Explorer Post
06. New IMAG Summer Camp Launches
07. Participated in Lipman Backpack Giveaway in Immokalee
08. Virtual Fort Myers: The Past Meets the Present exhibit debuts
09. Camp IRMAG; post-hurricane camp
10. The IMAG App drops in Google Play and the App Store
11. Partnership formed with Edison Innovators Assn to create a Fab Lab
12. STEM Team of SW Florida Solar Cook-Off
INNOVATION

Camp IMAG - Summer, 2017

In the Summer of 2017, IMAG continued to offer its flagship education program, Camp IMAG, but with a new twist! The incorporation of Southwest Florida History brought an exciting infusion of exploration into the 9-week long camp session. This included learning about the Calusa Indians and crafting tools and pottery they typically used, as well as a “time travel” segment examining various historical eras with a keen eye toward technology!

Camp IMAG curricula combine two powerful pedagogical tools to foster an atmosphere that facilitates learning in the deepest sense, allowing for exploration, inquiry and most importantly application of concepts being taught. These tools include providing an informal learning environment coupled with cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary examination of various topics, and hands-on exercises that allow participants to apply what they are learning.

Virtual Fort Myers – August, 2017

In August of 2017 IMAG unveiled a highly innovative experience at the nexus of state-of-the-art technology and history to bring the origins of Fort Myers to life. Utilizing Virtual Reality (VR), the IMAG History Team worked with a local design firm to create a one-of-a-kind 3D tour through the original fort of Fort Myers c.1856!

With the belief that individuals and communities find identity and a contextual lens with which to view the world through the study of history, IMAG chose the original fort because it represents a critical juncture in the history of Fort Myers. It precipitated settlers coming to the area to begin new lives and to lay the groundwork for future generations.

IMAG chose to use VR because it has proven to be powerful in its ability to fully immerse participants in an interactive environment, greatly enhancing their capacity to understand otherwise abstract concepts or one-dimensional lessons written on a page.

IMAG is thrilled to have presented the first opportunity in over 150 years to see and experience the fort as it originally stood. Visitors can see where soldiers and the early settlers slept, ate, and kept watch over the fort, and can interact with the environment just like early inhabitants did!
The IMAG APP Drops – October, 2017

There was no shortage of new and exciting experiences at IMAG in 2017, and the IMAG APP added to the fun and enhanced learning with more unique Augmented and Virtual Reality (AR and VR) adventures!

The VR experiences include a climb to the top of IMAG’s iconic water tower and a virtual dive to the U.S.S. Mohawk, an artificial reef off the coast of Sanibel Island. The AR experiences allow guests to look at the fossils on display at IMAG, and view their 3D animated renderings: a Columbian mammoth, a Trex and a megalodon, fully fleshed out and “alive” on the exhibit floor.

AR and VR are in direct alignment with IMAG’s goal of providing an informal learning environment that imparts invaluable lessons and enhances the ability to problem solve and better understand the world.

Fab Lab Announcement – November, 2017

IMAG History & Science Center and the Edison Innovators Association (EIA) have agreed to collaborate on establishing a Fab Lab in Fort Myers. A Fab Lab is a collaborative space for learning, problem solving and creating through the use of off-the-shelf, industrial-grade fabrication and electronics tools operated by open source software and programs.

The Fab Lab will be located at IMAG, and will further its efforts to advance science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) literacy. It will also serve as a community resource for area entrepreneurs, and members of the public who want to explore fabrication and invention possibilities.

EIA members will be instrumental in serving as technical experts. Through their partnership to create a Fab Lab, IMAG and EIA will leverage their respective core strengths to positively impact education and workforce development, economic development and the community at large.
At IMAG we are committed to partnering with and supporting other organizations to give back and contribute to our community. From hosting events and providing meeting space to mentoring young people and giving presentations, IMAG is invested in the communities of Southwest Florida.

Some of the groups IMAG was pleased to partner with and/or support in 2017 include:

- **Boy Scout Troop #314** - members of Boy Scouts of America, Southwest Florida Council. IMAG hosts the troop’s regular meetings.

- **Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast** - IMAG hosted a gathering of Bigs and Littles.

- **Edison Innovators Association (EIA)** - IMAG hosts EIA’s monthly board meetings and various events.

- **Community Cooperative** - IMAG conducted a food drive following Hurricane Irma and donated all proceeds to CCMI.

- **Exploring** - IMAG established a “Stem Explorer Post” to engage those interested in learning about careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), as well as history, museum operations, and aquarium and animal care. Exploring is a nationwide program that “exists to teach important life and career skills to young people from all backgrounds through immersive career experiences and mentorship provided by community and business leaders.”

- **Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)** – IMAG collaborated with the South District Office of the Florida DEP to organize the Sixth Annual Solar Energy Cook-Off. IMAG hosted the gathering in which students from grades K-12 worked together in teams to design and build a solar cooker, demonstrating the utility of their inventions by cooking an original dish.

- **Friends of Cayo Costa and Barrier Island Park Society** – IMAG participated in some scenes in Mullets & Mangroves II, the latest production of a two-part documentary, that presents Cayo Costa Island through the eyes of pioneering fishing families, and modern-day children. IMAG hosted the premiere screening of the documentary which was produced by Main Sail Production and funded by the Friends of Cayo Costa.
IMAG formed partnerships in 2017 with both institutions of higher education and early education that will launch in 2018. IMAG highly values collaboration and the shared growth and knowledge creation it produces for the benefit of the community.

IMAG historians and collections managers will work with the Museum Studies Program within the College of Social Sciences at Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) on various endeavors. The initial collaborations will entail a Seminole Indian Exhibition and object care projects within IMAG’s substantial historical collections.

The education team at IMAG plans to collaborate with educators from the Lee County School District to develop Pre-K programming to take place during IMAG’s Science and History Saturdays that occur monthly on the first and third Saturday respectively.

In addition to these new academic collaborations, IMAG will continue its ongoing partnership with area universities to provide academic internships to students focused on the various disciplines practiced throughout the center.
**IMPACT**

**HIGHLIGHTS**

**Economic Impact**

- $1.5 million direct spending
- 18 Employees
- $2.5 million indirect visitor spending
- 51 full-time equivalent employees supported

**Total Reach** 85,000+

- Up 11%
- 20,000+ students reached
- 5000+ social media contacts
- 1 million+ marketing reach

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**Event & Program Attendance**

- Community Events
- Special Events
- Education Events
- Student Tours
- Camps and Programs

**Annual Paid Admissions**

- 2017: 68000
- 2016: 56000
FINANCIALS

Highlights

195k in facility and exhibit upgrades

49% earned and contributed revenues
• Up 15%
LOOKING FORWARD

IMAG is looking forward to fulfilling its mission and vision through innovation and creativity. Distinctive in its combined focus of history and science, IMAG will engage guests of all ages in truly unique learning experiences.

Through merging its expertise in STEM literacy, skilled presentation of wildlife, and deep knowledge of the history of Southwest Florida, IMAG will illuminate these disciplines in new and exciting ways. It will achieve this through its trademark hands-on learning and interactive exhibits, along with cross-curricular and interdisciplinary teaching methods, and the use of cutting-edge technology.

IMAG will continue to deepen the understanding of the natural and man-made world through the lens of science, applying that inquiry to the rich history of Southwest Florida. Likewise, IMAG will evaluate science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) through the lens of history as the region’s industry, agriculture, infrastructure, and environmental management have evolved.

Whether it is a family enjoying a VR adventure, a group of adults hearing a lecture, a camp class learning about the impact of science throughout history, or corporate event attendees figuring out how to make a robot – IMAG serves to ignite curiosity, inspire discovery, and facilitate learning and knowledge creation.
NEW IN 2018

The Virtual Battle of Fort Myers
A one-of-a-kind Virtual Reality (VR) adventure taking visitors back in time and immersing them in the Battle of Fort Myers!

Science on a Sphere® (SOS)
A room sized, global display system that uses computers and videos to project planetary data onto a six-foot diameter sphere. Animated images of atmospheric storms, climate change, and ocean temperature can be shown on the sphere to help explain environmental processes. IMAG will be able to capture and track hurricanes that could potentially impact Southwest Florida!

The IMAG FAB LAB
A collaborative space for learning, problem solving and creating through using off-the-shelf, industrial-grade fabrication and electronics tools operated by open source software and programs. A Fab Lab will further IMAG’s efforts to advance STEM literacy, as well as serve as a community resource for area entrepreneurs, and members of the public who want to explore fabrication and invention possibilities.

A stand-alone café
A café will be built on the IMAG campus directly next to the main entrance, providing added convenience for visitors. Those who want to visit the campus to only dine at the café will have that option.