



**The Children's Museum  
of Indianapolis**  
P.O. Box 3000  
Indianapolis, IN 46206-3000

(317) 334-3322  
(317) 921-4122 fax  
(317) 920-2020 TDD  
[www.childrensmuseum.org](http://www.childrensmuseum.org)

**Jeffrey H. Patchen**  
President and CEO

June 16, 2005

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to recommend highly the Black Hills Institute of Geological Research (BHI) for any project involving the acquisition, preparation, molding and mounting of fossils.

The Children's Museum of Indianapolis' project with BHI, *Dinosphere: Now You're In Their World*, opened in June, 2004 resulted in more than 270,000 visitors experiencing the exhibit in its first six weeks. Over the past year, this exhibit has helped to drive an overall increase in our visitation of approximately 20 percent, due in part to the exceptional quality of BHI's work as the primary preparator of our dinosaur material, the outstanding staff at BHI and BHI's client-focused approach to customer service.

*Dinosphere* involved the unique immersion of children and families into an environment much like the *original* Cretaceous environment of our dinosaurs. Critical to this was that the dinosaur skeletons be mounted in life-like, interactive poses. The quality of BHI preparation and mounting was nothing less than world-class. Their molding and casting techniques were by far the best available.

The Children's Museum of Indianapolis acquired two of its dinosaurs for *Dinosphere* from BHI. BHI was then contracted to prepare, mold, and mount the specimens. Two additional dinosaurs acquired elsewhere were also prepared, molded and mounted by BHI. In addition, the Museum purchased a cast replica skeleton of STAN, BHI's original *T. rex*, and a variety of smaller casts which the Museum has used in educational exhibits, touch stations, etc.

The four original dinosaurs prepared for the Museum by BHI were *Tyrannosaurus rex*, *Gorgosaurus*, *Triceratops*, and *Maiasaura*. The quality of BHI's work was exceptional throughout the project. All specimens were carefully and meticulously cleaned, preserving any significant associated material with the same care. Because of BHI's diligence and care the Museum was able to announce evidence of the discovery of the world's first reported dinosaur brain tumor, found while preparing the *Gorgosaurus* skull. BHI's attention to scientifically important clues allowed them to mount the *Triceratops* skeleton in what is perhaps its first accurate posture.

Our project also included the production of casts. BHI was contracted to mold our four specimens and to create casts of them, both for scientific study and for display. Again, BHI's attention to detail is evident in the final results – we are not aware of any organization that makes better molds and casts of fossils!

Whom It May Concern  
June 16, 2005  
Page 2

BHI's skeleton mounting procedure was such that the Museum's dinosaurs were realistically portrayed in the poses we sought, and were easy to install! Even more important, should scientists ever need access to any part of the skeleton, each bone is easily removable from the mount.

All aspects of our work with BHI on the *Dinosphere* project were completed according to our schedule and budget.

In summary, we were thrilled with the quality, quantity, timeliness and cost of the work performed by BHI. We continue to enjoy an excellent relationship with BHI as principals Peter and Neal Larson remain as members of our International Advisory Board for the Museum's ongoing paleontology program. We continue to work closely with BHI as the Museum moves forward on to other projects involving paleontology.

I recommend Black Hills Institute without hesitation! For any additional information, please do not hesitate to call on me at any time.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey H. Patchen, D.M.E.  
President & CEO

Contact Information:

Phone: 317-334-4010

Email: [jeffp@childrensmuseum.org](mailto:jeffp@childrensmuseum.org)