



PHILANTHROPY REPORT

CONNECTING TO OUR CORE



FISCAL YEAR 2021

(JULY 1, 2020-JUNE 30, 2021)

CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY 





American naturalist, poet, and philosopher Henry David Thoreau once wrote, “You must love the crust of the earth on which you dwell more than the sweet crust of any bread or cake.” Indeed, the events of the past year have laid bare our dependence on this planet and all that dwell on it. Many of us found solace in nature while isolating from others, and we continue to seek deeper connections to the land. It seems only fitting to draw inspiration from the Earth as we reflect on fiscal year 2021, which ended on June 30.

We know that slow geologic processes have large cumulative effects over long periods of time.

So, too, has the Museum’s century of work in science and nature delivered an outsized impact. For more than 100 years, the Museum has served as a vital community asset. We inspire young minds with our educational offerings, including free programming provided to several metropolitan school districts. Our scientists continue to shape research on a global level, even unlocking new potential for an old museum staple—the planetarium. And, through our stewardship of more than 11,000 acres of Ohio’s natural areas, we work to build a sustainable future.

These achievements are all made possible thanks to strong leadership. We recently appointed a new Board Chair, Sally Sears. She succeeds Jon Grimm, who joined the Board in 2000 and served as Chair for two terms. I’d like to thank Jon sincerely for his dedication to this institution and extend a warm welcome to Sally. She brings an extensive record of service, passion, and knowledge to this role.

Much like the molten iron near the center of the Earth, our institution’s core—focused on biodiversity, human origins, human health, and human ecology—burns bright in everything we do. These areas of expertise are highlighted in our project to reinvent the Museum experience. As part of this reinvention, we debuted three Gateway Projects and broke ground on our expansion this year. Supported by the *Transforming the World of Discovery* campaign, this project marks the first time a natural history museum has completely reimagined its campus and all its exhibits to interweave the story of planetary processes with the record of life on Earth.

Our success is further reflected in our many financial accomplishments this past year. We are proud to have ended this fiscal year with a positive operating margin, continuing our streak of 44 years of balanced budgets. In addition, an economic impact study revealed that the Museum infuses approximately \$40 million annually into the regional economy.

Building on a century of world-class research, an exceptional collection, and a track record of strong management, the Museum will solidify its role as a leader in science, education, conservation, and community building. With a new strategic plan, *Where Science & Imagination Meet*, guiding our efforts, we know that the best is yet to come.

As you peruse this philanthropic report, I hope you enjoy learning about some of the most impactful moments from the past year. And I encourage you to reflect on the ways in which we’re *all*—at the core—deeply connected to our planet. Thank you for your investment in this remarkable institution.

Sincerely,

Sonia M. Winner
President & CEO

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

With the Museum's tradition of world-class research and education, it is positioned to advance the frontiers of knowledge while cultivating the next generation of citizen scientists. Through its transformation project, it is also creating a new model for natural history museums—one that draws on the past to inform the present in order to safeguard the planet's future. This year, the convergence of strategic thinking and new board leadership has helped the Museum make strides toward its vision of building a better tomorrow.



SALLY SEARS NAMED NEW BOARD CHAIR

At the groundbreaking for its transformation project, held on June 24, 2021, the Museum announced that its longtime supporter and advocate Sally Sears would soon step into the role of Chair of the Board of Directors. The appointment follows Sears's six-year tenure as a Director, which has entailed participation in a number of committees, including the steering committee for the Museum's *Transforming the World of Discovery* campaign. Her active involvement will continue in her new role.

Sears succeeds former Board of Directors Chair Jon Grimm, who joined the Board in 2000 and was appointed Board Chair in 2015.



DEVELOPING A MANY-LAYERED STRATEGIC PLAN

In conjunction with its ongoing transformation, the Museum developed its new strategic plan, *Where Science & Imagination Meet*. As the institution fully reimagines its exhibits, physical campus, and visitor experience over the coming years, this plan will guide its efforts as it becomes the museum of the future. By engaging a wider audience, leading through science, encouraging lifelong learning, and investing in organizational excellence, the Museum will set a bold new standard for natural history museums around the world.

Explore the full plan at naturalhistoryreimagined.org.

AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

Become an audience-centered museum that engages, serves, and enhances Greater Cleveland and the surrounding area.

SCIENTIFIC LEADERSHIP

Lead and innovate in scientific research and interpretation to address pressing issues of our time.

LIFELONG LEARNING

Transform the visitor experience to educate people of all ages and inspire a lifetime of learning.

ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Invest in organizational excellence, fiscal sustainability, and a healthy culture.



Ames Family Curiosity Center

SCIENCE IN OUR LIVES

At a time when science literacy is imperative to human survival, the Museum plays a particularly integral role in demonstrating the importance of science in day-to-day life. Through several initiatives this year, Museum experts have worked to empower visitors to see themselves in the story of life on Earth and inspire them to make a difference.

DUNK NAMED STATE FOSSIL FISH

On Wednesday, November 18, 2020, the Ohio General Assembly passed SB 123, a bill declaring *Dunkleosteus terrelli* (“Dunk”) the state fossil fish. The bill’s passage was a monumental achievement for the Museum. The designation serves to inspire those with a budding interest in Ohio history, paleontology, marine biology, and other fields, while putting Ohio on the map as one of the few states represented by a scientifically significant fossil fish. The Ohio legislature is celebrating the designation by installing a Dunk replica in the Statehouse.

Among the individuals who testified in support of SB 123 before the Senate and House Committees was Bree Obhof, a young paleontology enthusiast, fierce Dunk advocate, and daughter of former Senate President Larry Obhof.

THANK YOU TO THE SPONSORS OF THE BILL, INCLUDING:

Former President of the Senate Larry Obhof
Speaker of the House Bob Cupp
Senator Matt Dolan
Senator Nathan Manning
35 Senate and House co-sponsors





The Museum is grateful for the **STATE OF OHIO'S** enduring support of its mission-based work.

GOVERNOR UPLIFTS OHIO TOURISM

On May 5, 2021, the Museum hosted Ohio Governor Mike DeWine for a press conference in celebration of Ohio Tourism Day. Governor DeWine announced the kickoff of the state's tourism reinvigoration campaign and lauded the Museum for its safe reopening amidst the challenges presented by the pandemic.

MUSEUM RESEARCHER LAYS GROUNDWORK FOR NEW USE OF PLANETARIUM DOMES

The Museum's Associate Curator of Invertebrate Zoology, Dr. Nicole Gunter, brought to life her vision to display biodiversity data on planetarium domes with this spring's worldwide release of a new planetarium software plug-in. With funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF), Dr. Gunter partnered with Evans & Sutherland (E&S), a Cosm company, to develop the software update, which allows planetariums for the first time to immerse guests in the wonders of life on Earth as well as the far reaches of the Universe. Planetarium educators can now use the new tool to leverage 1.6 billion available specimen records and create customized programs on biodiversity.

The release of the plug-in marks a significant milestone in the fulfillment of Dr. Gunter's NSF CAREER grant-funded project, which aims to further important discourse on the processes shaping our world and the critical role of conservation and biodiversity.



MUSEUM AWARDED GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE GRANT

The Museum maintains its status as an active leader in land conservation. It continues to focus on stewardship in addition to strengthening existing preserves through the science of preserve design. Last fall, the Museum received a \$187,000 Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant in support of the Mentor Marsh coastal wetland restoration planting project. The grant has helped the Museum continue its efforts to restore and enhance the entire 806-acre coastal wetland habitat and allowed it to pursue an ambitious plant-plug and tree-planting plan this past year. The project will help to create habitats for rare and endangered native birds, such as rails, bitterns, and sandhill cranes.

As a part of this project, **90,000 PLANTS** of various native species (identified based on historical collections records) were planted.

More than **200 SPECIES** of native plants have returned to the area.

MEMBERS JOIN US FOR A DAY OF SERVICE

This past year, Museum members contributed to the institution's work to preserve and protect more than 11,000 acres of Ohio's natural areas through two Membership Days of Service—a tree planting at Mentor Marsh and an invasive-plant removal effort at Medina Sanctuary. Members helped plant 50 6-foot-tall red oak trees at Mentor Marsh.



BALD EAGLES AT MENTOR MARSH

This spring, the Museum marked the 12th year of bald eagle nesting at Mentor Marsh—a testament to decades of conservation work.

INSPIRE: REACH EVERY CHILD

Offering free Museum programming to all second-grade students in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District,

Inspire is funded by:

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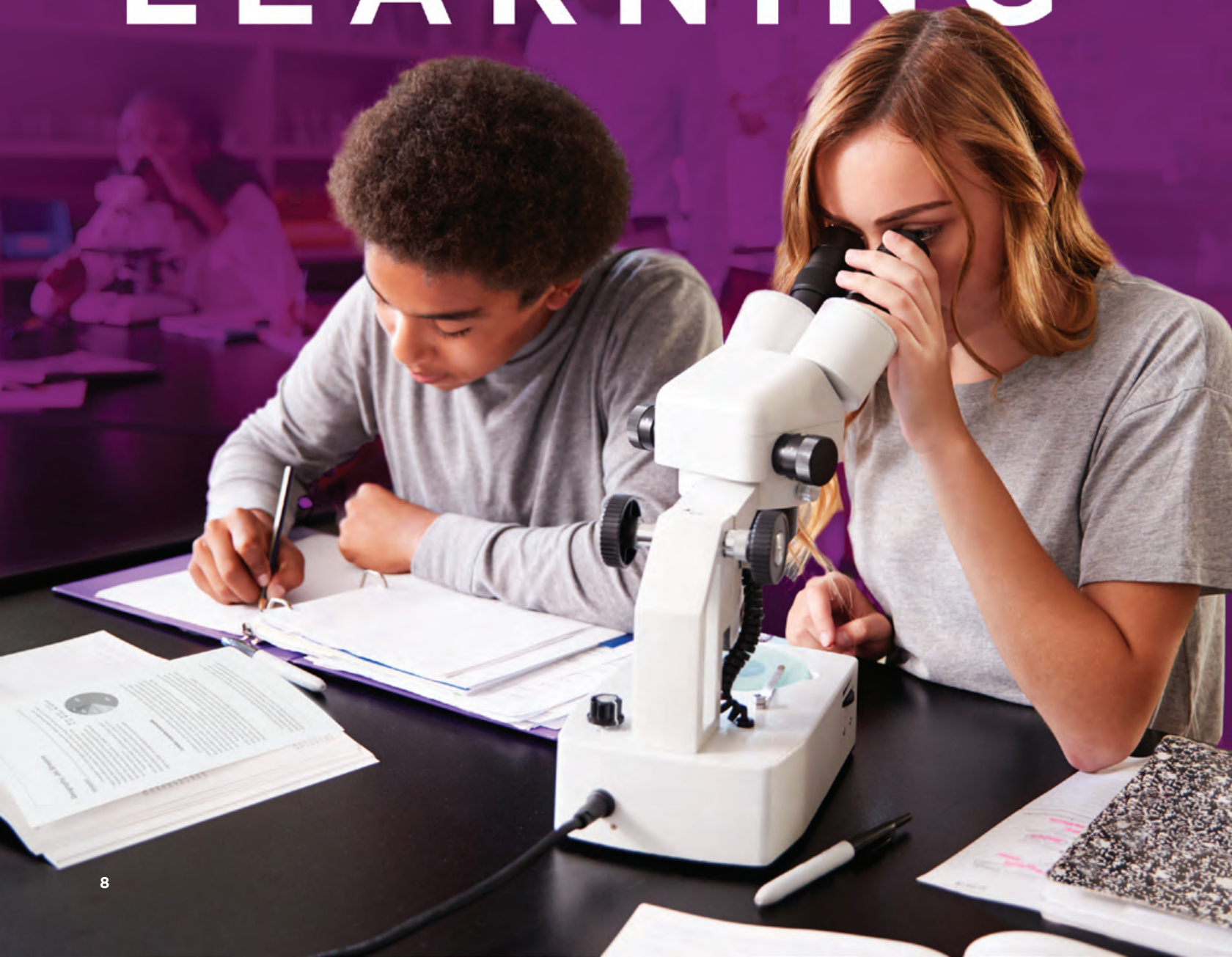
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ONGOING LEARNING



To ensure that curious minds of all ages have the opportunity to engage with science and nature, the Museum is transcending boundaries and dismantling the traditional approach to teaching about science. The Museum's educational division has created a number of innovative and inclusive programs to increase the Museum's relevance and impact this year. These initiatives enrich University Circle's integrated campus of learning, serve the local community, and shape the future of STEM.

SCIENCE FOR SUCCESS INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE SHIFTS PERCEPTIONS OF STEM

The Science for Success Teen Internship is a new, three-year paid internship for high-school students from groups who are underrepresented in STEM and experience education disparities. This year, the Museum hosted a group of high-school students who were interested in a career in science, technology, engineering, or math. Interns applied their creativity while participating in research projects that further the Museum's mission and contribute to the community. This internship joins the Museum's expanding portfolio of community-outreach initiatives and is funded in part by the Eric & Jane Nord Family Fund.

ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCES
Funded by GAR Foundation, this program welcomes every second grader in the Akron Public Schools to the Museum.

“ MY PERCEPTION OF SCIENCE HAS CHANGED DURING MY INTERNSHIP BECAUSE I HAVE SEEN HOW BROAD IT ACTUALLY IS. THERE ARE SEVERAL FACETS OF THE FIELD THAT I WAS NOT AWARE EXISTED, LIKE THE STUDY OF DUNG BEETLES. —Internship participant

SCIENCE, LITERACY, AND MATH COLLIDE IN NEW SLAM DUNK PROGRAM

This past school year, the Museum put the spotlight on *Dunkleosteus terrelli*, one of its most iconic specimens, in its new educational initiative, “SLAM Dunk.” “SLAM”—which stands for “Science, Literacy, and Math”—represents the multidisciplinary nature of the program, and “Dunk” refers to the Museum's nickname for *Dunkleosteus*, the fiercest fish of the Devonian sea. As part of the SLAM Dunk program, East Cleveland City Schools students in kindergarten, first grade, and second grade engaged with the Museum at several points throughout the school year, free of charge. The SLAM Dunk project receives support from the John C. and Sally S. Morley Family Foundation of the Cleveland Foundation.

This school year, the project will also be funded in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services through a Museums for America grant, log number MA-249371-OMS-21. The views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this program do not necessarily represent those of the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

DYNAMIC REINVENTIO



Over billions of years, the Earth's crust has dramatically shifted—changing form with varying conditions until eventually shaping the continents we recognize today. Similarly, the Museum is undergoing a complete transformation, which will pioneer a new model for natural history museums worldwide. Last year, several milestone events were at the epicenter of this transformation.

GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY KICKS OFF MUSEUM'S TRANSFORMATION

On June 24, 2021, the Cleveland Museum of Natural History broke ground on its project to reinvent the Museum: an expansion, complete reimagining of its campus and all its exhibits, and addition of new public spaces. The project will enlarge the Museum's building and outdoor visitor areas to more than 375,000 square feet.





“ WE ENTHUSIASTICALLY BELIEVE IN THE MUSEUM’S MISSION, ITS STRONG LEADERSHIP, AND ITS PATH FORWARD. WE HOPE OUR CONTRIBUTION WILL INSPIRE OTHERS IN THE COMMUNITY TO SHOW THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE MUSEUM. —SALLY SEARS, BOARD CHAIR ”

DN

**THE SEISMIC POWER OF DONORS:
SURPASSING \$100M FUNDRAISING MILESTONE**

During the groundbreaking, the Museum announced it had surpassed a \$100 million fundraising milestone in its \$150 million *Transforming the World of Discovery* campaign. This ambitious campaign is the institution’s chance to continue its long legacy of research and education and elevate its place in the community.

**INNOVATIVE CONCEPT DESIGN FOR
NEW EXHIBITS**

The Museum reached 100 percent of concept design in the process to reimagine its campus. The new exhibit design is organized around big questions, encouraging visitors to explore the large-scale forces that shape the world. New tools and technology will work in harmony with artifacts and specimens, empowering visitors to investigate these concepts and become a voice for the planet.

The Gateway Projects were completed with the help of generous gifts from the Museum’s donors, including **The Kent H. Smith Charitable Trust, Lubrizol Foundation, Anonymous (2), Sally and Larry Sears, The Murch Foundation, and the Murch Family.**

DEBUTING THE GATEWAY PROJECTS

This year, the Museum celebrated the grand opening of its three Gateway Projects:

- The dynamic new gallery **Current Science**, where guests can have one-on-one conversations with Museum researchers and educators. With rotating themes, it serves as an incubation space to help guide the Museum’s future exhibit concepts.
- The redesigned **Thelma and Kent H. Smith Environmental Courtyard**, which features an array of Ohio’s native plant species, a stunning waterfall, and an etched bluestone-paved court highlighting a map of the local watershed.
- The modernized **Murch Auditorium**, which fosters engaging experiences through acoustic enhancements, state-of-the-art audiovisual systems, and upgraded seating.

Momentum continues to build as the Museum embarks on its next phase of construction.

CAMPAIGN DONORS

Thank you to the donors who have invested in our transformation. Because of your generosity, we have raised more than \$103 million, completed the Gateway Projects, and broken ground on our major construction project. We are grateful for what we have accomplished with your support and look forward to witnessing continued progress toward the complete transformation of our Museum.

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If you qualify for Legacy Society membership or would like to learn more about becoming a member, please contact Diane M. Strachan, CFRE, Individual Philanthropy & Planned Giving Officer, at 216.231.2060 or dstrachan@cmnh.org.

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A special thank you to all the federal, state, and local elected officials who have supported our efforts.

A close-up photograph of a field of yellow flowers, likely goldenrod. The central stem is in sharp focus, showing its reddish-brown color and green leaves. The background is a soft-focus field of similar flowers, creating a warm, golden atmosphere. The text 'OUR IMPACT' is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font.

OUR IMPACT

181,000
ANNUAL
VISITORS*

11,700
MEMBER
HOUSEHOLDS

68,420
LEARNERS REACHED
THROUGH OUR
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

11,860
ACRES OF LAND
PROTECTED

\$3,084,208

OPERATING DOLLARS RAISED

94 IN-PERSON &
VIRTUAL PROGRAMS &
FIELD TRIPS OFFERED

2,550 ATTENDEES
AT PUBLIC
EVENTS

2,790 VISITORS
TO
MENTOR MARSH

125 ANIMAL AMBASSADORS CARED FOR IN THE RALPH PERKINS II WILDLIFE CENTER & WOODS GARDEN—PRESENTED BY KEYBANK

69
VISITORS TO OUR COLLECTIONS
AND RESEARCH LABS

18
RESEARCH
PUBLICATIONS

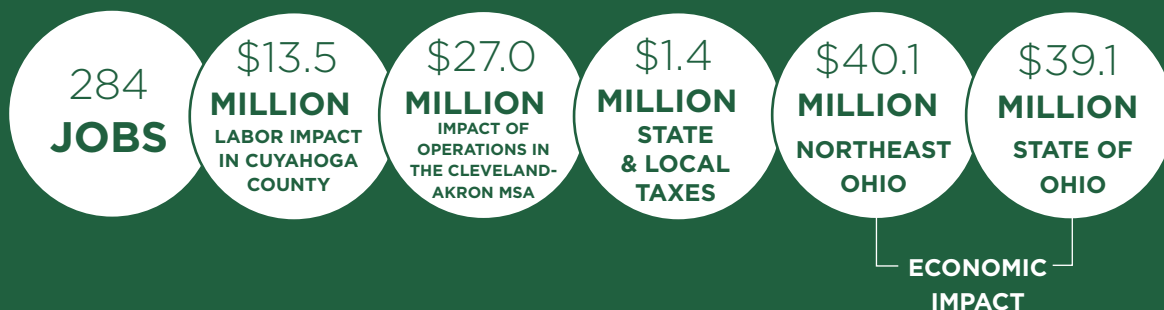
54
OFF-CAMPUS
PRESENTATIONS

2,457 NEWLY ACCESSIONED SPECIMENS

325 SPECIMENS LOANED FOR STUDY

\$39.5 MILLION

ANNUAL ECONOMIC IMPACT THROUGH OPERATIONS, VISITORS, EDUCATION, AND SCIENCE ACTIVITIES IN CUYAHOGA COUNTY



44TH CONSECUTIVE
FISCAL YEAR
ACHIEVING A
BALANCED
OPERATING
BUDGET

ANNUAL FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



ANNUAL PHILANTHROPY**

1,675 DONORS

20 \$25,000 OR MORE
40 \$10,000 TO \$24,999
67 \$5,000 TO \$9,999
99 \$2,000 TO \$4,999
1,449 UNDER \$2,000

Our donors demonstrated again the importance of our mission to the community. They contributed \$3,084,208 between July 1, 2020, and June 30, 2021, to our efforts to inspire people through science and nature. We are deeply grateful to all of them.

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