

San Jose Museum of Art

1) How has the current economy affected the need of services that you give to the community?

In a depressed economy, people look to art as a source of inspiration, hope, and perseverance. In times like these, there is an essential need for art that is more basic and beneficial than usual. Too often, museums find themselves at a loss in leaner times, but the actuality is that the need for the expressive and interpretive potential in art is higher in an economic downturn. Circumstances such as the loss of a home or job, or other financial pressures, can drive people into existential crises, leading to basic questions about one's life and work that art can often help answer.

2) How has the current economy affected the donations of goods and services that your organization receives?

At this time, in order to remain actively focused on core competencies, the San Jose Museum of Art has had to cut back on its staff. Both jobs and hours have been trimmed. This is primarily due to the philanthropic community reverting to a safer, more conservative position over the last two years. Taking a broader view, our operating budget was reduced by \$1 million between FY 2008 and FY 2009 (from just under \$5 million to just under \$4 million). Maintaining a nimble stance is a key component of our fiscal planning process, even though it can result in cutbacks we may prefer not to make.

3) How have the services that your organization provides to the community affected our local economy?

The City of San Jose considers SJMA as one of the cultural anchors of downtown San Jose. Its central location and diverse programming helps maintain the Museum's role as a key cultural resource and driver of downtown business. As the holiday season approaches, SJMA enjoys the adjacent position of Downtown Ice (an ice skating rink in the Circle of Palms), as well as Christmas in the Park directly across the street. The trifecta of the Museum, the ice rink, and Christmas in the Park form the core of downtown San Jose's holiday attractions, with the Tech Museum opposite the park providing a significant draw as well. Year-round partnerships with other arts organizations, hotels, and other businesses have long been a hallmark of SJMA's operations, and we continue to drive patrons to area restaurants and attractions. SJMA also makes a significant contribution to schools by providing our art education services for free.