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Science Chicago's LabFest! Triggers Reaction in Millennium Park

Blowout celebration offers hands-on science excitement in the heart of downtown Chicago

CHICAGO [July 28, 2009] – Science Chicago's traveling LabFest! science festival is set to go out with a bang in downtown Chicago's Millennium Park on Friday, August 21. After more than a dozen stops at CPS schools, local parks and libraries throughout Chicagoland, this finale event promises even more science discovery for Chicagoans and visitors of all ages in one dynamic and fun-filled summer day.

LabFest! in Millennium Park will give kids and families the opportunity to explore the sciences from – astronomy to zoology – in an interactive, memorable and FREE way. The day offers numerous hands-on activities, craft projects and games such as "Pop Fly" with Nate Ball, host of the popular PBS television series, *Design Squad*, where participants will have the unique opportunity to brainstorm, design, build and test products that are used in everyday life. The new season of Design Squad will air locally on WTTW11 Sundays at 11:30 a.m. beginning October 11, 2009.

"It's all about making science and engineering accessible," said *Design Squad* host, Nate Ball. "The Science Chicago initiative, just like the *Design Squad* TV show, features the importance of science and the design process in every aspect of our day-to-day lives – from riding a bike to recycling our garbage to making a call on a cell phone. LabFest! is an awesome opportunity to demonstrate the ideas that we share with our viewers every week. I'm even bringing one of the prototypes that our teenage cast invented on-screen!"

Some of the other exciting LabFest! activities at Millennium Park include:

- **Build a 15-Foot Willis Tower out of LEGOS®** – Work with architect Adam Reed Tucker to create a spectacular version of this Chicago landmark.
- **Building Windmills** – Engineer a functioning windmill with young Malawian innovator William Kamkwamba and author of the upcoming book, *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*.
- **Beakman's World** – See a show by Paul Zaloom, award-winning performance artist and host of the Sony Pictures science television show, *Beakman's World*.
- **Bubbleology 101** – Don't just blow bubbles, discover the science of bubbles and how the molecular nature of water causes a phenomenon called surface tension.
- **Alka-Seltzer Rockets** – Create a rocket out of a film canister and an alka-seltzer tablet.
- **Space Robots** – Learn about space exploration as you build and program your own LEGO space robot with experts from the NASA Science, Engineering, Mathematics and Aerospace Academy.
- **Solar Cars** – Kids can design, build and race model solar cars while learning about renewable energy resources; then they can participate in one-on-one drag races.
- **Oobleck** – Take off your shoes and learn about non-Newtonian liquids when you dash across a pool of cornstarch and water mixture which will allow you to "walk on water."
- **I want to be a Vet!** – Meet and talk to a veterinarian from the American Veterinary Medical Association and learn about animal health with the help of a real dog.

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The year-long Science Chicago initiative, considered to be the world's largest science celebration, wraps up in August. Since the launch of the program in September 2008, more than 300,000 people have engaged with Science Chicago programs and online communities.

"Science Chicago has been tremendously successful in building public enthusiasm for the sciences and positioning Chicago as leading city for cutting-edge science innovation," said Cheryl Hughes, Executive Director of Science Chicago. "If you haven't had a chance to experience a Science Chicago event, come to LabFest! at Millennium Park. It is a perfect culmination of this exciting year, as it celebrates the unique spirit of collaboration, hands-on learning and passion for science discovery that are the foundation of the Science Chicago initiative."

Science Chicago will continue to serve as a resource for science enthusiasts through social networks including Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube. The public may also visit the www.sciencechicago.com Web site for additional information on local science events and programs.

"It's truly impressive that within the short span of one year, Science Chicago has inspired hundreds of thousands of Chicago residents of all ages to awaken their inner scientist and explore the many scientific resources of the region," said David Mosen, President and CEO of the Museum of Science and Industry and Vice Chair of the Science Chicago Board of Advisors. "The Museum of Science and Industry is proud to have led this unparalleled collaborative effort, and it is our hope that cities and organizations across the nation will look to Science Chicago as a model for the development of similar initiatives aimed at inspiring the next generation of American scientists."

Event Details:

Date: Friday, August 21, 2009

Time: 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Location: Millennium Park

55 North Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60611

For more information on LabFest! visit: <http://www.sciencechicago.com/content/labfest-details?id=15>

LABFEST! IMAGES AVAILABLE: <http://www.sciencechicago.com/content/press-room>

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About Science Chicago

The Museum of Science and Industry is spearheading Science Chicago, a collaboration of more than 140 public and private institutions that have come together to present the world's largest science celebration. Designed to awaken the inner scientist in each and every one of us, thousands of dynamic and interactive activities will provide hands-on learning; spur thoughtful debate; enhance classroom learning; and build enthusiasm for the pursuit of cutting-edge science while establishing the critical value of science and math education.

For more information, visit www.sciencechicago.com.