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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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# The Library System welcomes the Lancaster Science Factory to the Family Museum Pass Program!

The Library System of Lancaster County is pleased to announce the addition of the Lancaster Science Factory to its successful Family Museum Pass Program! An official launch of the new Museum Pass is scheduled to happen on **Wednesday, January 25 at 7:00 pm at the Washington Elementary School, [545 South Ann Street, Lancaster, PA 17602](http://www.lancasterpa.gov/545-South-Ann-Street-Lancaster-PA-17602)**. Executive Director of the Lancaster Science Factory, Bob Herbert will provide opening remarks and a brief overview of the Science Factory offerings at the launch event. His enthusiasm for the partnership is evident, “We are very proud to be a part of the Family Museum Pass Program with the Library System of Lancaster County. This program aligns with our mission perfectly and opens the door for a whole new audience to come and experience over 50 hands-on exhibits that relate to Science Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.”

The addition of the Lancaster Science Factory to the Family Museum Pass program is the seventh museum pass to be a part of this successful library/museum partnership initiative. Dr. Janette Hewitt, Principal of Washington Elementary School is very enthusiastic about this new partnership, “We are excited to be the launch site for the newest partner in the family museum pass program. The Lancaster Science Factory is housed in our Southeast neighborhood which provides our families convenient access to this resource. Washington Elementary encourages extended learning at home and this partnership achieves that goal while creating additional educational experiences for our students and their families.”

According to Herb Landau, Executive Director of Lancaster Public Library, “This program fosters a love of science among our youth and highlights the natural affinity between public libraries and museums.”

Science Factory Exhibits include these areas: Light & Vision, Electricity & Magnetism; Mechanics and Motion; Structural Engineering; Acoustics; Fluid Dynamics; and Puzzles & Brain Teasers. Not only are the exhibits hands-on and fun, they are also designed to illuminate principles of science and math. In fact, they are aligned to the Pennsylvania Academic Standards.

### **Science Factory History**

Compared to other countries, the United States' progress in math and science is slowing down. Less people are studying in technical fields. The Lancaster Science Factory, along with science centers across the country, is playing a role in renewing interests in math, science, technology, and engineering. James Bunting, a retired advertising executive, was inspired by a science center he visited in Florida. He founded the Science Factory with goals to increase children's interests in math and science, provide an interactive learning environment outside the classroom, and be accessible to all local youth in Lancaster County.

After several years of planning and a \$1 million capital campaign, the Science Factory opened on January 22, 2008. Volunteers completed most of the start-up work, from graphic design and accounting to exhibit research and Science Factory promotion. The Science Factory now has a small staff but continues to rely on volunteers to greet visitors, answer questions about exhibits, keep exhibits in working order, and help with special events.

Today, the Science Factory houses over 50 hands-on exhibits as well as science-related events throughout the year. The Science Factory is a member of the Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC), an organization that links science centers and museums around the world. The Science Factory is not only a part of the community-it serves the community. Grants from generous donors make the Science Factory accessible to youth groups and agencies throughout Lancaster County. All of the Science Factory's exhibits align with Pennsylvania Academic Standards, and many schools visit the Science Factory on field trips throughout the year for experiments and demonstrations that cannot be done in the classroom.

### **About the Family Museum Pass Program**

The Family Museum Pass Program began in 2006 as a pilot program with the North Museum of Natural History & Science. Since this project started, the program has expanded to now include six partnering museums located in Lancaster County. In 2007 the National Watch & Clock Museum in Columbia joined the program and in 2008 the Landis Valley Village and Farm Museum was added. In September 2009 the National Toy Train Museum in Strasburg joined the Program and in October 2009 we welcomed Ephrata Cloister as an additional partner. The most recent addition to the Family Museum Pass Program was the 1719 Hans Herr House & Museum last year. The Family Museum Pass program provides free entry to families into these participating museums. The project promotes family activities focused on shared educational experiences. Bill Hudson, System Administrator for the Library System, shares his enthusiasm for the project in saying, "I'm delighted to have the Lancaster Science Factory join the Family Museum Pass Program. This kind of partnership strengthens the efforts of both our organizations to enrich the lives of Lancaster County residents. Partnerships and other collective efforts like these are critical for cultural and educational institutions as we move forward into a challenging, yet exciting future."

The Passes are available at all seventeen public libraries in Lancaster County and the Bookmobile. A Pass may be checked out on an adult library card for one week. The Family Pass to the Museum is good for up to **four (4) people**, one of whom must be an adult, and provides free entry into the museum. The Library System of Lancaster County administers this project through the Eiserer-Hickey Fund of the Lancaster County Community Foundation. "We believe that a range of educational opportunities for everyone will help to create extraordinary community. The Eiserer-Hickey Fund of the Lancaster County Community Foundation is proud to sponsor the Family Museum Pass Program as a creative way to invite more families to enjoy interactive learning together," Sam Bressi, CEO of the Lancaster County Community Foundation explained.

The Lancaster Science Factory is located at 454 New Holland Ave, Lancaster, PA 17602. To learn more about the Lancaster Science Factory visit them in person or online at <http://www.lancastersciencefactory.org> to learn more about their educational programs.

Directions to the January 25<sup>th</sup> Launch event: From Penn Square, center city Lancaster, turn right on East King Street and go approx.6/10 mile. Take right on South Ann Street and go another .6 mile. Turn left of Chesapeake Street. George Washington Elementary School is on the left. The address is 545 South Ann Street.

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