



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contacts:**

Hannah E. Clore  
Kentucky Science Center  
Communications Coordinator  
(502) 593-2937  
[hannah.clore@louisvilleky.gov](mailto:hannah.clore@louisvilleky.gov)

Terri Wilson  
PNC  
VP & Senior Manager of External Relations  
(502) 581-4073  
[terri.wilson@pnc.com](mailto:terri.wilson@pnc.com)

**SCIENCE CENTER OPENS PROGRESSIVE, NEXT-GENERATION LEARNING EXPERIENCE**

*Science in Play® powered by PNC Grow Up Great aims to improve school readiness*

**LOUISVILLE, JULY 2, 2015** – Today, Kentucky Science Center and their newly appointed Curious Kids Board announced the opening of their new early childhood experience, *Science in Play® powered by PNC Grow Up Great*. The multimillion dollar overhaul is a progressive, next-generation learning experience designed for young children and their families. Part of the Science Center's strategic agenda, *Science in Play* aims to improve the state's school readiness statistics with a focus on 21<sup>st</sup> century learning skills, open-ended collaboration and creativity – all through the power of play.

“Through the portal of play, young kids and their families are empowered to translate their everyday activities at home and beyond into opportunities for learning,” said Science Center Executive Director, Joanna Haas. “In this, we are excited to join our supporters as well as city and state leaders in the important job of setting children on the right path to succeed in school and life.”

The new *Science in Play* encompasses the entire first floor exhibit space, including the former *KidZone* area, and more than doubles the space dedicated to early childhood education to roughly 11,000 square feet. *Science in Play* represents the first major permanent gallery renovation at the Science Center since the 2006 opening of the second floor *World Around Us* exhibit.

“PNC's support of science education for Louisville's young children and their families is a strategic investment to address the changing needs of an economy,” said Chuck Denny, regional president for PNC in Greater Louisville. “The Science Center and its partners have created a space that will foster the 21<sup>st</sup> century learning skills that today's children will need as our future leaders.”

A project representing more than \$3 million, *Science in Play powered by PNC Grow Up Great* has garnered major gifts from the region's leading advocates of early childhood education, including: the James Graham Brown Foundation, Sandra Frazier, the LG&E and KU Foundation, Lift a Life Foundation, Louisville Metro Government, Norton Foundation, C.E. and S. Foundation, Gheens Foundation, Inc., YUM! Foundation, Kentucky Science Center, its Board of Directors, staff and numerous individual supporters.

-more-

## Next-Generation Learning

*Science in Play* is a continued design collaboration between the Science Center and HandsOn! Inc., a St. Petersburg, Florida exhibit fabricator. The family-friendly experience includes:

- BIGGER AND BETTER:
  - **Build-Your-Own Rollercoaster** – an exploration in physics and engineering which can be manipulated in countless ways.
  - **Shapes & Stuff Store** – a math-rich shopping experience that includes more tools and interpretive materials. The unstructured exhibit encourages inventiveness and flexibility.
  - **Little Build** – an interactive area where young children can put their engineering skills to work through direct manipulation of blocks and other loose parts.
  - **Science Depot** – a fully integrated area with activities designed to encourage first-hand use of real science tools by the youngest of visitors.
  - **Splash! Water Table** – a popular sensory experience which remains a staple of the Science Center's early childhood experience.
  - **Mirror Maze** – a challenging exploration in mirrors which encourages children to observe and formulate questions – a key component in developing problem solving skills.
  - **Build Your World** – an experience built around playing with large blocks which sharpens planning skills and encourages young children to use blocks to represent real world objects.
  - **Optimusic** – a motion-sensing light and sound show exploring patterns and recognition.
  - **Noodle Forest** – an immersive sensory experience featuring pool noodles which encourages young children to predict cause and effect.
- ALL NEW:
  - **Happy Climber** – an enormous, 14-foot tall climbing structure that encourages children to stretch and strengthen their motor skills and problem-solving abilities as they build self-confidence and accuracy in gauging their own physical talents.
  - **Color & Light** – an engaging room that gives young visitors the chance to experiment with the concepts of color mixing and shadow play as they explore patterns and visual memory.
  - **Grow Zone** – a protected play space dedicated to infants and toddlers with ample opportunities for sensory exploration, located near the Science Center's **Airways** exhibit.
  - **Grateful Gears** – an experience made of interlocking parts which demonstrates engineering skills as well as cause and effect
  - **Pump It** – a highly interactive air experience powered by young learners which encourages exploration of cause and effect
- AND SO MUCH MORE!

The entire experience is built around the concept of "loose parts," which consist of materials that can be re-imagined in countless ways, fostering creativity and problem-solving skills. Also included as part of the expansion are parental tips and a new online early childhood resource section of the science center's website offering expanded learning for all ages.

The permanent *Science in Play* gallery experience is included in the price of admission to the Science Center. General admission to the Science Center is \$11 for children ages 2-12 and \$13 for adults. For more information or to purchase tickets, please visit [KYScienceCenter.org](http://KYScienceCenter.org).

**About PNC**

The PNC Foundation, which receives its principal funding from The PNC Financial Services Group ([www.pnc.com](http://www.pnc.com)), actively supports organizations that provide services for the benefit of communities in which it has a significant presence. The foundation focuses its philanthropic mission on early childhood education and community and economic development, which includes the arts and culture. Through Grow Up Great, its signature cause that began in 2004, PNC has created a \$350 million, multi-year initiative to help prepare children from birth to age 5 for success in school and life. For more information, please visit [www.pncgrowupgreat.com](http://www.pncgrowupgreat.com) or follow [www.youtube.com/PNC](http://www.youtube.com/PNC).

**About Kentucky Science Center ([KYScienceCenter.org](http://KYScienceCenter.org))**

Kentucky Science Center is a nonprofit educational institution that encourages people of all ages to do science in engaging, educational and entertaining ways to inspire a lifetime of learning. Designated the "State Science Center of Kentucky" by the 2002 Kentucky General Assembly, Kentucky Science Center features interactive exhibits and engaging programs for children, families and adults. Kentucky Science Center is committed to growing a scientifically literate community that investigates, questions, and challenges.

###