

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Kentucky Science Center to operate Challenger Learning Center**

*With the start of the new school year, missions are available to book now!*

**Louisville, KY (Wednesday, August 12, 2015)** – Kentucky Science Center's proposal to operate the Challenger Learning Center -- Louisville, located at The Academy @ Shawnee in Louisville, Kentucky (Shawnee Challenger) was recently approved by the Jefferson County Public School Board. Beginning this fall, the Science Center will operate the Shawnee Challenger as an offsite destination serving schools, after and out-of-school groups, families and corporations from across the region.

"We're thrilled to have collectively found a way to continue this powerful, immersive learning experience here in Louisville," said Science Center Director of Education and Experience, Kim Hunter. "This is a win for kids in our community and a major win for STEM education – just when the allure of space exploration is being rekindled with exciting projects like *New Horizons*."

Kentucky Science Center begins operating the Shawnee Challenger with the start of the new school year. They will offer all 3 missions currently owned by the Shawnee Challenger – "Rendezvous with a Comet," "Voyage to Mars" and "Return to the Moon" – along with a new suite of programs designed to maximize reach into public, private and home schools across the region.

The Kentucky Science Center's new Challenger Flight Director comes from the renowned *Space Camp* in Huntsville, AL, bringing with him more than 4 years of experience managing flight simulations in both space travel and aeronautics.

Overseeing these missions, the Science Center and their new Flight Director will ensure that Challenger Shawnee programs match the performance expectations of the Next Generation Science Standards and expand the core target student audience from pre-k through 12.

Expanding beyond the school district, Kentucky Science Center will utilize Shawnee Challenger facilities to deliver after-school and out-of-school Challenger simulations to organizations across the region. Missions will now be available for scout programs, birthday parties, corporate retreats and so much more.

"With our outreach efforts already reaching communities across the Commonwealth, we're optimized to add this invaluable resource to our arsenal of programs," said Science Center Executive Director Jo Haas. "In our continued partnership with JCPS, the operation of Shawnee Challenger will continue to serve our community with new and expanded programming."

Missions are booking now! More information on how to book can be found by calling the Science Center at 502-560-7128 or by visiting their website at [KYScienceCenter.org](http://KYScienceCenter.org).

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**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.

**About Challenger Center for Space Science Education (Challenger Center)**

As a leader in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education, Challenger Center and its international network of Challenger Learning Centers use space simulations to engage students in dynamic, hands-on opportunities. These experiences strengthen knowledge in STEM subjects and inspire students to pursue careers in these important fields. Centers reach hundreds of thousands of students and tens of thousands of teachers each year. Founded in 1986, Challenger Center was created to honor the crew of shuttle flight STS-51-L: Dick Scobee, Gregory Jarvis, Christa McAuliffe, Ronald McNair, Ellison Onizuka, Judith Resnik, and Michael J. Smith. Learn more about Challenger Center at [www.challenger.org](http://www.challenger.org) and connect with us on [facebook.com/challengerctr](https://facebook.com/challengerctr), [twitter.com/challengerctr](https://twitter.com/challengerctr) and [youtube.com/ccsse](https://youtube.com/ccsse).

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