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KENTUCKY SCIENCE CENTER LAUNCHES *SCIENCE IN PLAY 2GO*

MOBILE EARLY-CHILDHOOD LEARNING EXHIBIT WILL IMPACT SCHOOL READINESS RATES STATEWIDE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – KENTUCKY COUNTIES – *Science in Play 2Go (SIP2GO)*, the mobile version of Kentucky Science Center’s progressive next-generation learning experience will launch in December – taking elements that embody the philosophies behind the existing exhibit to libraries across the Commonwealth for 12-week residencies. With support from PNC and Genentech, and in partnership with the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives (KDLA), *SIP2GO* will open December 3, 2016 at Woodford County Library and continue its 2017 tour at libraries in Oldham County (March-May), Logan County (June-August), and Laurel County (September-November) this year, with Boone, Boyle, Marshall, and Muhlenberg Counties slated for the second year. *SIP2GO* will be open during library hours and is FREE to the public.

“When we first opened the *Science in Play® Powered by PNC Grow Up Great®* permanent gallery, we had a dream that we might eventually be able to replicate its inspirational design in a format that could be transported to communities across the state, helping reach more children and families with progressive early childhood learning experiences,” said Executive Director Joanna Haas. “A strong and flourishing economy across the Commonwealth is predicated on the notion of children becoming confident, capable learners first in school and then for life. *Science in Play 2Go* joins the many efforts locally and across the state focused on family and workforce success, right from the start!”

Schools in and around the county are encouraged to take field trips to *Science in Play 2GO* – arrangements can be made by contacting the host library.

Why It Matters

Science in Play creates opportunities for life-long learning by focusing on 21st century skills, open-ended collaboration, and creativity – all through the power of play. A recent impact study conducted through a lengthy survey of over 250 respondents speaks to the power of the experience and confirms that *Science in Play* is working:

- *Science in Play* is a resource for parents and caregivers. 77% of parents surveyed said the exhibit helps them support and encourage 21st century learning skills in their children;
- *Science in Play* helps children learn important life skills. A number of higher order learning behaviors such as risk-taking, linking knowledge, persistence, and communication are being observed by parents in their children. 82% of respondents are noticing improvement in their child’s critical thinking skills;
- *Science in Play* enhances formal education. 82% of families correlated visits to *Science in Play* with improvement in their child’s school readiness or school success.

“*Science in Play 2Go* will play a critical role in addressing the issue of Kindergarten readiness across Kentucky by providing children with access to experiences that invite imaginative thinking, foster creativity and encourage problem-solving skills,” said Terry Manuel, Acting State Librarian & Commissioner, Kentucky Department for Libraries & Archives.

What It Will Look Like

SIP2GO will have the flexibility to work in a variety of spaces and be easily transported. In addition to matching the design of the permanent gallery, *SIP2GO* will include the following popular elements:

- **Build Your World:** playing with large blocks sharpens planning and design skills and encourages young children to imagine blocks as representations of real world objects
- **Build Your Own Roller Coaster:** an exploration in physics and engineering, roller coaster sections and parts can be manipulated in countless designs and configurations, promoting problem-solving and critical thinking skills as well as encouraging social skills such as teamwork and collaboration, communication and empathy
- **The Science Depot:** a fully integrated program encouraging exploration, experimentation, and family interaction with hands-on applications of real science tools for young children
- **Shapes and Stuff Store:** encourages inventiveness and flexibility as children explore shape attributes such as color, texture, and geometric and numerical skill-building. Shopping for shapes invites a variety of play and learning behaviors that strengthen mathematics and computational thinking skills.
- **Ball Fall:** explores cause and effect, patterns and prediction, and invites problem-solving and collaboration skills
- **Light Bright:** lighted colored pegs invite planning and predicting skills while designing and developing patterns and shapes

In addition, Kentucky Science Center will hire and train the equivalent of a full-time staff person in each library to support the principles behind *Science in Play* by facilitating the mobile exhibit and additional early-childhood learning opportunities.

Support For *SIP2GO*

Gifts of \$149,000 from PNC and \$100,000 from Genentech, allowed Kentucky Science Center to begin fabrication of *Science in Play 2Go* and underwrite some components of the residencies. Additional funding is being sought to continue the program for future years, perhaps even creating an endowment that would allow one or more *SIP2GO* exhibits to travel in perpetuity.

“Our (PNC Grow Up Great) research has proven that children who participate in high-quality preschool programs are far more likely to experience greater educational achievements, strive toward higher vocational aspirations and contribute to society in adulthood,” echoed Chuck Denny, PNC Bank regional president for Kentucky and Tennessee. “Kentucky Science Center is a leader in early-childhood education, and we frequently look to them to set the standard for how cultural institutions may collaborate with our schools and community leaders to provide meaningful experiences that lead to Kindergarten readiness.”

To mark its 40th anniversary, Genentech has chosen to support a few select nonprofit organizations whose work brings science, technology, engineering and math to life through hands on-learning experiences. This gift is a testament to the Kentucky Science Center's commitment to progressive, next generation learning experiences for children and their families.

"Without the past, current, and future support of our sponsors, revolutionary programs like *Science in Play* would not be possible," said Ms. Haas.

Kentucky Science Center adds *Science in Play 2GO* to a number of statewide initiatives, including school programs like *Ion Jones and the Lost Temple of Chemistry* and *Captain Current vs. the Electricity Vampires* which travel to any school in Kentucky, Youth Science Summits, Discovery Festivals, and *Schools Out, Science Is In Camps* taking place in Fayette County, Bowling Green, Owensboro and additional locations. For more information or to book these programs, educators and community center leaders should contact Mira Gentry-Johnson at mira.gentry@louisvilleky.gov or 502-560-7126.

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About Genentech

Founded 40 years ago, Genentech is a leading biotechnology company that discovers, develops, manufactures and commercializes medicines to treat patients with serious or life-threatening medical conditions. The company, a member of the Roche Group, has headquarters in South San Francisco, California. For additional information about the company, please visit <http://www.gene.com>.

About PNC

The PNC Foundation, which receives its principal funding from The PNC Financial Services Group (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 or follow www.youtube.com/PNC.

About Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives (KDLA)

KDLA provides equitable access to quality library and information resources and services, as well as helps public agencies ensure that legislatively mandated documentation of government programs is created, efficiently maintained, and made accessible. For more information on KDLA resources, programs and services visit www.kdla.ky.gov or call 502-564-1753.

About Kentucky Science Center (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.