



PUBLIC RELATIONS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Kat Stein
215.448.2375
Kstein@fi.edu

**THE FRANKLIN INSTITUTE RECEIVES \$10 MILLION LEAD GIFT
FROM NICHOLAS & ATHENA KARABOTS**

*Largest Individual Gift Ever to the Institute
Enables New Building Construction to Begin Spring 2012*

Philadelphia, PA, October 3, 2011 – The Franklin Institute, Pennsylvania’s most-visited museum, has received a transformative \$10 million contribution from Nicholas and Athena Karabots for an ambitious new building addition. In grateful appreciation of the extraordinary generosity, vision, and leadership shown by Mr. and Mrs. Karabots, the Institute will name the new building addition the “Nicholas and Athena Karabots Pavilion.” The gift marks the largest individual contribution ever to the science museum, and allows The Franklin Institute to break ground in spring 2012 with a goal of opening the addition in summer 2014.

The new 53,000 square-foot-building, adjacent to the Benjamin Franklin National Memorial, enables the Institute to expand its successful ongoing education programs by adding 10,000 square feet of multi-purpose and classroom space. Further, it will secure the Institute’s standing as *the* preferred destination for traveling exhibitions by adding 8,000 square feet of climate-controlled gallery space adjacent to the existing traveling exhibit gallery in the Mandell Center. The addition will house *Your Brain*, a cutting-edge exhibit on the human brain, and allow for improved visitor flow throughout the museum. The building is being designed by SaylorGregg Architects and will be LEED-certified Silver.

The new building and *Your Brain* exhibit are the final capital initiatives of a comprehensive strategic plan that included the restoration of the Benjamin Franklin National Memorial in 2008 and the opening of two new core exhibits, *Changing Earth* and *Electricity*, in 2010. The Karabots gift brings the museum’s *Inspire Science!* fundraising campaign total to \$58 million, toward a goal of \$64.7 million.

With this new facility the Institute will be able to broaden its educational impact, particularly in programs that provide opportunities for children from underserved communities to positively engage with science and technology. The Franklin Institute produces a variety of educational initiatives with proven records of effectiveness and success, including many that help connect young people from communities often under-represented in the sciences to careers in these fields.

The addition will also enable the Institute to continue attracting the leading traveling exhibits available, and to present them in the optimum layout and manner. In recent years, The Franklin Institute’s ability to mount successful traveling exhibitions has garnered international acclaim for Philadelphia while creating a measurable economic impact on the region’s economy.

“The Karabots Foundation is pleased to be involved in this expansion of The Franklin Institute given the Foundation’s belief that the Institute will be better equipped, with this significant extension of its facility, to broaden its reach and thus touch and interest a larger segment of our youth in the sciences,” Nicholas Karabots explained.

He continued, *“It should be noted that The Karabots Foundation’s mission is to attract youth in our more troubled and underserved communities with areas of interest that will, with the proper programs and support, lead to continuing levels of interest which, in turn, will help increase the involvement and attraction to these programs of young people within these communities.”*

“We at the Karabots Foundation believe that the sciences are such an area and thus are happy to now join forces with The Franklin Institute to not only continue but to also expand on our efforts to reach our youth, via both the expansion of the physical facility combined with programs that are sure to keep their interest, which will most certainly help motivate them to continue with their education or otherwise continue with an interest in the sciences thereby directing their efforts towards a more positive contribution to society. My wife Athena and I look forward to the realization of such results.”

“We are tremendously grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Karabots for their truly exceptional \$10 million commitment to The Franklin Institute,” said Marsha Perelman, Chair of The Franklin Institute Board of Trustees. *“It is remarkable to have found such an extraordinarily generous couple who also completely understand the importance of the Institute’s work. Athena and Nick appreciate that it is imperative to provide opportunities for all of our region’s young people to learn about science and technology, and to learn that educational activities can be exciting and fun.”*

“This gift will help The Franklin Institute remain one of the country’s leading science centers,” said Dr. Dennis M. Wint, President and CEO, The Franklin Institute. *“Our expanded facility will enable us to provide a broader range of educational opportunities – at a time when science and technology training is of incredible importance in our nation.”*

The Karabotses and The Karabots Foundation, Inc.

Nicholas Karabots is the Chairman of the Spartan Organization, Inc. and its family of companies, which includes Kappa Publishing Group, Inc., the largest publisher of puzzle magazines and books in the nation. Nicholas and Athena are well-known for their philanthropic efforts. They established the Karabots Foundation to support programs that provide opportunities for young people in violence prone neighborhoods to see that an alternative way of life is achievable. In recent years they have made major contributions to the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, Montgomery Hospital, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Philadelphia College of Physicians, William Jeanes Memorial Library and various other organizations that provide opportunities for traditionally underserved youth.

The Franklin Institute

Located in the heart of Philadelphia, The Franklin Institute is a renowned and innovative leader in the field of science and technology learning, as well as a dynamic center of activity. Pennsylvania’s most visited museum, it is dedicated to creating a passion for learning about science by offering access to hands-on science education. Since 2001, the museum has launched or re-furbished every major exhibition in the building. Considered one of the great science centers in the nation and the world, The Franklin Institute is known for blockbuster exhibits, one-of-a-kind

theatrical experiences, and cutting-edge community learning with national influence. All are aimed at explaining science in ways that impact people's lives. For more information, visit www.fi.edu.

#