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Philadelphia Announces Dates for 2012 Science Festival: 10 Days of Interactive, Hands-On Events that Explore the Science of Everyday Life

**Second year festival will be held April 20-29, 2012 and includes more than 100 events,
most free of charge**

PHILADELPHIA (Jan. 10, 2012) – Last year, the Philadelphia Science Festival brought together more than one hundred partners in an unprecedented collaboration highlighting the region’s role as a worldwide leader in science and technology innovation.

The result – the inaugural citywide science festival – featured Philadelphia organizations large and small celebrating science and engaged tens of thousands of citizens in nontraditional, thought-provoking activities. There was PhillieBot, a robot that threw out the first pitch at a Phillies game, miracle berries that turned your taste buds upside down and a hugely popular citywide astronomy night – all of which, combined, entertained and educated more than 120,000 visitors.

The 2012 Philadelphia Science Festival (PSF) will run from April 20-29 and feature all-new events, as well as twists on popular ones from last year.

“I’m thrilled to see a second year for the Philadelphia Science Festival,” said Mayor Michael A. Nutter. “This city loves science, and who better to host this event than The Franklin Institute. I look forward to seeing what this year brings.”

The Festival is organized by The Franklin Institute (TFI), which secured a grant from the National Science Foundation in 2009 as part of a four-city pilot program to develop sustainable models for science festivals. It’s a movement already well underway in Europe, and the goal is to create a similar network here in the U.S. With that mandate, the Philadelphia Science Festival set out to break down misconceptions about science and foster groundbreaking collaboration among museums, institutions, schools and the communities around them.

“Going into our first year, we had a plan, but no one was sure what a science festival would look like in an American city of this size,” said Dennis M. Wint, TFI’s President and CEO. “But true to Philadelphia’s spirit as an innovator, thousands of people – from chemists to chefs – rolled up their sleeves and came together to create something truly unique. What we did here in Philadelphia is already a model for other cities. More importantly, it is changing people’s perception about what science is—Philadelphians are beginning to realize that it is a part of everything we do, allowing them to look at science and technology in an entirely different way.”

All of the original PSF collaborators have returned for 2012, Wint said, including The Dow Chemical Company as the Festival's Presenting Sponsor.

"Innovations of tomorrow will come from the students of today, so it is our job to try and inspire them," said Jerome Peribere, President and CEO of Dow's Advanced Materials Division. "It's a proud moment for Dow to work this year with the Philadelphia Science Festival to illustrate the enabling power of chemistry and material science for every day products from cell phones to house wraps."

"Through our presenting partnership with leading regional organizations comprising the Science Festival, the involvement of our employees as volunteers and through sponsorship of many other science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education programs, Dow has been supporting science-based career development for more than 100 years."

Signature Programs

Under the leadership of science festival director Gerri Trooskin, PSF organizers have been busy for months finalizing a slate of programs that is designed to inspire and engage the Philadelphia region – and the next generation of scientists, doctors, engineers and entrepreneurs. The majority of the events slated for 2012 are interactive in nature, providing opportunities for hand-on experiences, an approach that has quickly become the hallmark of Festival programming in Philadelphia.

A complete list of events will be available in February at philasciencefestival.org, but here are a few of the signature programs already confirmed:

- **Science Carnival**
Saturday, April 21 at 11:00am | Around Logan Circle on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway and at The Franklin Institute
The Festival again officially opens with a free outdoor carnival on the Parkway, featuring more than 100 hands-on interactive activities, science-themed performances and demonstrations that the whole family can enjoy.
- **Visualizing the Body Beautiful**
Friday, April 27 at 6:00pm | Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts
Since before the days of Leonardo, artists and scientists have together created a visual knowledge of human anatomy and brought understanding to the complexity of life science in health and disease. Discover how this visual journey reflects man's cultural history -- and how technological advances are revolutionizing the interdisciplinary profession of medical illustration.
- **Science Day at the Ballpark with the Philadelphia Phillies**
Saturday, April 28 at 7:05pm | Citizen's Bank Park
This year, it's brains and brawn with the Phillies. Special hands-on activities throughout the ballpark will explore the "science of sports." In 2011, Science Day at the Ballpark sold out shortly after tickets were made available.
- **Earth in Crisis**
Tuesday, April 24 | The Franklin Institute
Our planet is changing, but what is *really* happening? Join 2012 Franklin Institute Laureates Ellen Mosley Thompson, Lonnie Thompson and a team of museum interpreters who will take you through a tour of our planet with live media and on stage demonstrations. This program will include hands-on activities throughout The Franklin Institute, including the *Changing Earth Exhibit*.
- **Grow It, Cook It, Eat It**
Sunday, April 22 | Bartram's Garden
Everyone can grow a tomato, but have you ever tried to grow your own mushrooms or spinach? And just what is a kohlrabi anyway? Join agricultural experts and culinary students on this tour of how to grow, cook, and enjoy homegrown produce. Other scheduled "foodie" programs include an "all about ales" workshop with Yards Brewery and a science of chocolate program where you can, literally, trace different tastes to regions of the world.
- **The Science Cabaret**
Tuesday, April 24 at 6pm | Chemical Heritage Foundation, 315 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia
The Science Cabaret returns for another year with eye-popping experiments and contestants competing for the coveted "Golden Spoon" award, wowing the audience with their scientific chops.

Other PSF arts programming will include multiple showcases of the science of music as well as a University of the Sciences program highlighting the “Biomechanics of Dance.”

— **Science Superheroes**

Wednesday, April 25

Sometimes the world needs a superhero. And sometimes that superhero needs to be a scientific genius. Meet some of the greatest problem-solvers of our generation as they demonstrate their answers to some of the world’s biggest scientific challenges – locating genes that trigger disease, addressing global warming and building robots that keep people out of harm’s way—and learn what it takes to be a science superhero.

— **The Great Vaccine Debate**

Tuesday, April 24 at 6:30pm

Hear the real scoop from a panel of vaccine scientists from The Wistar Institute, medical ethicists and Mark Largent, Ph.D., author of *Vaccine: The Debate in Modern America*.

— **Science Film Fest**

Nightly During the Festival @ various locations

Explore the many ways in which science has been illustrated through film. These nightly events, curated by the Philadelphia Film Society, will pair a movie with a post-screening Q&A led by scientific experts in the field.

In addition to these programs, there will be more than 50 activities taking place as part of PSF’s Neighborhood Science initiative in community centers, parks, gardens and Free Library branches across the region.

About 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. For more information, visit www.fi.edu.

About the Philadelphia Science Festival

The Philadelphia Science Festival is a citywide collaboration April 20-29 showcasing the impact of science and technology past, present and future. Part of a national movement to inspire the next generation of scientists and engineers, the Festival builds on Philadelphia’s own rich history of innovation with dozens of free, interactive exhibits, hands-on activities and immersive experiences. More than 105 institutions and partners are working together to produce the second annual Festival, which is funded in part by the National Science Foundation, presented by The Dow Chemical Company and organized by The Franklin Institute. To learn more, visit PhilaScienceFestival.org or call 215-448-1128.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

- Photos and artwork are available for publication at:
<http://www.philasciencefestival.org/communicate/press-room>
- PSF is on Facebook, Twitter and Foursquare: PHLScienceFest
- The 2012 hashtag is #PSF2012