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The Franklin Asks -- RACE: ARE WE SO DIFFERENT? Newest Exhibition Explores Controversial Topic Beginning May 30

Philadelphia, PA, May 12, 2009 – The Franklin will be launching its third exhibition in two months, *RACE: Are We So Different?*, on Saturday, May 30. The exhibit encourages visitors of all ages to explore the science, history, and everyday impact of race and racism, and will be highlighted by special programming events that aim to more fully connect with the community. Free to all visitors with a Sci-Pass admission to the museum, the RACE exhibit runs from May 30 through September 7. It will join The Franklin's other summer offerings, *Galileo, the Medici and the Age of Astronomy*, and the soon-to-be-launched adventure, *Star Trek: The Exhibition*. With the launch of the RACE exhibition, The Franklin will house three simultaneous special traveling exhibitions – the most it has hosted at one time.

“Race and education remain the two central challenges facing Philadelphia. This exhibit allows us to educate on the topic of race—with the discussion grounded in the cutting-edge science of our day,” said Dennis Wint, President & CEO of The Franklin Institute. *“Race is not only an exhibit, it is a conversation. We are committed to building programming and activities around the exhibit that challenge diverse conversations about race in meaningful ways.”*

RACE: Three perspectives on a wide-reaching topic --

From the scientific understanding that humankind cannot be divided into ‘races’ to how American history, economic interest and popular culture have played a role in shaping our understanding of race, *RACE: Are We So Different* creates a compelling opportunity to explore one of the most controversial topics in American culture today. The RACE exhibit addresses these topics through three interwoven sections that tell a moving story of science with deep and lasting social impact.

- **Science:** Visitors will discover that human beings are more alike than any other living species, and no one gene or set of genes can support the idea of race.
- **History:** Ideas about race have been around for hundreds of years, and they have changed over time. This section of RACE explores the origins of the term ‘race’ and the journey of racism in the United States.
- **Everyday experience:** Though race may not be a real biological concept, it certainly is real both socially and culturally. In this section of the exhibit, visitors will explore the personal experiences of race in our schools, neighborhoods, health care systems, sports and entertainment industries, and more.

The Franklin's “Out of Africa” task force, an in-house committee which is dedicated to creating dialogue about race through the museum, will be creating a series of special programming events around the exhibition, ranging from workshops to panel discussions.



A project of the American Anthropological Association in collaboration with the Science Museum of Minnesota, *RACE* uses a powerful combination of interactive activities, artifacts and multimedia, to challenge our own definitions and misconceptions about race, while chronicling various experiences of racism in America. The *RACE* exhibit is part of a larger public education project from the American Anthropological Association and is funded by the Ford Foundation and the National Science Foundation. In addition to the exhibit, the initiative includes a website, educational materials, and conferences designed to share research and information with the public. The national tour of *RACE: Are We So Different?* is presented by the Best Buy Children's Foundation. PECO, Proud Corporate Partner of The Franklin Institute, is the Associate Sponsor for the exhibition.

In order for all museum attendees to have access to this important exhibition, admission to *RACE* is included in regular Franklin exhibit gallery admission. For information on purchasing tickets or hours, please call 1.215.448.1254 or visit www.fi.edu. Information on tickets for groups of 15 or more is available at 1.800.285.0684.

About The Franklin

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 science by offering new and exciting access to science and technology. For more information: www.fi.edu.

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