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DELAWARE CHILDREN'S MUSEUM BREAKS GROUND AND ANNOUNCES OPENING DATE

WILMINGTON, DE – September 21, 2009 – The Delaware Children's Museum (DCM) broke ground today at its new home in Riverfront Wilmington and announced an opening date of Saturday, April 24, 2010. Thanks to kazoos, merrymaking toys, a performance by choral students from Kuumba Academy and a treasure-filled sand box, DCM's official groundbreaking event was a fun-filled celebratory affair.

Major advocates of the DCM provided supportive remarks at the event, including Governor Jack Markell, Lieutenant Governor Matt Denn, U.S. Senators Tom Carper and Ted Kaufman (both D-Del.), U.S. Representative Mike Castle (R-Del.), Wilmington Mayor Jim Baker, New Castle County Executive Chris Coons, and Riverfront Development Corporation Executive Director Mike Purzycki.

The groundbreaking is a significant milestone in the development of the DCM, marking the fact that 100% of the DCM's Phase One capital needs and 91% of the DCM's operating goal through 2012 have been met. Executive Director Julie W. Van Blarcom explained that, "The budget is a fine balance of contributed and earned revenue. We are trying to shore up our fundraising support as fast as possible. The message to our community is that we are almost there but we still need your help," adding, "I am pleased to state unequivocally that the project is moving rapidly toward opening in April 2010 and will be a flagship attraction for Wilmington."

Several founding corporate donors attended the groundbreaking in a strong show of support, including lead donors the State of Delaware, Riverfront Development Corporation, New Castle County, the JPMorgan Chase Foundation, AstraZeneca, DuPont and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Other founding donors include AAA, Bank of America, Barclays, Best of Delaware, Exelon, Nemours, NRG Energy, PSEG, Valero and Wilmington Trust.

Local foundational support came from Longwood Foundation, Welfare Foundation, The Laffey-McHugh Foundation, The Marmot Foundation and Delaware Community Foundation.

Delaware is one of the last states to have its own children's museum. More than 30 million children and their families attend a children's museum each year, according to a 2007 survey of members of the Association of Children's Museums. There are currently 400 children's museums across the country and around the world.

The Delaware Children's Museum's mission is to inspire children to explore, discover and celebrate the power of their potential. DCM will build imaginative minds through play and math-, science- and technology-focused informal learning. As the state's first and only museum dedicated entirely to children, the DCM will underscore the value of play in the learning process, especially as it sparks interest in math, science and technology for children aged 1-12. The DCM Board of Directors has identified the following values that drive the mission: creativity, fun, wonder, learning, stewardship, diversity, respect and cooperation. These define the direction and approach the institution will take toward exhibits, programs and the overall visitor experience.

For more information, visit www.delawarechildrensmuseum.org.