



Media Contacts:

Tracy Shirer (tshirer@ctsciencecenter.org)

O: 860.520.2116, C: 860.817.1373

Connecticut Science Center | 250 Columbus Blvd | Hartford, CT 06103

Kipling Berger-Gottshall (kiplingmlct@comcast.net)

D: 860.217.1304

Miracle League of CT | PO Box 331223 | West Hartford, CT 06133

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Miracle League of Connecticut Partners with Connecticut Science Center, Signs on as Presenting Sponsor of Sensory-Friendly Events

Hartford, CT— March 30, 2016 — The Miracle League of Connecticut has signed on as the official Presenting Sponsor of sensory-friendly events at the Connecticut Science Center throughout 2016. With the Miracle League's support, the Science Center will present four Sensory Friendly Day events this year, with the first event held on Wednesday, March 30. The Miracle League's investment also allows development of new hands-on programming for this special audience.

This new partnership will advance the organizations' efforts to expand and enhance learning opportunities tailored to individuals who require sensory-friendly atmospheres and to provide recreational activities to children of all physical and cognitive abilities. On these extra-special Sensory Friendly Days, visitors will enjoy Live Gallery Science demonstrations, Storytime, arts and crafts, and other hands-on entertainment. Discounted rates are available to all guests who visit during these events. The Science Center has also created a new Sensory Friendly Guide to help families and caregivers set expectations before arrival on-site.

"We are very excited to support the Connecticut Science Center's initiative of adding more sensory-friendly events. This partnership is a natural fit for our organization's mission, which is to provide recreational and educational activities for children with special needs and their families," said Kipling Berger-Gottshall, Program Director for the Miracle League of Connecticut. "Our hope is that this partnership expands opportunities for the families that we serve throughout the state."

The Miracle League of Connecticut is a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization that provides recreational and sporting opportunities for children with physical and cognitive challenges. Families enjoy an accessible, nurturing, and noncompetitive environment at Miracle League events, where they can cultivate new friendships and experience the joy of play.

"The Miracle League of Connecticut has been a valuable community partner, using their experience with inclusive activities and events to guide our programs so we can provide STEM learning that's accessible for all, while also helping us spread the word about our sensory-friendly and accessible events," said Tracy Shirer, Director of Marketing and Public Relations at the Connecticut Science Center. "We are grateful for the Miracle League's support of these programs and look forward to partnering with them on many similar initiatives in the future."

On Sensory Friendly Days, the Science Center dims its lights and lowers the volume on exhibits so groups and families with children on the autism spectrum or with other developmental disabilities can enjoy programming specifically tailored to them. In 2014, Science Center staff received training to help them understand the needs of these special youth, so families and caregivers can feel assured of a positive experience for all. Sensory Friendly Day activities include the *Creative Creatures* stage show, where guests explore animal habitats and adaptations; hands-on sensory fun with kinetic sand; and coloring activities. A designated quiet room is also available for any child who feels overwhelmed or overstimulated.

Thanks to the Miracle League's generosity, groups and families with special needs can purchase tickets for Sensory Friendly events in advance at the discounted rate of \$12 per person. Tickets will be available at the door for \$14.95 each. 1:1 aides are always free at the Connecticut Science Center.

With this partnership comes another exciting event at the Science Center. The second annual Miracle League Day on May 29 is open to all friends of the Miracle League and to the general public. Families will enjoy an outing full of family fun at the deeply discounted rate of just \$10 per person for General Admission to the Science Center plus a 3D movie. This special ticket provides a significant savings off the regular rate of \$26.95 Adults/\$19.95 Youth for General Admission plus a movie. General Admission includes all four floors of hands-on exhibits including the new traveling exhibit, *Leonardo da Vinci: Machines in Motion*. **Those who wish to participate in Miracle League Day must purchase discounted tickets in advance through the Miracle League's website.** Please note: Miracle League Day is NOT a sensory friendly event.

For more information or to purchase advance tickets for Sensory Friendly Day, contact Brit Montmeat, Group Sales Account Manager, at (860) 520-2112, or via email at bmontmeat@ctsciencecenter.org. To purchase reduced price Miracle League Day tickets, please visit miracleleaguet.org/upcoming-events.

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About the Connecticut Science Center: The LEED-Gold certified Connecticut Science Center, located in downtown Hartford, sparks creative imagination and an appreciation for science by immersing visitors in fun and educational hands-on, minds-on interactive experiences while maintaining an environmentally conscious presence. Serving more than 2 million people since opening in 2009, the Science Center features more than 165 exhibits in ten galleries and a range of topics, including space and earth sciences, physical sciences, biology, the Connecticut River watershed, alternative energy sources, Connecticut inventors and innovations, a children's gallery, and much more. Other features include four educational labs, a 200-seat 3D digital theater, function room, gift store, and ongoing events for all ages. The Science Center is a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing science education throughout the state of Connecticut and New England, providing learning opportunities for students and adults of all ages, and engaging the community in scientific exploration. The Connecticut Science Center is also the home to the **Joyce D. and Andrew J. Mandell Academy for Teachers**, offering powerful Professional Development for educators. More information: CTScienceCenter.org or 860.SCIENCE.

About The Miracle League of Connecticut The Miracle League of Connecticut is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing recreational and sporting opportunities for children with physical and/or cognitive challenges at accessible facilities. Building upon the ideal that "every child deserves a chance to play", the Miracle League has accomplished its original goal to construct a Miracle League Field in West Hartford. Located at the corner of Asylum Avenue and Trout Brook Drive within one of the finest Little League complexes in the state, the field is fully wheelchair accessible and was the first of its kind in New England. Hundreds of children from throughout the state come to West Hartford to participate in spring and fall baseball leagues each year. In addition to the field, the Miracle League has built an accessible-to-all playground, which has become one of the most used playgrounds in the area. More information: miracleleaguet.org.