



Media Contact:

Tracy Shirer (tshirer@ctsciencecenter.org)

O: 860.520.2116, C: 860.817.1373

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Connecticut Science Center Celebrates 3 Million Customer Milestone

Celebration includes Family Gardening Day with Petit Family Foundation

HARTFORD, CT (September 25, 2018) – Just nine short years ago, the Connecticut Science Center opened its doors and forever changed the landscape of Hartford. On Saturday, September 22, the Science Center celebrated a milestone by honoring its 3 millionth customer with a special ceremony in Science Alley, the Science Center's Lobby level. The celebration included special family garden activities and Community Day, a special event where the Science Center opens all four General Admission floors of engaging exhibits and interactive Live Science programs at a reduced price of only \$5.

A highlight of the day was the family gardening program on the unique rooftop garden with the Petit Family Foundation. Visitors experienced urban gardening high on the Hartford skyline in *Michaela's Garden*, created in memory of Michaela Petit using her favorite Four O'Clock Flowers. These beautiful blooms were recently named the State Children's Flower in Michaela Petit's honor, making the annual seed-harvesting tradition especially poignant.

Visitors were also introduced to Pepper, the Science Center's new Humanoid Robot. The new robot will be used for programming and guest engagement as part of the Science Center's tenth anniversary in 2019.

"It is humbling to reflect on the fact that the Science Center was no more than a vacant lot and an idea not so long ago, and now we have served millions of people," said Matt Fleury, President & CEO of the Connecticut Science Center. "Every day we strive to make their experience more interesting, more inspiring and more educational, and we open our arms to anyone who hasn't yet had the opportunity to engage with science, technology and innovation here."

The Science Center's mission is to engage people of all ages, but with a focus on connecting the younger generation to the growing opportunities in science, technology, engineering and math ("STEM") careers in Connecticut. Through industry growth, STEM career opportunities are growing tremendously in Connecticut. The Science Center is implementing a series of new projects and programs to showcase different science, technology and innovation professions. Last year, the Science Center opened the new permanent *Butterfly Encounter*, which houses 40-50 tropical butterfly species. The opening of this exhibit grew the life-science offerings at the Science Center. The new permanent *Engineering Lab* presented by

Stanley Black and Decker recently opened on Level 4. The exhibit features hands-on tasks from five engineering disciplines- software, structural, mechanical, electrical, and aerospace engineering.

The Connecticut Science Center is looking forward to an exciting fall, full of activities for everyone. There is also an exciting lineup of adult and family-friendly events coming this fall, giving all in the community the chance to immerse themselves in STEM.

Christina Pierce and her family were recognized as the 3 millionth visitor to the Connecticut Science Center. "We love coming to the CT Science Center," Said Christina Pierce. "Every visit is filled with excitement, learning, and pure joy. The Science Center is always adding new things which always leads to the kid's exclaiming "it was the best day ever!" which is a total win in my book. We are so thankful to the amazing staff and sponsors who make the CT Science Center possible for everyone to enjoy!"

Access to the new interactive exhibits is included with the purchase of General Admission or with a Connecticut Science Center Membership. Access to the *Butterfly Encounter* requires the purchase of a separate ticket. Kids under 3 are FREE. For information, including pricing and hours, visit CTScienceCenter.org.

###

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 3 million people since opening in 2009, the Science Center features more than 165 exhibits in ten galleries covering 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.