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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Connecticut Science Center Earth Day Event Features All-Female
Panel of Scientists and Experts**

Straight Talk: Nature & Nurture Restoring Mother Earth is a free virtual event on April 22 at 6 PM

Hartford, CT (April 21, 2021) The Connecticut Science Center is continuing to serve science-curious adults with virtual events to address hot topics in today's world. *Straight Talk*, a *Science Straight Up* program, brings together dynamic experts in the science community in a LIVE virtual setting. Moderated conversations allow for audience interaction and participation.

The Science Center is celebrating Earth Day 2021 and Women in Science with an environmentally-minded panel of renowned experts and passionate community leaders. The all-female panel will be moderated by **Meryl Mallery**, a Connecticut Science Center Trustee, the esteemed Chair of the Science Center's Women in Science Steering Committee and the Vice President of Engineering at Ensign Bickford Aerospace & Defense Company. Each panelist will bring a unique perspective to energize the conversations about the important topic.

Guests Include:

- **Dr. Marian Chertow**, Professor, Yale School of the Environment, Center for Industrial Ecology
- **Leticia Colon de Mejias**, President, Green Eco Warriors
- **Dr. Joellen Russell**, Co-Chair, NOAA Science Advisory Board's Climate Working Group; Professor, University of Arizona, Department of Geosciences
- **Anelise Zimmer**, Master of Environmental Management Candidate at Yale School of the Environment

Ms. Mallery, Dr. Russell, and Ms. Colon de Mejias may be familiar to those who have participated in previous Science Center programs including the *Green Gala* and *Women in Science* programs. These female science leaders are committed to promoting change and inspiring the next generation by sharing their work and illuminating curiosity and interest in science.

Straight Talk is the Connecticut Science Center's series of adult discussions with experts, STEM professionals, and thought leaders. Each *Straight Talk* event is unique and provides guests with a robust discussion of on-trend topics.

This popular program is usually held in person as part of the Connecticut Science Center's *Science Straight Up* happy hour events. Dubbed "Hartford's Smartest Happy Hour," the events usually draw 400-800 people. Over the last 10 months, the Science Center has adapted the programs to a virtual format to continue these

important conversations through the pandemic. Participants can expect to be informed and engaged with special features and opportunities to interact.

This edition of *Straight Talk* is part of the Connecticut Science Center's *Women in Science Initiative*. The founding sponsor of *Women in Science* is The Petit Family Foundation with additional support from Voya Financial and Vistra.

Registration is free and donations are accepted. To register and to learn more about virtual events, more information at CTScienceCenter.org/tickets.



Moderator: Meryl Mallery is the Vice President of Engineering at Ensign-Bickford Aerospace & Defense Company, is a member of the Connecticut Science Center's Board of Trustees as well as the Women in Science Committee Chair. She leads the EBAD engineering team which creates innovative solutions for flight termination, rocket stage separation, satellite deployment, and military breaching for Aerospace and Defense markets. Ms. Mallery holds a B.S. in Mechanical and Aeronautical Engineering from U.C. Davis and an M.S. in Mechanical Engineering from Penn State. She is passionate about promoting women in STEM fields and is interested

in doing more to promote environmental awareness and protection.



Marian Chertow is a professor of industrial environmental management at the Yale School of the Environment and Director of the Center for Industrial Ecology. She is also appointed at the Yale School of Management and the National University of Singapore since 2001. Her research and teaching focus on industrial ecology, business/environment issues, circular economy, waste management, and urban sustainability. Her research has championed the study of industrial symbiosis involving geographically-based exchanges of materials, energy, water, and wastes within networks of businesses globally. In 2019, Dr. Chertow was inducted into the Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame as an industrial ecology pioneer.



Leticia Colon de Mejias is an awarded building scientist and speaker. She is the founder of Energy Efficiencies Solutions, Chair of Efficiency For All, Policy Co-Chair of the National Building Performance Association, Chair of Commission on Women Children Elderly Latino & Puerto Rican Affairs Commission, President of Green Eco Warriors. She is an author of books on environmental leadership and a series of educational science-based graphic texts. Awards include United States of America's DOE award, National Award Building Scientist Hall of Fame, Minority Small Business of the year. Her companies have provided energy efficiency assessments and upgrades to over 20,000 CT households and completed retrofits in over 10 million sq

ft of multifamily housing. She has provided climate and energy education to over 40,000 youth and families. In addition and prior to this event, **Ms. Colon de Mejias** will be testifying in front of the United States of America's House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis. This will occur on Tuesday, April 20 2021 at a hearing entitled, "Making the Case for Climate Action: Creating New Jobs and Catalyzing Economic Growth."



Dr. Joellen Russell is the Thomas R. Brown Distinguished Chair of Integrative Science and Professor at the University of Arizona in the Department of Geosciences. Her research uses global climate and earth system models to simulate the climate and carbon cycle of the past, the present, and the future and develops observationally-based metrics to evaluate these simulations. Prof. Russell is the lead for the modeling theme of the Southern Ocean Carbon and Climate Observations and Modelling project (SOCCOM) including its Southern Ocean Model Intercomparison Project (SOMIP). She currently serves as Co-Chair of the NOAA Science Advisory Board's Climate Working Group. She received her A.B. in Environmental Geoscience from Harvard and her Ph.D. in Oceanography from Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California, San Diego.



Anelise Zimmer is a Master of Environmental Management candidate at the Yale School of the Environment studying climate policy and ecosystem-based adaptation. Ms. Zimmer coordinates Yale's Climate Solutions Generator and was a delegate to the United Nations climate conference, COP25. For her Master's research, she led the site selection process for a climate-resilient coral restoration project in Hawaii. Before grad school, Ms. Zimmer worked in wildlife conservation in Guatemala, was a Park Ranger in Alaska, completed a Fulbright grant in Malaysian Borneo, and managed the environmental programs for Ocean Beauty Seafoods. She is from Kodiak, Alaska and studied Environmental Science at Willamette University.

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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 3.25 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, a function room, a gift store, and ongoing events for all ages. The Science Center is a 501(c)(3) 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 of the Joyce D. and Andrew J. Mandell Academy for Teachers, offering powerful professional development for educators. More information: CTScienceCenter.org or 860.SCIENCE.