



Media Contact:
Tracy Shirer tshirer@ctsciencecenter.org
W: 860.520.2116, C: 860.817.1373
Connecticut Science Center
250 Columbus Blvd | Hartford, CT 06103

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Connecticut Science Center to Rededicate Nassau Science Plaza *Beautified Space to Come Alive With Summer Activities*

Hartford, CT, June 22, 2021— The Connecticut Science Center and Nassau leadership and employees will gather June 23 to celebrate their longtime partnership by rededicating the Science Center’s exterior plaza as Nassau Science Plaza. The increasingly vibrant plaza area is named in recognition of Nassau’s donation of the land on which the Science Center was built – a momentous gift that helped make the project possible at its iconic location in Downtown Hartford.

“The gift of this extraordinary location was a threshold moment in bringing a state-of-the-art science museum to the State of Connecticut,” said Matt Fleury, Connecticut Science Center President & CEO. “That gift, and Nassau’s continuing contribution of leadership and support, has helped provide more than 3.5 million visitors with eye-opening experiences and made Connecticut a better place to raise or be a child.”

Nassau’s ongoing engagement with the Science Center currently includes the service of senior executive Edward Cassidy on the Center’s Board of Trustees, and voluntary participation of Nassau employees in STEM Career Showcases, garden beautification projects on the Nassau Science Plaza, and advising on digital content applications. Nassau supports more than three dozen nonprofit organizations each year, focusing in part on the environment, placemaking, and youth, which aligns nicely with the mission of the Connecticut Science Center.

“We are thrilled to partner with the Connecticut Science Center,” said Diane Ellsworth, Nassau’s Chief of Staff. “This plaza is designed to bring together the community, and here at Nassau we are proud to be a part of it. Our employees have enjoyed volunteering their time in the gardens, helping to bring to life a space they can enjoy throughout the summer, directly connected to our headquarters in the Boat Building.”

Adjoining plazas at Nassau and at the Science Center provide beautiful green space in Hartford and gorgeous walking paths connecting to the Riverfront. The Nassau Science Plaza is a green roof system and part of the Connecticut Science Center’s Gold LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. Complementing the bold and exciting design of the Connecticut Science Center are three distinct spatial and microclimatic-engineered green roof systems totaling over 54,000 square feet. They are a combination of extensive green roof systems.

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Green roofs offer many benefits to the building and its surrounding environment:

- Improve storm water management
- Conserve energy
- Decrease urban heat island impacts
- Decrease greenhouse gas generation
- Increase longevity of roof waterproofing materials
- Reduce noise and air pollution
- Sequester carbon
- Increase urban biodiversity by providing wildlife habitat
- Provide aesthetically pleasing public space

“We are so excited to be able to share this beautiful space with our community,” said Connecticut Science Center Horticulturist and Butterfly Encounter Manager, Kimberly Kelly. “Our amazing Green Team of volunteers have been hard at work over the last 4 years to re-imagine this outdoor space. Through exploration of our gardens, we hope to inspire the community to further explore the joys, benefits and science of gardening.”

The newly rededicated Nassau Science Plaza is a wonderful spacious green roof system with numerous diverse planting areas adjacent to the CT River Greenway. They vary in size, planting media depth, sunlight, and exposure. These areas create a public space that is connected, yet varies in scale, space, and context. Each is appealing and unique providing an opportunity to create a space that will further engage the community and create an active urban habitat. Most importantly, the focus of this successful public urban green space is the use of native plants.

Over the past four years, the Connecticut Science Center has been in the process of ‘activating’ the plaza. This activation included installing sustainably designed landscapes, with a focus on increasing biodiversity, while creating a dynamic public space. In the past year alone, the Science Center Green Team has installed almost 10,000 plants, and benches as seating options for guests to enjoy. There are plans for more additions to come in the future, including some interactive elements.

As a true gateway for the community, the Nassau Science Plaza is open for guests to explore with or without General Admission to the Connecticut Science Center. More information on Nassau Science Plaza and other rooftop garden systems can be found at CTScienceCenter.org.

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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 3.5 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.