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Sciencenter's Trautmann To Lead International Children's Museum Initiative

May 29, 2012 – On May 9, Sciencenter executive director Charlie Trautmann joined five other leaders in the fields of education, media, and community development to launch the Association of Children's Museums' (ACM) international three-year project "Reimagining Children's Museums" at a symposium in Portland, OR. During the project, the Association will envision and promote new models for children's museums to help them meet the changing needs of youth and families in the 21st century.

Trautmann was elected to a two-year term on the ACM board of directors this month. ACM, based in Washington, DC, serves as an advocate and worldwide resource for children's museums, which provide play-based learning experiences for children and families.

"The goal of this initiative is to envision museum visitors of the future and to empower children's museums with the tools to provide this new generation of visitors with rich, early-learning experiences," said Trautmann. "It's an exciting opportunity to embrace what we've learned about the changing faces and motivations of museum visitors and to strengthen children's museums as vibrant community anchors for increasingly diverse families."

"ACM is pleased to have the highly-esteemed Charlie Trautmann elected to its board of directors," said Janet Rice Elman, ACM executive director. "His perspective on how ACM members can impact families with children through informal learning experiences is a welcome addition."

In an increasingly complex world, children's museums provide a place where all kids can learn through play with the caring adults in their lives. While known for its cutting edge work in the science museum field, the Sciencenter is also a significant player in the world of children's museums. "Our primary audience is families with children ages 0-12," explains Trautmann. "In recent years we have significantly expanded our museum programming and exhibit work in early childhood learning to meet a significant need in our community." Recent collaborative partnerships with Cornell University's Early Childhood Cognition Laboratory and the Drop-In Children's Center have helped the Sciencenter's focus expand into research on early learning in children, programming for preschoolers, and science curriculum and training for early childhood educators.

ACM provides leadership, professional development, advocacy and resources for its member organizations and individuals. Children's museums annually reach more than 30 million children and families. For links to ACM's international list of museums and information about Reimagining Children's Museums, visit www.ChildrensMuseums.org.

The Sciencenter inspires excitement for science through interactive exhibits and programs that engage, educate and empower. The hands-on museum offers visitors of all ages more than 250 exhibits, educational programs, a gift shop, an outdoor science park and a seasonal miniature golf course. The museum is open on Tuesday-Saturday from 10 am to 5 pm, on Sunday from noon to 5 pm and on holiday Mondays from 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is \$8 for adults, \$7 for seniors, \$6 for children 3-17 years, and free to members and children under 3. For membership information, current programs and activities, please visit www.sciencenter.org. The Sciencenter is a proud member of the Discovery Trail in Ithaca.

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