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Liberty Science Center Names Fabiano Caruana, Highest Rated American Chess Player Ever & Third Highest Rated Chess Player in History, as LSC Visiting Grandmaster

Jersey City, NJ – July 9, 2015 – Liberty Science Center announced today the appointment of Fabiano Caruana, the number two ranked chess player in the world for most of 2015 and the strongest American chess player in history, to the position of LSC Visiting Grandmaster and *Chess Works!* Ambassador.

Born in Miami and raised in Brooklyn, Caruana joins Liberty Science Center at a particularly exciting moment in his chess career. The 22-year-old, who has American and Italian citizenship, has been living abroad for the past decade representing Italy. In a coup for American chess, Caruana recently switched chess federations from Italy to the United States, and this past weekend—in his first outing playing under the American flag—took first place in Germany’s elite Dortmund Sparkassen tournament with a five-game winning streak.

“Fabiano is the very embodiment of LSC’s ‘genius’ brand, and shares our goal of unlocking the genius within every child,” said Paul Hoffman, LSC President and CEO. “Chess is much more than a game. Research shows that playing chess—at any skill level—can positively affect a student’s academic performance as well as the development of emotional intelligence and life skills.”

Caruana aims to be the first American since Bobby Fischer in 1972 to win the World Chess Championship. First, he must win the tournament of eight in March 2016 to become the official World Championship challenger and then he must topple reigning champion Magnus Carlsen, 24, “the Mozart of chess,” in a match that will be played in the United States in 2016.

As he goes for the crown, Caruana will be an ambassador for LSC’s soon-to-be-launched *Chess Works!* program. Plans for *Chess Works!* include both after-school and weekend chess activities at LSC, as well as in schools and community centers in Jersey City and throughout New Jersey beginning this fall.

Caruana is the second expert who is at the very top of his field to join the Center. David Blaine, the world-renowned illusionist and endurance artist, has served as LSC’s Magician-in-Residence since 2012. Caruana and Blaine will work together to amaze and inspire LSC visitors.

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Liberty Science Center is known for its visiting and resident geniuses. At its annual Genius Gala, LSC bestows Genius Awards on singularly brilliant men and women who have uniquely advanced or employed science and technology. Fourteen people have won LSC's coveted Genius Award: Jeff Bezos, Sir Richard Branson, Garry Kasparov, Jane Goodall, Oliver Sacks, Sylvia Earle, Craig Venter, Temple Grandin, Dean Kamen, Vint Cerf, David Blaine, Cori Bargmann, Erno Rubik, and Jill Tarter.

About LSC CEO Paul Hoffman

Paul learned to play chess at the age of five when he fell in love with the names of chess openings: the Fried Liver Attack, the Frankenstein-Dracula Variation of the Vienna Game, and the Falkbeer Countergambit. Paul is never going to dethrone Magnus Carlsen, although he did briefly hold his own in the one game they played before 2,000 spectators in Avery Fisher Hall in June. OK, Magnus was blindfolded, was playing two other games in his head at the same time, and had only nine minutes total for all three games! Paul has been a student of the royal game and a chess journalist and promoter for five decades. He was an alternate on the Harvard College Chess team and he organized an after-school chess program for children, many of them with learning disabilities, at Woodstock Day School in Woodstock, NY. He was the color commentator for 18 hours of live chess televised on ESPN, and he has written about chess for *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New Yorker*, and *Smithsonian*. In 2004 Paul was determined to play chess with different world leaders and ended up held in detention in Tripoli when he tried too hard to play chess with Muammar el-Qaddafi. The author of the memoir *King's Gambit: A Son, A Father, and the World's Most Dangerous Game*, Paul participated in highly publicized matches between Garry Kasparov and Anatoly Karpov and between Kasparov and the German computer X3D Fritz. Paul currently assists the Hungarian grandmaster Judit Polgar, the strongest female chess player in history, by serving on the board of her foundation, which uses chess to improve the academic performance of school children in Europe.

About Liberty Science Center

Liberty Science Center (LSC.org) is a 300,000-square-foot not-for-profit learning center located in Liberty State Park on the Jersey City bank of the Hudson near the Statue of Liberty. Dedicated to bringing the excitement of science to people of all ages, Liberty Science Center houses 12 museum exhibition halls, a live animal collection with 110 species, giant aquariums, a 3D theater, the nation's largest IMAX Dome Theater, live simulcast surgeries, tornado and hurricane-force wind simulators, K-12 classrooms and labs, and teacher-development programs. More than half a million students, teachers, and parents visit the Science Center each year, and tens of thousands more participate in the Center's offsite and online programs. LSC is the most visited museum in New Jersey and the largest interactive science center in the NYC-NJ metropolitan area.