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Liberty Science Center Announces the Kickoff of Its 25th Anniversary \$25M Campaign

Distinguished Donors Include NJ Philanthropists Betty Wold Johnson, Josh Weston, Joseph D. and Millie E. Williams, and Jennifer Chalsty; Former NJ Governor Thomas H. Kean to Serve as Honorary Chair; \$15.5M Already Raised in Donations and Pledges

JERSEY CITY, NJ (October 16, 2017) – On January 25, 2018, Liberty Science Center will commemorate its 25th year with the official VIP celebration of the Jennifer Chalsty Planetarium, the largest and most technologically advanced planetarium in the Western Hemisphere. The event will honor the lead supporters of a new 25th Anniversary \$25 Million Campaign that the Center announced today.

Former New Jersey State Governor and Founding Governor of LSC **Thomas H. Kean** will chair the campaign. “Without Governor Kean’s vision and perseverance, LSC would not exist,” said Paul Hoffman, President and CEO of Liberty Science Center. “I am delighted that he is now helping us build a bright future.” Five of New Jersey’s most distinguished philanthropists – **Betty Wold Johnson, Josh Weston, Joseph D. and Millie E. Williams, and Jennifer Chalsty** – have generously pledged a combined \$15.5 million in support to the 25th anniversary campaign, Mr. Hoffman announced.

“We want to make Liberty Science Center the best interactive science museum in the world,” said Paul Hoffman. “Our exhibition halls must be fully immersive and reflect the latest science and technology. With a quarter million more people coming to LSC annually, there is also more wear and tear on the interactive exhibits, and we want to make sure that every square foot of our 300,000 square-foot facility is humming.”

In announcing her \$5 million pledge, **Mrs. Johnson** said, “I am pleased to support Liberty Science Center and its mission to inspire the scientists of tomorrow.” This donation will help further the Center’s goal of bringing the power, promise, and pure fun of science and technology to people of all ages through a renewal of its hands-on exhibitions.

Mr. Weston’s \$2 million gift will establish the Weston Family Lab for Earth and Space Exploration, an exhibition and state-of-the-art laboratory classroom featuring Science on a Sphere, the brainchild of researchers at National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The Sphere is a six-foot suspended electronic globe that enables students and adults to track in real-time hurricanes, tropical storms, tsunamis, earthquakes, and volcanoes on Earth, as well as “atmospheric” events on other planets and moons.

“Our country needs more scientists and technologists, and needs a public that is scientifically literate,” said Mr. Weston, the Co-Chair of LSC’s Board of Trustees. “The Center inspires the next generation of scientists and engineers and is essential to the future of New Jersey and society at-large,” said Mr. Weston. “So I’m pleased to help Liberty Science Center become the world’s premier interactive science museum.”

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Mr. and Mrs. Williams pledged \$2.5 million. Mr. Williams has been a supporter of Liberty Science Center from the very beginning, working hand-in-hand with Governor Kean to secure the funding necessary for its very creation in 1993. Their gift will allow the Center to build **Sapiens 2.0: Will 100 Be the New 60?**, an exhibition featuring the exciting new science of human life extension. The highly interactive experience will make this incredible research immediate and relevant to visitors by putting the tools and techniques of the biotech industry into their hands. For example, visitors will be able to 3d print their own tissue scaffold and print living cells, simulate the work of a drug developer in a high-speed digital game constructing ultra-precise molecular delivery systems, and control prosthetic limbs with their minds using specialized headsets.

“As a supporter from day one, I’ve been incredibly proud of the great work Liberty Science Center has done in its first twenty five years,” said Mr. Williams. “I’m honored to support their next quarter century and inspire the world’s next generation of biotechnologists and pharmacologists.”

Ms. Chalsty has committed an additional \$1 million to her generous \$5M gift announced by the Center last year. Her gift is enabling the Center to transform its iconic dome theater into the Jennifer Chalsty Planetarium and LSC Giant Dome Theater. Scheduled to open to the public during the 2017 holiday season, the Jennifer Chalsty Planetarium will host the official VIP reception and 25th Anniversary \$25 Million Campaign celebration on January 25, 2018.

“As a former teacher, I know that education is life’s great equalizer,” said Ms. Chalsty. “I also know that if we hope to fill the tremendous need for more top quality STEM professionals, we have to start inspiring children and imbuing in them a lifelong love for these subjects. That is the mission of the Liberty Science Center and why I’m proud to support this great institution.”

In the past four years, LSC’s annual attendance has grown by 53%, or 224,000, to more than 650,000 visitors, including 91,000 “at-risk” children from the lowest-income neighborhoods in New Jersey. LSC’s attendance spike has made it the fastest growing established museum in the United States. The 25th anniversary campaign will help the Center reimagine its interactive exhibitions and elevate its important science and technology education programs.

The Center provides programs to over 250,000 students annually, and is on the frontline of getting K-12 students excited about Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and into the pipeline toward STEM careers. LSC pioneered the award-winning *Live From Surgery* program, in which 9,500 students annually watch in real-time (through two-way videoconferencing) kidney transplants, cardiac surgery, robotic surgery, heart transplants, and knee replacements while conversing the whole time with the surgical teams. The Center delivers programs for learners of all ages, from robotics classes for five-year-olds to regular “LSC After Dark” events for a largely millennial audience.

“I am honored to be at the helm of the 25th anniversary campaign,” said Governor Kean. “Liberty Science Center is providing the State of New Jersey with critical learning opportunities for our students. I am thankful for the support of our generous donors who recognize how important an institution LSC is and what a strong future it has.”

If you wish to donate to Liberty Science Center’s 25th Anniversary Campaign, please contact Christine Arnold-Schroeder, VP, External Affairs, at 201-253-1362 or cschroeder@lsc.org.

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About Josh Weston

Mr. Weston joined Liberty Science Center's board in 1989. He served as CEO of Automatic Data Processing (ADP) for 15 years before retiring in 1998. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from City College of New York, and a Master of Arts in economics from the University of New Zealand. Weston is a Fulbright Scholar who also holds several honorary degrees. His commitment to education and human rights is evident in his extensive and enduring board service. He currently serves on many pro bono boards, including: International Rescue Committee, WNET (PBS), NJ Performing Arts Center, NJ Food Bank, Tel Aviv Foundation, Boys Town Jerusalem, Safe Water Network, American-Israel Friendship League, KIPP-NJ Schools, and FIRST Robotics. He also has served on the President's Task Force to Improve Veterans' Healthcare, the National Commission to Restructure the IRS, GAO Advisory Board, and DOD Tail-to-Tooth Commission. Mr. Weston and his wife, Judy, live in New Jersey and have four children.

About Joseph D. Williams

Mr. Williams was one of Liberty Science Center's very first supporters and was instrumental in raising the capital needed to create the Center. He became fascinated by pharmacy as a young boy while visiting and later working in his grandfather's Pawnee City, Nebraska, drugstore. Later, he would work from the ground up to rise through the ranks at the pharmaceutical company Parke-Davis to become the president and CEO. Following a merger, he was eventually president, then chairman and CEO of Warner-Lambert before retiring in 1991. He credits his training as a pharmacist for his advantage over the competition when he began his career as a salesman. Mr. Williams served in the U.S. Submarine Service in World War II and attended the University of Nebraska. He served on numerous major and national boards, including AT&T, Columbia University, Exxon, J.C. Penney, Liberty Science Center, Project Hope, and UNCF. He was the 1980 recipient of the Remington Honor Medal, the American Pharmacists Association's highest honor.

About Millie E. Williams

Mrs. Williams supported LSC by volunteering her legal services 1993-1996. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Rutgers University where she graduated from Douglass College with high honors and distinction and as a Phi Beta Kappa Society Member. She obtained her JD from Seton Hall University School of Law. She has served on the boards of Chilton Memorial Hospital, Atlantic Health Management and Investment Corporations, New Jersey Ballet Company, and Leukemia Society of America, Inc. She was the Chair of the Bioethics Oversight Committee of Atlantic Health Corporation.

About Jennifer Chalsty

Jennifer Chalsty was born in a small town east of Johannesburg, South Africa, in 1934. When war broke out, her father, a school teacher, enlisted in the South African army. The family moved frequently. She attended eight schools before graduating from high school. She attended the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg on a scholarship, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree and a teaching diploma. She taught in Pretoria for two years and, with apartheid becoming increasingly intolerable, immigrated to Canada. She taught there for five months before entering the US in 1957. She and her husband became US citizens in 1960. She has two daughters and three grandchildren. Her philanthropy is geared toward improving the lives and education of children. She has served on LSC's board since 2004.

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 power, promise, and pure fun of science and technology 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, live simulcast surgeries, a tornado-force wind simulator, K-12 classrooms and labs, and teacher-development programs. More than 250,000 students visit the Science Center each year, and tens of thousands more participate in the Center's offsite and online programs. LSC is the largest interactive science center in the NYC-NJ metropolitan area.

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