



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: **Christine DiBartolo**, Burson-Marsteller, (312) 596-3412
Chenika Veal, Science Chicago, (773) 947-3191

City Leaders Maintain Power...with Their Legs *World's Largest Science Festival Begins This Week in Chicago*

CHICAGO [September 16, 2008] – The world's largest science celebration kicked off today with an experiment involving city and civic leaders riding a fleet of more than 20 stationary bicycles to power a press conference. Supporting the concept that everyone's "life is a lab," the experiment was the first of thousands of activities and programs being planned as part of Science Chicago, a year-long science celebration designed to raise awareness about the significance of science in everyday life.

Science Chicago offers opportunities for people of all ages to learn and have fun with science in non-traditional formats. The ambitious collaboration includes the participation of more than 100 public and private institutions that will allow city and suburban residents of all ages to awaken their inner scientist and discover the scientific resources of the region.

"In a changing world dominated by the global economy, it is vital that we raise awareness about the importance of a science education. The future of our children depends on cities that are capable of producing graduates who can perform the jobs of a global economy," said Mayor Richard M. Daley. "Together, we have a responsibility to make a career in science an option for every child."

Today's activity is just one of many events happening this week as part of the kick-off celebration, which includes:

- **LabFest!**, a dazzling science carnival on the lawn of the Museum of Science and Industry that will include rocket making, solar car demonstrations, robotic shows, large-scale science demonstrations and a Chicago-inspired inventor's competition, among others;
- **Science Saturdays**, behind-the-scenes tours which will include some of the region's most celebrated and hard-to-see laboratories;
- **Polar-Palooza**, a multimedia presentation about our changing planet that brings together America's leading polar scientists, amazing video and the actual gear used by polar explorers. Participants will be able to view a piece of a polar ice core that is more than 130,000 years old and being used to help understand the impact of climate change;
- **Movie Premiere: The Atom Smashers**, a new documentary detailing the efforts of local scientists at Fermilab racing to beat their European counterparts in finding the answers that will help explain how the universe came to be. A panel discussion with the filmmakers and scientists will follow; and,
- **American Maker**, a new event that showcases grassroots innovation from Chicago-area inventors hosted by *Make* magazine. Editors and a panel of judges will judge 20 makers' work on originality, design, craftsmanship and the potential for others to benefit.

A full roster of activity can be found on the Science Chicago Web site at www.sciencechicago.com.

-more-

“Science Chicago is about making science real to everyday people,” said David Mosen, President and CEO of the Museum of Science and Industry and Vice-Chair of the Science Chicago Board of Advisors. “We hope that millions of people in our region will come out and experience science in a whole new light beginning this week.”

“Science Chicago will educate, inspire, and change lives, reaching out to four million people – 700,000 of them children and teenagers – with thousands of inter-related activities and events,” added Jonathon Fanton, President of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and Co-Chair of the Science Chicago Honorary Committee. “The range of events and topics is breathtaking with activities covering everything from particle physics to wetland conservation, robotic surgery to the history of DNA.”

The year-long slate of programs is aimed at engaging the region in science and raising awareness of the importance of science education. By providing unique learning opportunities, Science Chicago hopes to engage, excite and educate the next generation of scientists by establishing the critical value of science and mathematics education, providing opportunities to support classroom learning, and highlighting the world-class scientific resources and work being done in the Chicago region.

“As a result of Science Chicago, our community will be able to take pride in our scientific history, as well as begin to foster the young minds that might lead us to the next great innovation,” added Dr. Walter Massey, President Emeritus of Morehouse College and Co-Chair of the Science Chicago Board of Advisors.

Science Chicago offers teachers and scientists an online portal to connect with one another and with resources that can enhance classroom learning. The online “Find a Scientist!” feature allows educators to identify scientists and engineers who are willing to visit classrooms, mentor students and offer unique insight for classroom lessons. The online “Teachers’ Lounge” connects educators with professional development opportunities, classroom materials, field trips, traveling exhibits and other resources offered by Science Chicago partners. These features as well as a complete calendar of events, at-home experiments and Dr. Rabiah’s interactive blog are available at www.sciencechicago.com.

The initiative is funded, in part, by the generous support of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and The Searle Funds at The Chicago Community Trust. It is also made possible through the generous financial support of Abbott, the Boeing Company, Illinois Tool Works Inc., and Motorola. The Museum of Science and Industry, which is spearheading the initiative, and more than 100 partners are providing the content and programs that will help electrify the region.

About Science Chicago

Adventure. Excitement. Exploration. As the world’s largest science celebration, Science Chicago will awaken the inner scientist in all of us by allowing kids of all ages to explore the wonders of our region’s scientific resources. Beginning in September 2008 and lasting through August 2009, more than 100 of the Chicago area’s leading academic, scientific, corporate and non-profit institutions will host thousands of programs that will provide hands-on learning; spur thoughtful debate; enhance classroom learning; and build enthusiasm for the pursuit of cutting-edge science. Science Chicago will help establish the critical value of science and math education in order to continue to inspire the next generation of innovation.

Life’s A Lab. By offering an unprecedented number of free interactive public programs, Science Chicago will demonstrate that science isn’t just something you learn in a classroom or lab—it happens all around us and has real impact on our daily lives. For more information, visit www.sciencechicago.com.

###