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Kids Snap Up Turtle Talk

National Geographic, Children's Museum & Riverfront Recapture Launch Study

June 9, 2008 (West Hartford, CT)...On June 9th, Hartford students from the Riverfront Recapture Connecticut River Summer Youth Employment Science Program came to The Children's Museum in West Hartford to begin their research on snapping turtles. National Geographic is collaborating with Riverfront Recapture to study snapping turtle habitats along the Connecticut River in Hartford. 10 students from the Summer Youth Employment Program started the program with a visit to the *Turtle Town* exhibit at the Museum, home to 19 species of turtle and tortoise. The visit included a tour of the exhibit with a safe opportunity for close aquatic observation of the Museum's juvenile snapping turtle and an opportunity to talk turtle with Cindy King the museum's Wildlife Sanctuary Director.

This National Geographic project includes study of the snapping turtle species, using Crittercam technology used in such films as *March of the Penguins*. Students will attach the Crittercam to the snapping turtle to record life in the River from its perspective. This technology will allow

the students to obtain data about the turtles and gather facts about their behavior, providing valuable information back to National Geographic and the CTDEP. Said Cindy King, Director of the UTC Wildlife Sanctuary at The Children's Museum, "This is a great opportunity for students to collect data in a unique way. The visit to the Museum gave them a chance to see Connecticut turtles up close and personal before starting their field studies."

The Children's Museum has a long history of providing hands-on learning focused on science based education for younger children and families. One of the state's major attractions, each year it serves nearly 200,000 children and their families. The Children's Museum is also home to the new Travelers Science Dome at the Gengras Planetarium, wildlife and interactive science exhibits, as well as science based outreach programs in the elementary school system statewide. The Children's Museum offers one of the longest running early childhood education centers in the nation at The Children's Museum Preschool. Additionally, the Museum's Roaring Brook Nature Center in nearby Canton offers natural science and history exhibits and programs, a wildlife sanctuary, nature trails and outdoor gardens. With the recent recommitment of support from the State of Connecticut and the Town of West Hartford, The Children's Museum is poised to begin an exciting new chapter in its 80-year history with plans to relocate and expand at a new facility over the next few years.

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