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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **World Class Team of Professionals Vision The “New” Children’s Museum *West Hartford Museum Announces Momentous Change***

WEST HARTFORD, Conn (May 6, 2012) - The Children’s Museum of West Hartford, the region’s premiere destination for science and nature exploration, today announced strategic formation of a world class team that will create a new museum for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Robert Griesmer, President and Chief Executive Officer of The Children’s Museum, first shared the news during the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Fundraising Gala held on Saturday, May 5 at the Tumblebrook Country Club in Bloomfield.

“By all measures that the entire Board of Trustees considers to be important, this has to be one of our most successful galas to date,” said Dr. Rick Liftig, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of The Children’s Museum.

Over 200 attendees at the fundraiser gained insight on the master growth plans for the long established organization.

“We need to deliver a museum that is relevant for the 21st century,” said Griesmer. “This will be a museum that delivers on the promise of creating the next generation of problem solving lifelong learners.”

Griesmer continued, “This will be an institution that serves families and schools by providing multiple educational platforms, flexible to change, from within and without, in this new information and knowledge age in which we all live and work. An institution where engagement reaches beyond our walls so that our diverse community identifies with our museum as a community center that plays an ever increasing important role in the family.”

During his speech, Griesmer announced assembly of a world class team of professionals in order to vision the new museum.

It was announced that Dr. John Falk, Sea Grant Professor of Free-Choice Learning at Oregon State University has agreed to be the guardian of the vision. He is known internationally for his expertise on free-choice learning, learning that occurs in settings like museums and has authored hundreds of scholarly articles and more than a dozen books in the field.

The team will include Adam Tobin and Sam Dean who represent The Exploratorium of San Francisco. The Exploratorium is the international gold standard when it comes to hand on interactive exhibit development and research. They lead the entire field in creating ground breaking exhibits that create important learning moments for children and adults.

Peter Stevens, President of JCJ Architecture, headquartered in Hartford, brings the firm’s depth of design talent and the history of commitment to The Museum’s success dating back 35 years when David Jepson, one of the “J’s” in JCJ, was the museum’s chairman.

Also on the vision team is Jeff Bowen of Bowen Technovation designed over 200 Planetariums around the world and is considered one of the most innovative and forward looking thinkers in the industry.

Mark Principi, President of Caldwell & Walsh, of Sandy Hook, Ct, whose project-construction management team has executed significant projects in the tri-state area will help guide the project management from vision to reality.

Tom Martin, President and founding partner of ConsultEcon, an international museum financial consulting firm, brings over 35 years of experience of analyzing baseline operations, future expansion feasibility, and economic impacts for over 350 museums, zoos, and aquariums around the world, from Detroit to Dubai.

“Tonight we are 85 years young, and today is a new beginning for The Children's Museum,” said Griesmer.

The Children’s Museum features over 100 live animals, including the now famous Fennec foxes, hands-on science exhibits, out-of-this-world digital planetarium shows, and programs for younger children and families. The Children’s Museum and Roaring Brook Nature Center are the region’s premiere destinations for science and nature exploration.

The Children’s Museum is located at 950 Trout Brook Drive in West Hartford and at Roaring Brook Nature Center in Canton. More information is available at [www.TheChildrensMuseumCT.org](http://www.TheChildrensMuseumCT.org).

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