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PLEASE TOUCH MUSEUM SELECTS LAURA FOSTER AS PRESIDENT AND CEO

Longtime museum executive to succeed Nancy Kolb, who retires in November

PHILADELPHIA, PA – Please Touch Museum, the Children’s Museum of Philadelphia, today announced the selection of Laura Foster as its next President and Chief Executive Officer. Ms. Foster, who has been with the museum since 1991 and currently serves as Executive Director, will succeed Nancy D. Kolb, who retires on November 20 after exactly 21 years on the job. Ms. Kolb joined Please Touch on Nov. 20, 1988.

“As Nancy Kolb steps down after 21 years of incredible service, Please Touch Museum is thrilled to have Laura Foster in place as our next President and CEO,” said Elizabeth Cartmell, Chair of the Board of Directors. “Nancy and Laura worked side-by-side to bring the museum to Memorial Hall and to guide us all through this incredible past year of growth and change. With Laura’s experience and leadership I believe that we will be able to sustain the success of this past year and move forward with our mission of being a champion of creating learning opportunities through play.”

“I am truly honored to become President and CEO of Please Touch Museum, and I look forward to the next steps in the museum’s development,” said Ms. Foster. “We have an outstanding staff with whom I am privileged to work. The joy of this past year has been seeing the smiles on the faces of children and grownups when they experience the restored beauty of Memorial Hall and our new exhibits and programs. We will be working from the legacy put in place by Nancy. We will build upon our relationships in the Centennial District and the Parkside neighborhood and create new partnerships throughout the region.”

In addition to her current position as Executive Director, Ms. Foster has held the positions of Senior Vice President and Chief of Staff, Vice President of Development, and Director of Development and Marketing. She leads the museum’s senior management team of vice presidents and works closely with its Board of Directors, which is currently comprised of over forty individuals from Philadelphia’s corporate and philanthropic community.

Ms. Foster led the creation of the business and operations plan for the museum’s new location at Memorial Hall in Fairmount Park. The museum at Memorial Hall is three times larger than the

museum's old home on 21st Street, and Ms. Foster has played a leadership role in strategic planning, staffing adjustments and change management during this transition and expansion. She is directly involved with the museum's government relations and development activities.

Ms. Foster received a BA in anthropology from Barnard College and a JD from University of Baltimore, and she is a graduate of The Getty Museum Management Institute. For the last five years she was an Adjunct Associate Professor in the Museum Studies Department at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia where she taught museum governance. In April 2006, Ms. Foster was elected President of the Association of Children's Museums, for whom she currently serves as Past President. In April 2009, she and Please Touch Museum hosted more than 700 colleagues in Philadelphia for the annual ACM InterActivity conference. In April 2009 Ms Foster was elected to the board of the American Association of Museums.

"Laura Foster has been an outstanding colleague, friend, and advocate for children during her 18 years at Please Touch Museum, and I could not be more pleased that she will be succeeding me as President and CEO," said Nancy Kolb, who will remain active with the museum as President Emeritus. "She brings unparalleled experience and a clear vision of the tremendous opportunities ahead for the Museum, the Centennial District, and all of Philadelphia. It's time for her to lead while I go enjoy a few rounds of golf, fun with my grandkids, committees and Boards, and cheering for all of the Philly sports teams."

Ms. Kolb's tenure as President and Chief Executive Officer has been one of growth and achievement. She spearheaded the museum's capital campaign and restoration of Memorial Hall in Fairmount Park—a registered National Historic Landmark originally built for the 1876 Centennial Exhibition. Since the museum opened in October 2008, she has received the "Public Service Award for Preservation in the Public Interest" from the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia, the "Visionary Woman Award" from Moore College of Art & Design, and the "Distinguished Leadership Award" from the National Organization for Hearing Research Foundation. Under Ms. Kolb's leadership, the museum also introduced its Community Partners Program and in 2002 she accepted the Institute of Museum and Library Services' National Award for Museum Service by First Lady Laura Bush at a White House ceremony.

Ms. Kolb has been a key player in the creation of the Centennial District, a nationally significant cultural, recreational and family entertainment zone in which Please Touch Museum is a partner. She serves on the Mayor's Cultural Advisory Council, the Board of Trustees of the Free Library of Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau's Board of Directors, and the Spatial Intelligence and Learning Center Advisory Board. Prior to joining the Museum, she was the Director of Historic Sites and Museums and Assistant Executive Director at the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission in Harrisburg and the Director of Pennsbury Manor. She graduated with honors from Bucknell University with a BA in history and biology and is a graduate of The Getty Museum Management Institute. Ms. Kolb served as General Chair for the 2009 American Association of Museums' Annual Meeting in Philadelphia.

Please Touch Museum will celebrate the career of Nancy Kolb at a retirement bash on Monday, September 14 at 7 p.m. at Memorial Hall. The Museum will honor Nancy's legacy and continue her mission of rescuing irreplaceable treasures that define the history of Philadelphia childhood

through the creation of the Philadelphia Treasures Fund, which has been established to rescue and restore icons of the city like the *Enchanted Colonial Village*, the *Rocket Express* monorail and the archives from *Captain Noah and His Magical Ark*, the popular local TV show.

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Please Touch Museum® at Memorial Hall, Fairmount Park is dedicated to enriching the lives of children by providing learning opportunities through play. The museum is open Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Sundays from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission is \$15 for adults and children age one and over. Museum members and children under one are free. On-site parking is available. For more information, call 215-581-3181, or visit www.pleasetouchmuseum.org.