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For Immediate Release

Contact: Cecilia Clark, cclark@cdm.org; cell 408-221-3814
Autumn Young, ayoung@cdm.org; office 408-673-2861 cell 408-656-4038

***Thomas & Friends™: Explore the Rails* Traveling Exhibit Makes Debut at Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose**

10-Year Tour Brings STEM Learning with Thomas & Friends to Silicon Valley

San Jose, CA – March 31, 2017 - The world's most beloved #1 blue engine rolls into Children's Discovery Museum this summer. *Thomas & Friends®: Explore the Rails*, an interactive exhibit created by Minnesota Children's Museum and inspired by the popular children's series on PBS KIDS® in the US, and Family Jr. and Télé-Québec in Canada, will steam into San Jose on May 20 through September 10, 2017.

The *Thomas & Friends* exhibit was designed and developed by Minnesota Children's Museum in partnership with HIT Entertainment, a subsidiary of Mattel, Inc. Fisher-Price, the #1 Infant/Preschool Toys manufacturer, is the presenting sponsor for the exhibit. 3M is the national tour sponsor.

Featuring the favorite engines and destinations from *Thomas & Friends*, the STEM (Science Technology, Engineering and Math)-focused exhibit seeks to engage children, ages 2 through 7 years, and families in foundational skills that foster STEM literacy through playful learning experiences. The exhibit incorporates foundational STEM practices that encourage thinking mathematically, making comparisons, experimenting to solve problems using a variety of methods and tools, thinking creatively and reflecting on actions and results.

"The skills and proficiencies children learn and refine through play in the early years set the stage for future learning and success from the kindergarten classroom to the workplace," said Dianne Krizan, president of Minnesota Children's Museum.

"I can't think of a more iconic character to inspire the engineer in everyone," said Marilee Jennings, executive director of Children's Discovery Museum. "I'm thrilled to bring this playful exhibit to Silicon Valley where science, technology, engineering and math are such a part of the region's DNA and our educational mission."

Visitors to the 1500 square foot exhibit will be delighted as they find themselves surrounded by the Island of Sodor's iconic locations: Knapford Station, Sodor Steamworks, and much more. In the exhibit, children help Thomas and his friends solve a variety of challenges, from a simple sorting and shape identification activity to more complex engineering obstacles, such as completing a train track using track pieces with different levels of elevation.

As children confront new challenges and test their abilities, the smiling faces of Thomas, Percy, Victor and others are there to offer encouragement and remind children how “really useful” they all are.

“*Thomas & Friends: Explore the Rails* brings to life kids’ favorite characters and destinations from the Island of Sodor in a fun and educational way,” said Julie Freeland, Senior Director, The Americas, HIT Entertainment. “With their expertise and creativity in designing and producing top-rate interactive experiences for kids, the Minnesota Children’s Museum has been an enthusiastic partner developing this exhibit and delivering to fans a new way to experience the brand.”

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[About Children’s Discovery Museum of San Jose](#)

With over 150 interactive exhibits and programs, **Children’s Discovery Museum of San Jose** is one of the largest museums of its kind in the nation. Since opening its doors in 1990, the museum has welcomed over 8.3 million visitors and has offered new exhibits each year that respond to children's diverse educational needs. The striking 52,000 square foot purple building was designed by Mexico City-based architect Ricardo Legorreta and is a beacon of discovery. Encompassing the broad themes of community, connections and creativity, hands-on exhibits invite self-directed, open-ended explorations. For more information about the Museum, visit www.cdm.org.