

For Immediate Release

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**Federal, State & Local Officials Announce Landmark Grant
to EdVenture Children's Museum
\$1.3 million to flow into state to help families**

COLUMBIA, SC – January 11, 2010 – Congressman James E. Clyburn, Senator Lindsey Graham, and EdVenture Children's Museum, along with other elected local, state and federal officials, announced today the museum is receiving the largest competitive grant ever awarded to a South Carolina museum. EdVenture has received a \$1.3 million grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to expand its health programming and to encourage more middle and high school students to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and math.

The NIH is funding 20 grants nationally in the Science Education Partnership Award category from federal stimulus money provided to the NIH with the goal of investing in long-term, community-building programs. The grant money awarded to EdVenture will help fund new educational programs and science laboratories at the museum to:

- Educate multi-generational families about the variety and factors of chronic disease;
- Provide hands-on classes for students in kindergarten through eighth grades on NIH-driven research topics, exposing them to science career possibilities; and
- Expand EdVenture's youth development program for students in 7th-12th grades, with a focus on minority and under-served populations, to encourage interest in biomedical science careers.

South Carolina's statistics on student career development and health-related illnesses were the impetus for applying for the funding. According to the State Department of Education, only four percent of South Carolina's graduating high school seniors intend to pursue a career in STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) fields. Employers are beginning to see a drought of qualified candidates in these

fields to replace retiring Baby Boomers. The disparity in pursuing science careers is largest for minority youth.

Relating to citizen's health, chronic diseases such as diabetes, stroke, cancer, infectious and cardiovascular diseases are prevalent throughout the state. South Carolina is ranked 42nd in the nation for overall well health of its citizens, as reported by the United Health Foundation.

“This grant marries two of the issues I am passionate about in my public service: eradicating health disparities and improving minority student interest in pursuing STEM-related careers,” Congressman Clyburn says. “I am pleased that EdVenture will be receiving this stimulus investment to enhance its programming and address these important issues in our state.”

“Since first opening its doors, EdVenture has been a star attraction in the Columbia area. Each year, thousands of parents and children from local communities in the Midlands and across South Carolina have made their way here to learn, play, and enjoy the many wonderful opportunities this museum offers. The \$1.3 million grant from the National Institutes of Health, the largest competitive grant ever awarded to a South Carolina museum, will help EdVenture build upon its record of success. The mission of EdVenture has been to inspire children to experience the joy of learning. With today's announcement, I believe we can expect even bigger and better things in the years to come,” says U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham.

“The NIH funding is transformational for Edventure and enables us to increase services to older youth, encouraging and preparing them for careers in science, technology, engineering, and math,” says EdVenture President and CEO Catherine Wilson Horne. “The grant will enable us to focus on increasing student achievement in the sciences, address health disparities, and make a positive impact in workforce development. In South Carolina, we have invested in higher education access through creation of scholarships and endowed chairs. Now it's time to prepare teenagers to feel confident about careers in technical fields, such as biomedicine and engineering.”

The mission of EdVenture Children's Museum is to inspire children to experience the joy of learning. Learn more at www.edventure.org.

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