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### **RELEASE : 10-007**

### **NASA's New Museum Grant Allies Will Make the Universe Accessible to Families From Alaska to Florida**

WASHINGTON -- Interactive museum exhibits about climate change, Earth science, and missions beyond Earth are among the projects NASA has selected to receive agency funding. Nine informal education providers from Alaska to New York will share \$6.2 million in grants through NASA's Competitive Program for Science Museums and Planetariums.

Participating organizations include museums, science centers, Challenger Centers and other institutions of informal education. Selected projects will partner with NASA's Museum Alliance, an Internet-based, nationwide network of more than 400 science centers, planetariums, museums, aquariums, zoos, observatory visitor centers, NASA visitor centers, nature centers and park visitor centers.

Projects in the program will engage learners of all ages as well as educators who work in formal or informal science education. The projects will provide NASA-inspired space, science, technology, engineering or mathematics educational

opportunities, including planetarium shows and exhibits.

In conjunction with NASA's Museum Alliance, the grants focus on NASA-themed space exploration, aeronautics, space science, Earth science, microgravity or a combination of themes. Some projects will include partnerships with elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities.

The projects are located in Alaska, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, New York, North Carolina, Oregon and South Dakota. The nine grants have a maximum five-year period of performance and range in value from approximately \$120,000 to \$1.15 million. Selected projects work with the NASA Shared Service Center in Mississippi to complete the business review necessary before a NASA award is issued.

Proposals were selected through a merit-based, external peer-review process. NASA's Office of Education and mission directorates collaborated to solicit and review the grant applications. This integrated approach distinguishes NASA's investment in informal education. NASA received 67 proposals from 32 states and the District of Columbia.

Congress initially funded the Competitive Program for Science Museums and Planetariums grants in 2008. The first group of projects began in fall 2009 in California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Michigan, Montana, New York, North Carolina, Vermont and Washington. Congress has enacted funds to continue this program in 2010, and NASA anticipates selecting additional proposals to fund from those submitted in 2009.

For a list of selected organizations and projects descriptions, click on "Selected Proposals" and look for "Competitive Program for Science Museums and Planetariums (CP4SMP)" or solicitation NNH09ZNE005N at:

<http://nspires.nasaprs.com>

For information about NASA's Education programs, visit:

<http://www.nasa.gov/education>

NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif., leads the Museum Alliance. For information about the alliance, visit:

<http://informal.jpl.nasa.gov/museum>

For more information about NASA and agency programs, visit:

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