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Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum Announces Two Vice President Promotions

CHICAGO (February 13, 2009) – An accomplished museum educator and a revered conservationist are elevated to Vice President positions at The Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum. Rafael Rosa and Doug Taron, PhD, respectively, have been promoted, effective immediately.

Rosa has been named Vice President of Education. He served as the Director of Education for the past two years, and has played a vital role in the Museum's Education Department for 16 years. His major accomplishments include establishing key relationships with Chicago Public Schools teachers, principals and administrators, and leading the Museum's *Science on the Go!* program, an in-classroom professional development program that has been correlated to improve test scores. In 2008, the Museum served 225 Chicago classrooms through *Science on the Go!*. Rosa also helped to create the Museum's Home School Science Program, an interactive program held at the Museum that covers a wide range of science topics for home schooled children.

Rosa's responsibilities as Vice President of Education, the largest department in the Museum, includes overseeing a variety of programming and resources that reach 70,000 school children, 1,550 teachers and thousands of Museum visitors each year.

Taron has been named Vice President of Research and Conservation. Along with his promotion, he will remain Curator of Biology, a position which he held for a decade—a year after he started working with the Museum. Taron spearheaded the Museum's butterfly research efforts through butterfly monitoring and breeding. He has served as the Executive Director of the Illinois Butterfly Monitoring Network since 1987, and has worked to bolster the population of rare and endangered butterflies native to the Chicagoland region through the Museum's Butterfly Restoration Project. In 2008, Taron and his team became the first to successfully breed the rare swamp metalmark butterfly in a laboratory.

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Taron's responsibilities as Curator of Biology and Vice President of Research and Conservation include managing the *Judy Istock Butterfly Haven* and overseeing the Chicago Academy of Sciences' collections of nearly 250,000 specimens, as well as the 150 live animals in the Nature Museum. He also will continue to play an instrumental role in butterfly restoration and research.

Note to editors: Photos available upon request.

About the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum

Celebrating more than 150 years of science exploration and education, the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum is the teaching and learning center of the Chicago Academy of Sciences, founded in 1857 as Chicago's first museum dedicated to educating Chicagoans about nature and science through the preservation and display of native specimens, classroom activities, and dissemination of scientific knowledge.

Today the Nature Museum continues the Academy's tradition of education about nature in greater Chicago, research, and conservation through participatory exhibits and programs, educational outreach, and ongoing scientific activity. Its collections, due to their age and type, are among the most important in the region. The Museum's distinctive experience includes extensive involvement in schools and classrooms, and the opportunities for visitors to learn about nature up close.

Since its opening 10 years ago, the Nature Museum has welcomed more than 1.8 million visitors and provides hands-on exhibitions and programs to 70,000 students annually and trains and provides resources for more than 1,500 Chicago teachers in over 430 schools. The Nature Museum engages visitors, especially urban dwellers, in new ways to connect with and preserve the natural world through a unique indoor/outdoor experience. The Museum is one of the city's best examples of eco-friendly building technology with lush outdoor nature trails and habitat, green roof, rain barrels and solar panels.

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