



**THE PEGGY NOTEBAERT  
NATURE MUSEUM**

*The Museum of the Chicago Academy of Sciences*

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**Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum Prepares for Greater Growth and Recognition  
*Museum Builds off Significant Gains in 2008***

CHICAGO (January 12, 2009)—Coming off a year of significant increases in attendance, contributions and programming, The Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum plans for another decade of growth on a grander scale.

“Over the past ten years, more people and organizations have not only become familiar with the on-site interactive exhibitions, but also with the great work educators and researchers have done here,” said Museum Board of Trustees Chairman Charles Douglas. “It is the right time for us to reach out to even more people so they recognize this tremendous resource the Chicago community has.”

The cultural institution opened its doors at its Lincoln Park location in 1999. Even though the facility itself is young, it's the public face of Chicago's oldest museum—the Chicago Academy of Sciences, which traces its history to 1857. The Museum provides school curriculum and education programs in science and the environment, offers extensive exhibitions, and provides a variety of activities for the public. It also is a leading advocate of green living and conservation.

“The Museum represents a beautiful balance between preserving the past and dealing with the environmental issues of today,” said Donna Gustafsson, who the board recently appointed interim president and chief executive officer while it begins a search for a leader to take the Museum to its next level of growth. Gustafsson served more than two years on the board and has been directed to help chart a course for the continued expansion of the Museum and its programs.

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The board anticipates engaging even more people in all the Museum offerings as it builds on its momentum from 2008. A significant number of additional people are walking through the doors and others are discovering the Museum's largest exhibition—its surrounding landscape. The annual fund has doubled its revenue with a 70 percent increase in new donors; and the Museum's premiere education program, Science on the Go!, reached out to students in 225 classrooms in Chicago public schools—representing a 10 percent increase from the previous year. The Museum's nationally-renowned Butterfly Restoration Program and Biology Conservation Programs have also experienced significant successes during the year, including the first lab-breeding of the critically endangered Swamp Metalmark butterfly.

“We are truly in a period of growth,” Douglas said. “New leadership will allow us to take this fine institution to the next level and ensure a future in which the public will reap many more benefits.”

*Celebrating more than 150 years of science exploration and education, the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum is the public face 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 Museum continues the Academy's tradition of research, conservation and education about nature in the Midwest 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 distinguishes itself through extensive involvement in schools and the opportunities it provides for visitors to experience nature up close.*

*As one of the city's best examples of eco-friendly building technology with its lush outdoor nature trails and habitat, green roof, solar panels, and natural light sources, the Museum engages visitors, especially urban dwellers, in new ways to connect with and preserve the natural world. Since its opening in 1999, the Museum has welcomed more than 1.5 million visitors and provides hands-on exhibits and programs to 65,000 students annually and trains and provides resources for more than 2,000 Chicago teachers.*

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