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**For immediate release**

## **“DAYS OF HOPE” AT LOUISIANA CHILDREN’S MUSEUM USES ART AND LITERATURE TO REBUILD HOPE DURING KATRINA COMMEMORATION**

*As City continues to rebuild, Museum focuses on children’s need for optimism about the future.*

(NEW ORLEANS, LA, July 30, 2008) – The Louisiana Children’s Museum is putting on a two-day commemoration of the third anniversary of hurricane Katrina on Friday, August 29 and Saturday, August 30. Inspired by the transformation of the caterpillar into the butterfly, the days’ activities are designed to inspire hope for the future and give children a voice for their own thoughts about what lies ahead.

“Children have great capacity for resilience, exuberance and joy, and as adults we strive to provide children with experiences that nurture these qualities. The programs offered during the *Days of Hope* engage children in discovering, renewing and expressing optimism for the future. After all, we are rebuilding this City for them. We are all struggling to create something better, to build a better future for the next generation,” says LCM Executive Director, Julia Bland.

### **National Experts in Child Learning Visit Museum**

Special guests include national children’s television producer, Alice Wilder (*Super Why!*, *Blue’s Clues*) leading writer’s circle workshops in the Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood exhibit. Children and families can write their own story in a brand new book by Think It Ink It Publishing, illustrated by prominent local artist Katie Rafferty.

Megan Lambert, Instructor of Children’s Literature Programs for The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art in Amherst, MA, will provide special story times in the Times Picayune Theatre using The Carle’s inquiry-based model, The Whole Book Approach.

Inspired by the world-renowned Eric Carle book, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, butterflies of all shapes and sizes will be crafted and suspended in the three story atrium, creating a dramatic display.

Louisiana Children’s Museum  
420 Julia St., New Orleans LA, 70130 504-523-1357

Through Virtue Foundation's Louisiana Education Initiative, visitors can experience interactive, digital storytelling. Children and families create mini-movies instantly at the Museum's new state-of-the-art computer station, a permanent installation donated by the Virtue Foundation.

"Three years later, children and adults are still processing the impact that Katrina has had on their lives. Whether they are back in their own homes, living with families in makeshift conditions, or new to the City, families have the task of maintaining hope in difficult times. It is important to share happiness, joy and creativity as these nourish our bonds and help us grow as families and communities," says LCM staff psychologist Valerie Wajda-Johnston.

### **Children's Art Exhibitions**

Also on display during *Days of Hope* are several exhibits of children's work including the Doors of Hope, a gift from the youth of New York to the youth of New Orleans through the public arts organization CITYarts in New York. Memory boxes, journals and urban planning designs from students at MLK Jr. Charter School also will be on display.

*Days of Hope* programming is 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Friday, August 29 and Saturday, August 30. The Museum is open on those days from 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and is located at 420 Julia Street.

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More information about LCM's partners for *Days of Hope* is available through these web links:

Alice Wilder, children's television producer (*Super Why!*, *Blue's Clues*) and Think It Ink It

Publishing founder ([thinkitinkitpublishing.com](http://thinkitinkitpublishing.com))

The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art ([picturebookart.org](http://picturebookart.org))

New Orleans Kids Partnership ([americaspromise.org](http://americaspromise.org))

United Way's Success by 6 ([unitedwaynola.org](http://unitedwaynola.org))

The Virtue Foundation ([virtuefoundation.org](http://virtuefoundation.org))

CITYarts of New York ([cityarts.org](http://cityarts.org))

Martin Luther King Jr. Charter School students ([drkingcharterschool.org](http://drkingcharterschool.org))

## **Fact Sheet for *Days of Hope* Commemoration**

**WHEN:** Friday, August 29 & Saturday, August 30, 2008  
Museum open 9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Special programming from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**WHO:** Alice Wilder, children's television producer (*Super Why!*, *Blue's Clues*) and Think It Ink It

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Publishing founder ([thinkitinkitpublishing.com](http://thinkitinkitpublishing.com))  
Katie Rafferty, prominent local artist and children's book illustrator  
Megan Lambert, Instructor of Children's Literature Programs, The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art ([picturebookart.org](http://picturebookart.org))  
New Orleans Kids Partnership ([americaspromise.org](http://americaspromise.org))  
United Way's Success by 6 ([unitedwaynola.org](http://unitedwaynola.org))  
Virtue Foundation ([virtuefoundation.org](http://virtuefoundation.org))  
CITYarts of New York ([cityarts.org](http://cityarts.org))  
Martin Luther King Jr. Charter School students ([drkingcharterschool.org](http://drkingcharterschool.org))  
Rebirth Brass Band ([rebirthbrassband.com](http://rebirthbrassband.com))

**WHAT: ART PROGRAMS INSPIRED BY WORLD-RENOWNED ERIC CARLE BOOK *THE VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR***

- Crafting colorful butterflies using a variety of art techniques and suspending them in the three-story atrium, creating a dramatic and inspirational display
- Papermaking workshops and collaborative, giant butterfly project

**CREATIVE WRITING AND STORYTELLING PROGRAMS**

- Writer's Circle Workshops led by national television producer, Alice Wilder - Children write their own stories in open-ended, illustrated books designed to help children create their own adventures while working through feelings of loss and recovery. Children will keep their own authored book, created in the Mister Rogers' Neighborhood exhibit.
- The book's illustrator, Katie Rafferty, will autograph copies of the book.
- Children will use a new state-of-the-art computer station to create their own digital stories and share them with the online community. This permanent installation was donated by Virtue Foundation that has provided innovative 21<sup>st</sup> Century digital educational opportunities to LA children since 2005.
- Special story times presented by Megan Lambert of The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art, using The Carle's inquiry-based model The Whole Book Approach.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR**

Luncheon/workshop - Educators, librarians, child care providers and interested public can learn about The Whole Book Approach, an inquiry-based story time model developed by Megan Lambert of The Carle. Free, 90-minute seminars offered on 8/29/08 and 8/30/08.

**MUSICAL PROGRAM**

Enjoy live music throughout the Museum provided by the internationally-renowned New Orleans institution, Rebirth Brass Band. (to be confirmed)

**CHILDREN'S ART EXHIBITIONS**

- Doors of Hope – A gift from the youth of New York City to the youth of New Orleans, these magnificent, hand-painted doors include inspirational messages and images that celebrate nature.

- Memory Boxes and Journals - Created by third graders at MLK Jr. Charter School, these two-foot square boxes, exhibited as pairs, reflect both children's recollections of the Storm and their hopes and dreams for the future. Sixth graders at the same school fashioned Identity Collage Journals, combining art and words to share their personal stories.
- *I Have a Dream: The Lower 9<sup>th</sup>* – This urban planning presentation showcases the work of 7<sup>th</sup> graders at MLK Jr. Charter School engaged in the redevelopment their ninth ward neighborhood through an interdisciplinary project created by the Museum's outreach program, *Play Power*.

**RAFFLE THROUGHOUT THE DAY OF *THE VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR* POSTERS  
AUTOGRAPHED BY WORLD-RENOWNED CHILDREN'S BOOK AUTHOR ERIC CARLE**

**WHERE:** Louisiana Children's Museum, 420 Julia Street, New Orleans