



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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# **The Phoenix Mars Lander lands at The Children's Museum**

April 10, 2008 (West Hartford, CT)...The Children's Museum and new Travelers Science Dome will be celebrating the landing of the Phoenix Mars Lander on May 25, 2008 from 4:30 – 8:00 p.m. The evening will kick off in the Planetarium with a live NASA feed featuring commentary of the landing and first photos from the space craft. Events will also include Mars geology classes, where the young and not-so-young can learn why the search for water is so important, and how the Phoenix Mars Lander will study the Martian surface. A special Mars feature film will wrap up the

evening's festivities, complete with snacks and drinks!

The Phoenix Mars Lander takes its name from an ancient Greek myth about a bird from Arabia that lives for 500 years. As it approaches death, it bursts into flames and a new phoenix rises from the ashes. Just as a new bird rises from the ashes of the old one, the Phoenix Mars Lander has been built from instruments of two previously unsuccessful missions to Mars, the Mars Polar Lander and the Mars Surveyor 2001 Lander.

Launched in August 2007, the Phoenix Mars Mission is the first to take flight in NASA's Scout Program. Now, almost 10 months later, the Phoenix Mars Lander will land on Mars, its mission to study the history of water and to search for organic molecules. Current missions studying Mars include the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter, Mars Exploration Rovers Spirit and Opportunity, and the Mars Odyssey Orbiter. Each of these missions have conducted searches for water and evidence of life. Now that sub-surface water has been found, the Phoenix Mars Lander will go directly to the arctic regions of Mars and begin drilling for ice-rich soil under the surface.

Pre-registration is highly recommended, since the event may sell out. For more information about the evening's events and to learn more about this mission and the planet Mars, please visit The Children's Museum website at

[www.TheChildrensMuseumCT.org](http://www.TheChildrensMuseumCT.org). To register, call 860.231.2830, ext. 44 or [events@thechildrensmuseumct.org](mailto:events@thechildrensmuseumct.org).

The Children's Museum has a long history of providing hands-on learning focused on science based education for younger children and families. One of the state's major attractions, each year it serves nearly 200,000 children and their families. The Children's Museum is also home to the new Travelers Science Dome at the Gengras Planetarium, wildlife and interactive science exhibits, as well as science based outreach programs in the elementary school

system statewide. The Children's Museum offers one of the longest running early childhood education centers in the nation at The Children's Museum Preschool. Additionally, the Museum's Roaring Brook Nature Center in nearby Canton offers natural science and history exhibits and programs, a wildlife sanctuary, nature trails and outdoor gardens. With the recent recommitment of support from the State of Connecticut and the Town of West Hartford, The Children's Museum is poised to begin an exciting new chapter in its 80-year history with plans to relocate and expand at a new facility over the next few years.

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