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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Guests are “Driven by Innovation” at the Connecticut Science Center
New hands-on driving simulator lets users experience the latest in crash avoidance technology

Hartford, CT, June 30, 2015 –Picture this: you’re making your way through downtown Hartford in your car. You know the route well, and you expect to arrive safely at your destination after a few minutes’ drive. Suddenly, traffic has halted in front of you. Then, you notice a heavy fog rolling in just ahead of your car. This might sound like a typical drive, but you’re actually inside the Connecticut Science Center, trying your hand—and all of your senses—at the all-new Driven by Innovation exhibit, presented by The Hartford.

This exciting addition to the Science Center’s permanent exhibits allows guests to get behind the wheel for a virtual driving challenge that incorporates hazards drivers face in the real world. As users drive from The Hartford’s headquarters to the Science Center, they’ll test the newest in crash avoidance technologies, such as lane departure warnings and smart headlights. These technologies will help them navigate inclement weather, objects rolling into the vehicle’s path, and more.

“We’re very excited to add Driven by Innovation to our educational and entertaining Sports Lab exhibit gallery,” said Matt Fleury, Connecticut Science Center President and CEO. “Safe driving involves not only our reflexes, response time, and mental alertness, but an awareness of vehicle technologies that help keep us safe. Experiencing new technologies firsthand helps empower drivers and the younger citizens who will soon be sharing our roads. We’re proud to help communicate this important message to our guests.”

Driven by Innovation’s focus on crash avoidance technologies illustrates a shift from passive to active safety technology. In the past, safety features have been geared toward protecting drivers and passengers during crashes; now, new technology has the potential to prevent accidents altogether. Research by The Hartford Center for Mature Market Excellence® and the MIT Age Lab found that smart headlights, blind spot warnings, reverse monitoring, lane departure warnings, and crash mitigation systems rank among the most likely to enhance driving safety.

“Education is a key focus of The Hartford’s community involvement strategy and we’re pleased to share our expertise in vehicle technology through this creative approach in our hometown,” said Ray Sprague, executive vice president of Personal Lines at The Hartford. “Thanks to the ingenuity of our partnership with the Connecticut Science Center, Driven by Innovation reinforces the benefits of new technologies that help promote safe driving.”

Access to these new interactive exhibits is included with the purchase of General Admission or with a Connecticut Science Center Membership. Kids under 3 are FREE. For information, including pricing and hours, visit CTScienceCenter.org.

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About the Connecticut Science Center The LEED-Gold certified Connecticut Science Center, located in downtown Hartford, sparks creative imagination and an appreciation for science by immersing visitors in fun and educational hands-on, minds-on interactive experiences while maintaining an environmentally conscious presence. Serving 1.8 million people since opening in 2009, the Science Center features more than 165 exhibits in ten galleries and a range of topics, including space and earth sciences, physical sciences, biology, the Connecticut River watershed, alternative energy sources, Connecticut inventors and innovations, a children's gallery, and much more. Other features include four educational labs, a 200-seat 3D digital theater, function room, gift store, and ongoing events for all ages. The Science Center is a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing science education throughout the state of Connecticut and New England, providing learning opportunities for students and adults of all ages, and engaging the community in scientific exploration. The Connecticut Science Center is also the home to the **Joyce D. and Andrew J. Mandell Academy for Teachers**, offering powerful Professional Development for educators. More information: **CTScienceCenter.org** or 860.SCIENCE.

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