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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**EDVENTURE ANNOUNCES THEIR FIRST NEW SATELLITE LOCATION IN HARTSVILLE, SC**

**HARTSVILLE, SC** --- EdVenture announced today plans to open a satellite location in Hartsville, South Carolina in 2018. The project will be the museum's first new satellite location. EdVenture merged with the Children's Museum of South Carolina in Myrtle Beach in March, and plans to open a new location there in 2019.

The Hartsville location will focus on serving families with children age 8 and under with exhibits and programs that promote literacy, art, math and science. City officials have secured a building for the new museum on Carolina Avenue in downtown Hartsville and pledged support for a portion of the satellite location's operating costs. Commitments thus far from the local community total more than \$1 million to support the building's renovation, exhibit design and construction, and underwriting admission discounts for economically fragile families.

The concept of a Hartsville satellite grew out of EdVenture's program offerings in the area. EdVenture included Hartsville High School on its 2016 Chef Jeff Tour, a multi-location motivational tour for middle and high school students throughout the state featuring celebrity Food Network Chef Jeff Henderson, who developed his passion for cooking while a federal inmate, eventually becoming the first African-American Executive Chef at Caesar's Palace on the Las Vegas strip. After the tour, Hartsville officials, community leaders and museum representatives explored other partnership possibilities, and determined that a satellite location was a viable option.

"A Hartsville satellite fits perfectly with our expansion plans," said Karen Coltrane, EdVenture president and CEO. "We are inspired by the warm welcome in Hartsville and look forward to serving children and families throughout the area with a community-based museum they can make a regular part of their lives."

"We believe this will enhance downtown Hartsville," said Mayor Mel Pennington, "Bringing the know-how and experience of one of the nation's largest and best children's museum to our city is a good investment in our children and their futures."

EdVenture's location in Columbia is the largest children's museum in the Southeast. Last year, the facility was visited by more than 200,000 and its after school programs in area schools served more than 500 Midlands area students.

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This summer in Columbia, EdVenture installed its newest permanent exhibit, FLIGHT, funded by NASA and the City of Columbia and featuring a Boeing 757 cockpit protruding from the side of the building, installed by Hood Construction Company.

The Hartsville satellite concept received a big boost from The Byerly Foundation with a leadership grant that will be acknowledged with presenting sponsorship of the facility. “This project fits all three of our priorities which include enhancing education, community development, and quality of life,” explained Dr. Jerome Reyes, The Foundation’s chairman. “We are excited to help bring this facility to our community.”

Other early supporters include Carolina Pines Regional Medical Center, Charles W. Coker and Elizabeth H. Coker Foundation, The Joan S. and Charles W. Coker Foundation, Duke Energy Foundation, First Citizens Foundation, Chuck McDonald, Mary Kendall Bittle, Mary J. Ketchin McDonald Trust, McDonald Brothers, LLC, Suzanne B. McLeod, Sonoco Products Company, SPC Credit Union, and West Oil Company.

A committee co-chaired by Brandy Johnson and Mary Ann Chapman is planning a Ladies Night Out event to benefit the museum on September 28 at Prestwood Country Club. The event is presented by Minnie’s Giftique and Carolina Bank, and Rachel Hodges and MaryWood Beasley are Honorary Co-Chairs. More information is available at [www.edventuregno.com](http://www.edventuregno.com).

“I’ve learned that very few museums have the community impact that EdVenture does,” said Dr. John Dozier, Chief Diversity Officer and Senior Associate Provost for Inclusion at USC and Chair of EdVenture’s Board of Trustee. “And as a Board, our job is to find ways to help the organization both deepen and broaden that impact. With the excitement we are feeling in Hartsville, combined with the experience of serving millions of visitors, a senior management team with nearly 50 years of museum experience, and programs that are nationally recognized, I believe we will make a real difference in the community.”

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#### **About EdVenture**

The mission of EdVenture is to inspire children to experience the joy of learning. EdVenture is a locally-managed, not-for-profit informal educational institution dedicated to lifelong learning through its 92,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor interactive exhibit space and in its educational outreach programs and afterschool programs. The museum has welcomed visitors from all 50 states and 18 foreign countries, creating shared experiences and memories for families learning together. For more information about EdVenture, visit [www.edventure.org](http://www.edventure.org) or call 803-779-3100.