MSI OFFERS VIRTUAL HEART APP IN BEAT WITH AMERICAN HEART MONTH

New Museum of Science and Industry app lets users explore internal, external views of a realistic, beating heart

Chicago, Ill. (Feb. 24, 2012)—In the spirit of American Heart Month, get a heart pumping in a whole new way with the Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago’s (MSI) Virtual Heart app, available now for free in the iTunes App Store.

The Virtual Heart, designed for the iPad, was developed in collaboration with XVIVO, the scientific visualization company that created the computer generated images in the Museum’s 13-foot Giant Heart in YOU! The Experience—a dramatic and unprecedented 15,000-square-foot exhibit at MSI that explores what it means to live a healthy and vital life in the 21st century.

Featuring the same highly realistic visual elements as YOU!’s Giant Heart, the Virtual Heart app invites users to explore multiple views of the human heart: an external view and three internal views that realistically depict the heart’s valves, blood flow and electrical system. Offering an internal journey into the human heart, users can choose to turn on labels that identify different areas of the heart’s structure and can slide their finger up and down the screen to change the view of the heart from external to internal. Red and blue color streams visualize blood flow, and flashes of light highlight the heart’s electrical system.

The Virtual Heart is not static, but constantly beating—just like a real human heart. Users can choose to have the heart beat as low as 30 beats per minute or as high as 180 beats per minute by pressing on either the up or down arrows located in the upper, right-hand corner of the screen. As you manipulate the app, labels and facts about the heart and the cardiovascular system are available to increase learning.

“The Virtual Heart app is a fun and easy tool for teachers, parents and kids,” said Steven Beasley, MSI’s director of digital media. “Today, apps like this are great for reaching new audiences outside the Museum’s walls and creating one-of-a-kind science learning experiences that can happen anytime.”

The Giant Heart at MSI’s YOU! The Experience exhibit was created in collaboration with the following partners: Thinc Design, XVIVO Scientific Animation, BBI Engineering, Seventh Sense, Maltbie, and Milgo-Bufkin.

NOTE: Access the Virtual Heart app at the iTunes App Store here: msichicago.org/virtualheart. Screen shots of the Virtual Heart app are available at msichicago.org/press.

About YOU! The Experience

YOU! The Experience, a permanent exhibit at the Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago, is a celebration of the body, mind and spirit that explores our personal health and well-being. YOU! showcases the extraordinary workings of our bodies, the choices we make, the environment in which we live, and the role of medical technology. The centerpiece of the exhibit is the 13-foot tall virtual Giant Heart, which guests can make beat in time with their own. This exhibit is included in Museum general admission.
About XVIVO
XVIVO’s internationally-acclaimed animation studio creates compelling visual productions for pharmaceutical, medical device and biotech companies, medical advertising and medical education agencies, educational institutions, associations, conferences, museums, publishers and broadcast companies. With their in-house medical expertise, XVIVO is able to translate complex medical information into productions that are both scientifically accurate and visually compelling. From script-to-screen, XVIVO provides custom education and communication services featured in The New York Times and WIRED, at TEDMED 2011, and as a partner with prestigious institutions like Harvard University and Stanford University.

The Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago (MSI) offers thousands of fun and interactive exhibits and one-of-a-kind, world-class experiences to inspire the inventive genius in everyone. Through its Center for the Advancement of Science Education (CASE), MSI also aspires to a larger vision: to inspire and motivate children to achieve their full potential in science, technology, medicine and engineering. Come visit and find your inspiration! MSI is open every day except Christmas day; regular hours are 9:30 to 4 p.m. every day. The Museum is supported in part through the generosity of the people of Chicago through the Chicago Park District. For more information, find MSI online at msichicago.org or call (773) 684-1414 or (800) GO-TO-MSI outside of the Chicago area.

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