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da Vinci Surgical Robot Demonstration Highlights Grand Rapids Public Museum's December 12th Inventions & Innovations Day

Grand Rapids, MI (October 14, 2009) – The Grand Rapids Public Museum's hands-on exhibit ***Leonardo da Vinci: Machines in Motion*** continues to inspire future generations of geniuses who come to explore the machines and absorb the concepts behind them. Another great learning opportunity comes Saturday, December 12, 2009 when Museum guests will also be able to see – and “test drive” – the remarkable da Vinci Surgical System™ robot.

With support from Saint Mary's Health Care and Intuitive Surgical, the surgical robot will be on display in the Museum's Galleria from 9 am – 3 pm December 12. Guests can sit at the console and manipulate the robot's arms just as a doctor in an operating room would. Several Saint Mary's Health Care surgeons will be on hand to answer questions, including Gynecologic Oncologist Kevin Brader MD; Urogynecologists Jason Bennett MD and Michael Bennett MD; Thoracic Oncologist Bruce Shabahang MD; Ob/Gyns Sejal Bennett MD, Kirsten Anderson MD and Stephen Dalm D.O., and Urologists Paul Rodriguez MD and John Lobo, MD

“The da Vinci Surgical System™ robot is one of the newest technologies to aid doctors and help patients recover faster,” says Dianna Darling of Intuitive Surgical. “The surgeons at Saint Mary's direct the movements of the 4-armed robot from a remote console while looking into the patient's body through 3-D eyepieces.”

Adds Micki Benz, Saint Mary's Vice President of Development, “The da Vinci Surgical System provides our surgeons with a natural dexterity and a precise range of motion while operating. Because incisions are smaller when using the robot, the patient is usually able to recover faster.” In fact, Saint Mary's Health Care boasts the longest and most successful track record in the west Michigan area using this technology. It is expected their surgical staff will complete their 1,000th procedure before the year ends.

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Inventions & Innovations Day at the Museum will also showcase local elementary, middle and high school student entries in the Public Museum's "***Doing da Vinci***" ***Build a Machine Competition***, which was announced in September. The goal of this contest is to showcase students' ingenuity and creativity. Entrants were asked to submit a two-dimensional drawing of their idea or a three-dimensional functioning model. Final judging will be done by GVSU engineering and Kendall College art students. Winners will receive family Museum passes and a class field trip, and will have the opportunity to display their work at the Grand Rapids Public Library's main branch.

The ***Leonardo da Vinci: Machines in Motion*** exhibit, open through January 3, 2010, brings to west Michigan the largest display of full-size machine replicas constructed according to da Vinci's famous codices.

The Public Museum is a collector of treasures, a motivator and resource for life-long learning, and a community partner in the pursuit of insight and understanding. The Museum is open Tues 9 – 8; Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri and Sat 9 – 5; and Sunday Noon – 5. Members are free. Regular admission to the special exhibit for Non-members is \$4 in addition to general Museum admission (Adults \$8, Seniors \$7, and Children and Students \$3. Kids under 3 are free.) For more information call 616.456.3977 or visit www.grmuseum.org.

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