



Science Center Leaders to Attend ASTC Annual Conference in Louisville

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WASHINGTON, D.C. — More than 1,500 science center professionals from all over the world will convene in Louisville, Kentucky, October 28–31 for the 2006 ASTC Annual Conference. ASTC 2006, "Appropriate Growth: Sustaining Institutional Advancement," will be hosted by the Louisville Science Center and held at the Kentucky International Convention Center and the Marriott Downtown Louisville.

Serving more than 96 million people worldwide every year, science centers are resources for informal science learning, serving families, schoolchildren, teachers, and citizens. They are places where people of all ages, cultures, and educational levels can learn at their own pace, engage their curiosity, and use all of their senses to explore science and technology.

Highlights of this year's Annual Conference include over 140 conference sessions—featuring topics like global warming, mathematics, nanotechnology, and evolution—and an exhibit hall featuring more than 145 different exhibitors and more than 175 booths. Featured speakers include Distinguished Lecturer E.O. Wilson, a world-renowned scientist and longtime Harvard University professor; Keynote Speaker Ron Crouch, a sociologist and demographer and the director of the Kentucky State Data Center; and Keynote Speaker Betty Bayé, a television producer, motivational speaker, and nationally syndicated columnist for Louisville's *Courier-Journal*.

This year's host, the Louisville Science Center, has been completely renewed and revitalized over the past 10 years. The museum now features 40,000 square feet of new hands-on exhibits, including THE WORLD WE CREATE, which celebrates creative thinking; THE WORLD WITHIN US, which explores the human body; and THE WORLD AROUND US, which focuses on environmental issues. Other areas include the Discovery Gallery, featuring items from the science center's collection; *Kidzone*, a special area for children age 7 and under; a temporary exhibitions gallery; and the recently renovated IMAX Theatre. Designated the State Science Center of Kentucky, the Louisville Science Center serves over 500,000 persons each year.

The Association of Science-Technology Centers is an organization of more than 430 science centers and museums in 42 countries dedicated to furthering the public understanding of science among increasingly diverse audiences. ASTC encourages excellence and innovation in informal science learning by serving and linking its members worldwide and advancing their common goals. ASTC provides professional development for the science center field, promotes best practices, supports effective communication, strengthens the position of science centers within the community at large, and fosters the creation of successful partnerships and collaborations. Visit www.astc.org to learn more about ASTC and to find a science center near you.

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