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Visit Baton Rouge Partners with LASM to Light Museum Through March 2020

BATON ROUGE - Just in time for the holidays, the Louisiana Art & Science Museum has had festive lights installed on its historic building thanks to a partnership with Visit Baton Rouge.

“Visit Baton Rouge is excited to partner with LASM on this exciting project,” said Paul Arrigo, President & CEO of Visit Baton Rouge. “The lighting display will serve as a great enhancement of the downtown area during the holiday season and New Years’ Eve celebrations. We are especially excited that the display will remain in place through March when Baton Rouge will host the Travel South Domestic Showcase, which will bring in travel and tourism professionals from around the country to Baton Rouge.”

The lights came on early in the first week of December and will remain through March 2020. LASM’s leadership has already noticed positive impacts since the project’s completion.

“Our building is very dark at night and appears closed, even when we’re open for after-hours events and programs,” said Serena Pandos, President & Executive Director of LASM. “This project was completed just in time for Downtown’s annual Festival of Lights celebration, where LASM experienced a 200% increase in attendance over last year’s numbers and collected many donations for Toys for Tots as a result. While our marketing efforts for this event were strong, I believe that being visible at night greatly helped to inspire festival-goers to visit their Art & Science Museum. As we look beyond the holidays, we hope to use this generosity as a springboard toward our goal of lighting the building year-round for the benefit of our stakeholders and all of Downtown Baton Rouge.”

“LASM has been providing a vital cultural service to Baton Rouge, the state of Louisiana, and beyond since 1960. Enriching the lives of over 98,000 school program participants from 41 Louisiana parishes and 5 Mississippi counties in 2018, LASM’s educational impact cannot be understated,” continued Pandos. “Museums contribute $562 million in gross value added to Louisiana’s economy; nationally, museums support more than 726,000 American jobs and contribute $50 billion to the US economy each year, according to the American Alliance of Museums. In 2018, 171,000 program participants experienced our Museum. Based on zip code analysis, about 40% of our general public visitors live in East Baton Rouge Parish, 42% live in other parishes in Louisiana, and 18% live out-of-state.”
Based on the preliminary results from its partnership with Visit Baton Rouge, the Museum feels that attaining permanent lighting for its façade will amplify its economic and cultural impact on Downtown Baton Rouge and beyond.

“Lighting the Museum raises not only our curb appeal within our community but also our visibility on both sides of the river to attract tourism,” said Pandos. “With more than 1,000 rooms available downtown alone and 5 high-caliber museums within walking distance of those hotels and each other, we have a golden opportunity to advance our economic development position through increased tourism—adding reasons to visit Baton Rouge, stay the night, and even consider Baton Rouge an attractive place to live, work, and play. Our greatest hope is that the current lights, courtesy of our friends at Visit Baton Rouge, will inspire support for more permanent architectural lighting for the long haul. So far, attendance records and tourism counts are proving that lighting is increasing attendance.”

“We hope that individuals and corporations in the community who want to help increase our quality of life, as well as our educational, cultural, and economic development, will consider a tax-deductible end of year charitable donation to help us permanently light the Museum in 2020,” Pandos continued. “We are pleased to share that we offer a new secure online donation portal to accept any gifts, large or small; any amount goes a long way!”

For more information on the Louisiana Art & Science Museum and its programs, visit lasm.org. To contribute to LASM’s Light the Museum campaign, visit lasm.org/give. To find out more about Visit Baton Rouge and its efforts to support organizations and businesses in the Capital City, visit visitbatonrouge.com.

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**Images:** The Louisiana Art & Science Museum’s historic building will be lit up through March 2020 thanks to support from Visit Baton Rouge. Nighttime image of recent lights installed, courtesy of Visit Baton Rouge; photo courtesy of LASM Facilities Manager, Will Barker.

**About the Louisiana Art & Science Museum**

A nonprofit organization housed on the banks of the Mississippi River in downtown Baton Rouge, the Louisiana Art & Science Museum enhances the understanding and appreciation of art and science for general audiences and students by presenting unique, educational and entertaining experiences that encourage discovery, inspire creativity, and foster the pursuit of knowledge. More information about the Art & Science Museum is available at lasm.org.

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