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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**LASM Reopens to the Public with New Operating Hours
Wednesday–Saturday, 10 AM–2 PM**

BATON ROUGE, LA –The Louisiana Art & Science Museum (LASM) at 100 S. River Road in downtown Baton Rouge has reopened to the public with new hours of operation from Wednesday–Saturday, 10 AM–2 PM. In-line with government regulations, spaces will operate at up to 50% capacity; masks are required and will be provided free-of-charge to visitors who arrive without them. The children’s hands-on galleries Discovery Depot and Science Station will remain closed until at least Phase 3.

“We are thrilled to re-open again with more consistent hours,” stated Serena Pandos, LASM’s President & Executive Director. “In April, we responded quickly by launching a free access digital learning platform to engage isolated and quarantined audiences of all ages and reduce learning regress in schoolchildren. In May, we began incrementally re-opening for special events in the Irene W. Pennington Planetarium. In June, we began providing virtual summer camps. Now, continuing to align with Center for Disease Control (CDC) protocols and complying with government orders, we can provide a more consistent public service schedule while ensuring a safe environment for staff and guests. Our hope is that taking these steps will enable us to safely reopen for the benefit of the whole community.”

The LASM has enacted a wide range of new protocols and procedures for both its staff and visitors, including sanitizing stations, personal protective equipment, signage, and closing the hands-on galleries Discovery Depot and Science Station. Visitors are temperature screened at the entrance to the Museum with no-touch thermometers. Social distancing guidelines are encouraged by signage throughout LASM’s 75,000 square foot building and groups are seated at least six feet apart in the Irene W. Pennington Planetarium. Thorough cleaning and sanitization of the building occurs frequently.

“We are grateful to our community for supporting the LASM through this crisis,” continued Ms. Pandos. “Museum industry surveys indicate that approximately one-third of the nation’s museums may close permanently as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, but thanks to our local government, museum members, friends, board and advisory council, along with our federal

CARES Act relief funding award, we will be able to sustain and expand services during and after the pandemic. Museums are an important resource for community culture, education, and economic development. We feel exceedingly grateful to be able to respond proactively and contribute positively to our community's recovery. We remain committed to doing our part to serve the community and prevent the spread of infection. If you are unable to join us physically, the LASM is always open online for at-home art and science experiences at our nationally-recognized digital learning platform hosted at virtual-lasm.org."

Operating hours are subject to change at this time. Patrons will be notified on lasm.org, on LASM's Facebook (@theLASM) and Instagram (@lasmbr) accounts, and through email newsletter if there is a change to operating hours. Sign up for emails at tinyurl.com/LASMnewsletter to stay up-to-date on LASM's programming.

Regular admission fees (\$12 for adults, \$10 for children ages 3-12 and senior adults 65+, and free for members) apply. Active duty military members, first responders, and their families receive free admission with ID as part of the Blue Star Museums program, sponsored by Special Risk Insurance, Inc. VFIS of Mississippi/Louisiana. Admission is paid at the door. The Museum Store is open for business during operating hours.

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Image: The Louisiana Art & Science Museum. Photo courtesy of Jay Lamm.

About the Louisiana Art & Science Museum

Housed on the banks of the Mississippi River in a historic railway station in downtown Baton Rouge, the Louisiana Art & Science Museum believes that art and science shape each other, our lives, and the world. The Museum is open for modified operating hours in response to the COVID-19 pandemic Wednesday–Saturday, 10 AM – 2 PM. Active duty military members, first responders, and their families receive free admission with ID as part of the Blue Star Museums program, sponsored by Special Risk Insurance, Inc. VFIS of Mississippi/Louisiana.

The Museum, founded in 1962 and accredited by the American of Museums since 1972, is home to the Irene W. Pennington Planetarium, the largest and most advanced planetarium in Louisiana and one of the largest in the southeastern United States; a permanent collection including over 4,000 objects; one of the only permanent ancient Egypt galleries in the southeastern United States, housing an authentic, Ptolemaic-era mummy; and displays changing art exhibitions of local and international acclaim. Access to the Museum's digital learning platform for at-home art and science experiences is available at virtual-lasm.org.

A 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, the Museum relies on the support of donations to operate; support the Museum's COVID-19 relief fund at lasm.org. Stay in touch at lasm.org and on social media!