

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FIVE PHANATIC-AL PHILADELPHIANS HONORED WITH ‘GREAT FRIEND TO KIDS AWARDS’ **Event raises more than \$200,000 for Please Touch Museum**

PHILADELPHIA, PA — He is a rare species of bird said to have come to Philadelphia from the Galapagos Islands. He is 6 feet, 6 inches tall, with size 20 shoes and the personality of an 8-year-old child. He appears at 81 home games each year for the Philadelphia Phillies, bringing smiles to the faces of young fans and taunting opponents like former Dodgers manager Tommy Lasorda.

He is the Phillie Phanatic, and his 30-plus years as Phillies mascot earned him a 2009 Great Friend to Kids Award from Please Touch Museum, the Children’s Museum of Philadelphia. The Phanatic was one of five local figures honored at the 14th Annual Great Friend to Kids Awards, honoring individuals and organizations making outstanding contributions to enriching the lives of children. The awards were presented at a ceremony at the museum’s home, Memorial Hall in Fairmount Park, on Thursday, November 19 from 6:30–10:00 p.m. The event, attended by more than 500 guests, raised \$205,000 to support Please Touch Museum’s exhibits and programs for young children and their families.

“The five individuals and organizations recognized this year are truly Great Friends to Kids,” said Nancy Kolb, President and CEO of Please Touch Museum. “They have inspired, served, educated, entertained and enriched the lives of children, and by recognizing their efforts we hope to inspire others to make similar efforts in the community.”

Since debuting in 1978, the Phillie Phanatic has become a Philadelphia icon. Whether he’s dancing in front of the opposing team’s dugout, shooting hot dogs or practicing his baseball skills, the Phanatic is a constant source of pleasure and amusement for children. The Phanatic has supported numerous local and national charities over the years and has brought smiles to the faces of children and adults who need it most. According to the Phillies, this feathery green creature has become the dean of all professional sports mascots, having been named the top mascot in all of sports by Forbes.com and “best mascot ever” by Sports Illustrated.

Joining the Phanatic in being honored on Nov. 19 was **Anne Hamilton**, who received a Lifetime Achievement Award for her work with children in the Philadelphia area; **Shire Pharmaceuticals** of Wayne, PA, for its support in keeping Philadelphia’s swimming pools open in 2009 and its support of the Cradles to Crayons program; **Cordella Hauser**, Youth Director of Grace Temple Church in Philadelphia; and **Tom Toscani**, President of the Berwyn Paoli Little League Program and champion of the “Field of Dreams” project.

Anne Hamilton, Lifetime Achievement Award

Mrs. Hamilton will receive a *Lifetime Achievement Award* for the many contributions she has made in support of children. Mrs. Hamilton has served on the museum’s Board of Directors for over 20 years and is active in several organizations, including: The Franklin Institute, The Philadelphia Antique Show, Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Steppingstones, American Heart Association, Thomas Jefferson Hospital’s Kimmel Cancer Center, The Philadelphia Zoo and Dragon Fly Forest. She also devotes her time when she is out of the Philadelphia region to causes in Newport, Florida, Colorado and Antigua.

Shire Pharmaceuticals

Shire Pharmaceuticals of Wayne, PA has made an immense impact on the youth community by bringing media attention to and supporting major issues our youth face. In September 2008, Shire facilitated a region-wide collection called “The Big Give” held in conjunction with Tredyffrin Township’s Community Day, drives were set up at local churches, synagogues,

athletic leagues, and neighborhood centers to collect clothes, shoes, toys, games and books for the Cradles to Crayons program. Also in 2008, Shire increased their contribution to the City by making a \$100,000 commitment to the Department of Recreation to support the opening of city swimming pools in Summer 2009. Additionally, Shire sponsored a day of free play at Please Touch Museum this April where nearly 1,700 children under 12 years of age attended for free.

Cordella Hauser

Youth Director, Grace Temple Church

Ms. Cordella Hauser was raised and educated in Philadelphia and has worked for Grace Temple Church for over 35 years as their National Church Mother, Youth Coordinator, Coordinator for Young People Willing Workers, manager of the Youth Choir, the church liaison with the Philadelphia Food Bank through Philabundance, and the Director of Summer Vacation Bible School. In 1989, she opened her own nursery in the church that, despite its daycare-nature, implemented a curriculum in math, science, English, history, music, art, and cooking. Ms Hauser is known to her community as a teacher, a preacher, a licensed Child Development Associate, an inspiration to kids of all races and ages, a mentor, a role model, a tutor, and someone who is completely dedicated to the health, safety, education, and nurturing of children of all backgrounds.

Tom Toscani

Lawyer and Volunteer Extraordinaire

Tom Toscani is a coach, mentor, energetic worker and volunteer who has been the driving force and consummate leader of numerous local associations in his community. As President of the Berwyn Paoli Little League Program, Tom campaigned and successfully partnered with Philadelphia Electric to develop land for his "Field of Dreams" complex – a response to lack of playing space for kids in the league. Under his leadership, a magnificent facility was born that is used regularly by hundreds of children, from tee ball to high school. Tom is also the host of "Challenger Day," an annual event featuring baseball games and activities for children with special needs, run by volunteers of all ages. Tom also chairs many boards, including the Waynesborough Country Club, Easttown Township Park and Recreation Board, and Main Line Chamber of Commerce.

Each of the winners was presented with a special award designed by Philadelphia artist Leo Sewell, creator of Please Touch Museum's own "Artie the Elephant" and the Statue of Liberty Arm & Torch created entirely from discarded toys.

Presenting sponsors of the 14th Annual Great Friend to Kids Awards were Mr. and Mrs. John S. Middleton. Media sponsors were WPVI-TV, The Philadelphia Inquirer, Philadelphia Daily News, and philly.com.

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Please Touch Museum® at Memorial Hall, Fairmount Park is dedicated to enriching the lives of children by providing learning opportunities through play. Recognized locally and nationally as one of the best children's museums, Please Touch is open Mondays through Saturdays from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Sundays 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. Admission is \$15 for adults and children age one and over. Children under one are free. For more information, please call 215-581-3181, or visit www.pleasetouchmuseum.org.