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NEWS RELEASE

Bakken Museum & Minneapolis Public Schools Honored with Tekne Innovative Collaboration of the Year Award

MINNEAPOLIS, October 31—The Bakken Museum and the Minneapolis Public Schools were honored by the Minnesota High Tech Association (MHTA) with the 2008 Tekne Award for the Innovative Collaboration of the Year. The Tekne Awards recognize Minnesota businesses and individuals who show superior technology innovation and leadership, and winners were announced at a ceremony held at the Minneapolis Convention Center on October 30.

“We are so proud to be recognized for such an outstanding program,” said Kelly Finnerty, Deputy Director for Programs for The Bakken Museum. “The award acknowledges The Bakken’s School Partnership Program with the Minneapolis Public Schools, a groundbreaking program that engages students typically underserved in science—girls, students of poverty and students of color.” Schools in the program have populations of at least 50% students qualifying for free or reduced lunch (an indicator of poverty) and at least 70% students of color. In the 2007-2008 school year, 76% of the nearly 1,000 participants in the Bakken Museum’s School Partnership program were students of poverty.

The Bakken’s School Partnership Program, launched in 2003, has been successful in helping students to develop improved science skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviors through creative classroom lessons delivered by Bakken educators, teacher professional development and family programs.

“My relationship with this Bakken partnership has allowed me to see things differently,” said Joe Alfano, Minneapolis Public Schools Elementary Science Specialist, of the unique partnership. “I now approach organizations who wish to partner with our science department differently. We are in a new era of public education. This partnership we’ve established represents where we need to be going.”

The School Partnership Program is made possible in part with major funding from The Bush Foundation. “A renewed multi-year grant from the Bush Foundation will allow The Bakken to reach out to all fourth grade students and teachers in the Minneapolis Public Schools through 2011,” said Beth Murphy, Director of Special Projects at The Bakken Museum. “The Bakken is looking forward to providing high quality science programming for students and teachers through this ongoing partnership.”

About The Bakken Museum

The Bakken Museum was founded in 1975 by Earl Bakken, a Minneapolis native who discovered his passion for science at an early age. He was eight years old when he saw the film *Frankenstein* at a local theater, and watched in amazement as Dr. Frankenstein used science and electricity to bring the monster to life. The movie inspired him to conduct his own experiments with electricity in the basement workshop of his childhood home. Bakken went on to study electrical engineering at the University of Minnesota and in 1949, cofounded Medtronic with his brother-in-law. In 1957, he developed the first wearable, external, battery-powered pacemaker.

As he was becoming a pioneer in the medical device industry, Bakken also began collecting early medical equipment and books on therapeutic uses of electricity. The collections were housed at Medtronic and grew to become the world's only library and museum devoted primarily to medical electricity. The *West Winds* mansion was acquired in 1976 and the collections were moved there a few years later. They now number approximately 11,000 books, journals and manuscripts, and 2,000 historic scientific and medical instruments. Researchers from around the world visit to study the collections.

Visitors to The Bakken Museum enjoy dozens of exhibits that bring together artifacts from the collections and interactive experiences, while providing learners of every age the opportunity to explore the history and nature of electricity and magnetism. The museum's educational programs inspire kids of all ages to discover the passion of invention.

The Bakken Museum is at the corner of West Calhoun Parkway and 36th Street on the west shore of Lake Calhoun. Free parking is available in The Bakken's lot. For more information, visit www.TheBakken.org or call 612-926-3878.

About Minnesota High Tech Association (MHTA)

The Minnesota High Tech Association (MHTA) accelerates the growth, sustainability and global competitiveness of Minnesota's technology-based economy through public policy advocacy, member collaboration and education, and community outreach. MHTA is the only membership organization that represents Minnesota's entire technology-based economy. MHTA members include organizations of every size—involved in virtually every aspect of technology creation, production, application and education in Minnesota. MHTA works in partnership with AeA, which represents Minnesota's technology organizations nationally. Find out more online at www.mhta.org.

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