

NEWS ANNOUNCEMENT

For Immediate Release

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Global Connections

The giant globe hanging in the entrance of ECHO at the Leahy Center for Lake Champlain highlights notable lakes of the world linked by international cooperation and goodwill. The 7-foot, aluminum wire framed globe, “Global Connections,” slowly spinning overhead, introduces visitors to the Lake Champlain Basin as a global partner in the preservation and protection of the world’s freshwater resources.

Lakes on the globe have been connected through LakeNet, an international organization that gives people and organizations around the world the opportunity to share information, experience and successful strategies for conservation and sustainable development. The global network currently serves more than 800 lakes in 80 countries.

Lake Champlain is, in fact, “sister lake” to Lake Toba in Indonesia and to Lake Ohrid in Macedonia/Albania. At the “Global Connections” exhibit on the second floor mezzanine, visitors will have a closer look at the locations of these lakes, and other lakes of the world, and learn more about LakeNet programs.

“It was a major revelation to discover that even though Lake Champlain and its sister lakes are very different in terms of socio-economic, political and physical characteristics—one an Indonesian crater lake near the equator, another an ancient lake in the Balkans—many of the challenges we face to protect these lakes are the same,” says Lisa Borre, director of LakeNet and a participant in the Lake Champlain Sister Lakes program. The grassroots beginnings of LakeNet can be traced back to early interest in Lake Champlain. Borre, who graduated from the University of Vermont, co-founded LakeNet in 1997.

“Global Connections” was developed by Amaze Design, Inc., Boston-based exhibit designers, who have developed the ECHO experience to interpret the ecology, culture, history and opportunities for stewardship in the Lake Champlain Basin. Amaze Design exhibits include the Awesome Forces Theater, the walk-in replica of the General Butler shipwreck, water-play space, and tide pool touch tank. The Amaze Design team has created award-winning museums, aquariums, visitor centers and zoos throughout Europe,

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Asia and the United States. It brings more than 35 years of experience in master planning, exhibition design, interactive installations, and 2D and 3D design to the project.

“Global Connections” has been underwritten by the generous contribution of Debra Shoenberg of Shoenberg & Associates of Burlington, attorneys at law.

ECHO at the Leahy Center for Lake Champlain is dedicated to teaching visitors about the ecology, history, culture and opportunities for community and stewardship of the Basin. It also recognizes Senator Patrick Leahy for his longstanding commitment to this project and the stewardship of Lake Champlain and its watershed. ECHO will bring more than 100,000 visitors of all ages to the Burlington waterfront every year. Encompassing nearly 30,000 square feet, the new lake aquarium, science center and community resource will present the Basin and Lake through 12,000 gallons of live animal aquariums, 2200 animal ambassadors, surrounded by nearly 100 hands-on interactive exhibits in a setting of spectacular views of Lake Champlain.

For additional information please write to ECHO at the Leahy Center for Lake Champlain, One College Street, Burlington, VT 05401, or telephone 802-864-1848.

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