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Crayola Brings Color and Creativity to Orlando with “Crayola Experience”

70,000 sq.ft. creative and colorful family attraction to open summer 2015

Orlando, FL – One of the world’s most loved brands is bringing its SunGlow to the Sunshine State.

Crayola announced today that it will open a new Crayola Experience, a colorful family attraction, in the heart of Florida’s top family destination: Orlando. The new location is slated to open Summer 2015 in The Florida Mall and will feature 25 hands-on attractions that offer hours of creative fun. At Crayola Experience, every child’s creation is wonderfully unique – just like them!

Although best known for its iconic crayons and markers, the 111-year-old company now has more than 1,500 proprietary products and technologies that have changed the way kids play.

“Ours has always been a culture of innovation,” Crayola CEO Mike Perry said. “This next adventure is yet another dynamic way we’re advancing our mission of helping parents and teachers raise creatively alive children and creating some colorful family memories in the process.”

“This move is important to our evolution, vision and strategy. It’s a beautiful manifestation of what our brand represents,” Perry said.

This imaginative, larger-than-life concept wasn’t created over night. In 1996, Crayola opened a visitors’ center in Easton, Pa. Primarily founded as a tool to help revitalize the city’s downtown – Crayola’s hometown – The Crayola Factory featured one floor of interactive activities, as well as some arts and crafts.

“The Factory,” as it was affectionately known, remained for many years, until Perry and his team took a deeper look. There was more magic there than met the eye. And so it was decided: The #1 brand loved by moms was going to dip its paint brush into the attractions industry.

Inspired by the company’s mission and products, the team re-imagined what a state-of-the-art Crayola attraction should look like, Crayola Vice President of Corporate Strategy and Development Victoria Lozano said. The facility was completely redesigned in 2013 and re-opened in May with 25 all-new, hands-on attractions throughout four colorful floors.

“We believe creativity is an essential skill for kids. It can be taught, should be nurtured, but most importantly must be experienced,” Lozano said.

And that experience will be uniquely Crayola. Many of the attractions feature proprietary technologies, designs and activities that allow children and families to experience the magic of Crayola color in ways they never have before.

“And where better to do that than in one of the nation’s top family destinations?” Lozano said.

“Crayola Experience is a natural fit for The Florida Mall and our strong family and tourist customer base,” said Brian Hanson, general manager of The Florida Mall, a Simon center. “We remain focused on elevating our shopper's experience and are thrilled to welcome this dynamic destination to the community.”

At Crayola Experience Orlando, families will enjoy many of the brand’s signature attractions – such as “Wrap it Up!” where you can name and wrap an authentic Crayola crayon and “Be a Star,” where you can star in your very own coloring page – as well as some exciting new attractions that will debut in Orlando. The attraction also will have a retail component where guests will discover hundreds of unique Crayola products and souvenirs only found at Crayola Experience.

“So many people have a special relationship with our brand because of what we represent. How many people, for example, have memories of their first box of 64?” Perry said. “As we continue to evolve as a company, we see Crayola Experience as a way that we can continue to share in the creation of colorful memories and have a special place in their hearts moving forward.”

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To learn more about Crayola Experience or to schedule an interview with someone from the Crayola team, please contact Kelly-Anne Suarez at 610-559-6654 or by email at krohrbach@crayola.com. Visual media and B-Roll footage available for download at www.crayolaexperience.com/pressroom. For tickets and info, go to www.crayolaexperience.com

About Crayola Experience: Discover the magic of color at Crayola’s premier and one-of-a-kind family attraction Crayola Experience! Twenty five hands-on attractions throughout four colorful floors await families in Easton, Pa. — the birthplace of Crayola crayons. Bigger, brighter and bolder than ever, the colorful adventures of Crayola Experience help kids and adults alike explore art and technology, express their creativity and experience color in a whole new way. Featuring new live entertainment! Now with a new, exciting location slated to open in The Florida Mall in Orlando Summer of 2015! To learn more, visit www.crayolaexperience.com or join the conversation at www.facebook.com/crayolaexperience

About Crayola: Crayola LLC, based in Easton, Pa., and a subsidiary of Hallmark Cards, Incorporated, is the worldwide leader in children's creative expression products. Known for the iconic Crayola crayon first introduced in 1903, the Crayola brand has grown into a portfolio of innovative art tools, crafting activities and creativity toys that offer children innovative new ways to use color to create everything imaginable. Consumers can find the wide array of Crayola products in the "Crayola Aisle" at all major retailers. For more information visit www.crayola.com or join the conversation at www.facebook.com/crayola.

About Mike Perry: Mike Perry is president and chief executive officer of Crayola LLC, a Hallmark subsidiary based in Easton, Pa. He also serves as a corporate officer for Hallmark Cards, Inc. Prior to joining Crayola, Perry served as vice president of new concept commercialization at Hallmark. He was promoted to his current position with Crayola and named a corporate officer in January 2009. During his tenure, Crayola implemented several environmental sustainability initiatives, including a 20-acre solar farm that supplies enough energy to create 1 billion crayons and 500 million markers each year. Crayola has grown from primarily back-to-school sales to an everyday business that includes key spring items and award-winning holiday toys. Perry is passionate about helping parents and educators raise creatively-alive children. Perry earned a bachelor's degree in finance from the University of Missouri – Kansas City.

About Victoria Lozano: Victoria Lozano is currently Vice President of Corporate Strategy and Development at Crayola LLC. In her role, she is responsible for leading Crayola's efforts in branded attraction and retail design and development, focusing on bringing Crayola's mission to life in experiential and engaging ways. Prior to this, she was Vice President of Marketing at Crayola. Victoria's academic background includes a Masters of Business Administration degree from New York University with a specialization in Marketing and Finance, and a Bachelor of Science degree from New York University with focus in Marketing and Classical Studies (summa cum laude). She serves on the Board of Directors for two organizations: The American Red Cross of the Greater Lehigh Valley and Discover Lehigh Valley.

About The Florida Mall: The Florida Mall is Central Florida's largest and most dynamic shopping center. This international, family-friendly shopping destination welcomes more than 20 million visitors per year and spans nearly 1.8 million square feet. Shoppers enjoy more than 250 fine stores and restaurants, including many exclusive to Central Florida, such as a Zara flagship store, The Disney Store, and one of only four worldwide M&M's World stores. At The Florida Mall, Dillard's, JCPenney, Macy's, and Sears, complement fashion-forward concepts such as Michael Kors, H&M, A/X Armani Exchange and XXI Forever. Visitors can look forward to American Girl's first Orlando store on property Fall of 2014 and a spectacular new Dining Pavilion in the spring 2015 that promises more dining choices and health conscious options. Located minutes from the Orlando International Airport and Walt Disney World Resort, the mall offers hotel accommodations and a conference center on property, as well as two Guest Services locations and valet parking for customer convenience. The shopping center is open Monday - Saturday, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Sunday, Noon to 8 p.m. For additional information, contact the mall management office at (407) 851-7234 or visit www.shopfloridamall.com.