

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**The PhET Interactive Simulations project  
at the University of Colorado Boulder named a  
2011 Tech Awards Laureate By The Tech Museum**

*PhET Interactive Simulations is one of 15 Innovators From Around the World Recognized for  
Applying Technology to Benefit Humanity*

(San Jose, California and Boulder, Colorado) Sept. 15, 2011 – The **PhET Interactive Simulations project at the University of Colorado Boulder** was today named as a laureate of The Tech Awards 2011, one of 15 global innovators recognized each year for applying technology to benefit humanity and spark global change. The Tech Awards, a signature program of The Tech Museum, and presented by Applied Materials, Inc., selected the PhET project from among hundreds of nominations representing 54 countries.

The PhET project – one of three laureates selected for the Microsoft Education Award – provides fun, interactive, research-based simulations of science and math concepts. These simulations are available for free at the PhET website: <http://phet.colorado.edu>.

Since 2002, PhET has created over 100 simulations for teaching and learning science and math. Going beyond traditional educational resources, PhET simulations offer an intuitive, game-like environment where students can learn through scientist-like experimentation and exploration, where dynamic visual representations make the invisible visible, and where science ideas are connected to real-world phenomena.

These simulations are widely used by K12 and university students and instructors worldwide. With an easy translation process, PhET simulations have been translated into 64 languages by volunteer teachers and scientists throughout the world, allowing students to access these high-quality science teaching and learning tools in their native language. In 2010, the simulations were used more than 15 million times, reaching over 200 countries and territories around the world. Use is expected to grow to more than 22 million in 2011.

The PhET project was founded by Nobel Laureate Carl Wieman in 2002 with money from his Nobel Prize, and has been supported over the years by the University of Colorado, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the National Science Foundation, the O'Donnell Foundation, King Saud University, and the Kavli Foundation as well as smaller gifts from individual and corporate donors.

The Tech Awards: Technology Benefiting Humanity is one of the premier annual humanitarian awards programs in the world, recognizing technical solutions that benefit humanity and address the most critical issues facing our planet and its people. The awards program honors 15 scientists and innovators annually alongside the recipient of the Global Humanitarian Award. Laureates are selected by a prestigious panel of international judges organized by the Center for Science, Technology, and Society at Santa Clara University, and made up of Santa Clara University faculty as well as leaders from educational and research institutions, industry and the public sector around the world.

"We are honored to receive this prestigious award, which recognizes innovators using technology to benefit humanity." said Dr. Kathy Perkins, Director of PhET. "In our vision, advancing science education is key to addressing many of today's global challenges. The PhET team is very excited to see our work used by so many teachers and learners around

the world, and we are grateful for the generous support of the University of Colorado and our other sponsors, which makes this work possible.”

“The global challenges of the day have become increasingly strident, more deeply rooted,” said David Whitman, Vice President of Signature Programs at The Tech Museum. “Still, there is hope. These incredibly impressive Laureates have all proven to be equal to, or better than, the challenge to make the world a better place. By celebrating their accomplishments today, we are encouraging future innovators to work toward solutions to make the world healthier, safer and more sustainable.”

Established in 2000, The Tech Awards recognizes 15 Laureates in five universal categories: education, equality, environment, economic development and health. These laureates have developed new technological solutions or innovative ways to use existing technologies to significantly improve the lives of people around the world. One Laureate in each category will receive a \$50,000 cash prize during the annual Awards Gala in Santa Clara CA. on October 20.

This year, the laureates represent the truly global vision of the program, spanning countries such as India, Honduras and Ethiopia. Their work impacts people in many more countries worldwide.

The Tech Awards collaborates with humanitarian, educational, and business partners through global outreach efforts, giving people around the world the opportunity to benefit from the successful technologies recognized through The Tech Awards. The selected laureates’ projects address multiple humanitarian efforts including developing alternate ways to generate electricity, creating free educational tools, and improving literacy among children.

Key sponsors supporting The Tech Awards include Applied Materials, Inc., Intel Corporation, Nokia, Microsoft, Swanson Foundation, Flextronics, Polycom, Skoll Foundation, KPMG, Ernst & Young, Accenture, eBay, Qatalyst, Google, Wells Fargo, Xilinx, American Airlines, Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide, Bain & Company, NBC11, San Jose Mercury News, Forbes, Stanford Social Innovation Review, TIME, Xfinity, MEMC Electronic Materials, Brassfield Estate Winery, Hilton San Jose, Convention Plaza Hotel, and Hayward Quartz Technology.

For more information about The Tech Awards, visit [The Tech Awards](#)

### **About The Tech Museum**

The Tech Museum is a hands-on science and technology institution designed to engage people of all ages and backgrounds in experiences that educate, inform, provoke thought, and inspire action. Ensnconced in the heart of Silicon Valley, the museum captures the spirit of the region through innovative content and programs such as The Tech Challenge, our annual team design competition for youth, and the internationally renowned The Tech Awards, which recognizes technology to benefit humanity. Daily, The Tech Museum celebrates the present and encourages the development of pioneering ideas for a more promising future. For more information about The Tech Museum, visit [The Tech Museum](#).

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

[PhET’s Award Information webpage](#)

<http://phet.colorado.edu/en/media/tech-award-2011>

PhET's Tech Award Application ([pdf](#))  
[http://phet.colorado.edu/publications/tech-award-2011-resources/PhET\\_TechAwards\\_Application.pdf](http://phet.colorado.edu/publications/tech-award-2011-resources/PhET_TechAwards_Application.pdf)

Letter of Support from Sandor Nagy in Hungary ([pdf](#))  
[http://phet.colorado.edu/publications/tech-award-2011-resources/LetterOfReference\\_SandorNagy.pdf](http://phet.colorado.edu/publications/tech-award-2011-resources/LetterOfReference_SandorNagy.pdf)

[The PhET Team](#)

<http://phet.colorado.edu/en/about>

[Photos of PhET use around the world](#)

<http://phet.colorado.edu/en/media/photos>

[High resolution simulation images](#)

<http://phet.colorado.edu/en/media/images>

[Research on PhET simulations](#)

<http://phet.colorado.edu/en/research>

**CONTACTS:**

***Dr. Kathy Perkins, Director***

*PhET Interactive Simulations  
Department of Physics, 390 UCB  
University of Colorado Boulder  
Boulder CO 80309-0390  
(303) 492-6714  
[Kathy.Perkins@colorado.edu](mailto:Kathy.Perkins@colorado.edu)*

***Dr. Kathryn Dessau, Associate Director of Marketing and Development***

*PhET Interactive Simulations  
Department of Physics, 390 UCB  
University of Colorado Boulder  
Boulder CO 80309-0390  
(303) 579-6091  
[Kathryn.Dessau@colorado.edu](mailto:Kathryn.Dessau@colorado.edu)*

***Roqua Montez***

*The Tech Museum of Innovation  
(408) 795-6225  
[lcroel@thetech.org](mailto:lcroel@thetech.org)*

***Anne Heise***

*Ogilvy PR  
(415) 677-2731  
[anne.heise@ogilvypr.com](mailto:anne.heise@ogilvypr.com)*