

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Museum of Innovation and Science Achieves Certified Autism Center™ Designation, Ensuring Inclusivity for Its Guests

SCHENECTADY, N.Y. (September 13, 2023) – The Museum of Innovation and Science (miSci) earns the Certified Autism Center™ designation granted by the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES). This designation recognizes organizations that have committed to providing an accessible space and services to autistic and sensory sensitive individuals. To earn this certification, miSci staff members received training on how to effectively communicate and accommodate the needs of autistic and sensory sensitive guests to provide an elevated experience for them and their families.

“On behalf of miSci, we are very proud to have this certification,” shared Gina Gould, Ph.D., president and CEO of miSci. “With a much better understanding of uniquely abled people, we can now provide programming that will help our young guests feel not only comfortable in miSci's spaces, but we also hope they will thrive and aspire to be whatever they want to be when they grow up.”

As part of the Certified Autism Center™ designation, miSci received an on-site assessment by IBCCES to provide recommendations and sensory guides to help enhance the guest experience. These guides will enable guests to understand the sensory intensity for each area of the museum—such as noise level, lighting, and impact on other senses—so informed decisions can be made prior to entering an area. Families with autistic and sensory sensitive children often find it challenging to identify spaces and attractions where their children feel safe, welcomed, and understood. These sensory guides, recommendations, and staff training will better equip miSci with the necessary resources to meet the needs of all guests.

"miSci's dedication to inclusivity and accessibility is truly commendable. By receiving autism certification from IBCCES, they have demonstrated their commitment to creating an environment where individuals of all abilities can learn, explore, and thrive," said Assemblyman Angelo Santabarbara, Chair of the New York State Assembly Sub-Committee on Autism Spectrum Disorders and father of an autistic son. "This initiative not only showcases their understanding of the diverse needs of our community but also sets a shining example for other institutions. Together, we can foster a world where every individual, regardless of their differences, can fully participate and contribute. Congratulations to miSci for this well-deserved recognition."

As part of their accessibility initiative, miSci will offer monthly events geared towards sensory sensitive guests and their families. During these events, miSci transforms itself into a sensory-friendly environment, providing patrons the opportunity to explore the exhibitions and offerings in an environment that is safe and comfortable. Lights are dimmed, music is subdued and planetarium shows are available with the doors left open. More information about including upcoming, including program dates and times will be available on the miSci website at www.misci.org. Additional supports are available for guests who need them, including social stories for use in advance of their visit, ear plugs for noise reduction, and a dedicated quiet space.

“We’re proud to work with miSci in recognizing the organization as a Certified Autism Center™. IBCCES certification programs are an essential step in increasing knowledge and understanding for attractions and edutainment organizations to create a welcoming environment for all guests.” expressed Myron Pincomb, board chairman of

IBCCES. “We hope this achievement encourages more entertainment, travel and hospitality organizations to follow suit in creating attractions with inclusive spaces and enhanced accessibility.”

For over 20 years, IBCCES has been the leading authority in cognitive disorder training and certification for professionals worldwide. Its evidence-based training and certification programs are developed in collaboration with clinical experts and autistic individuals. Through these programs, professionals gain a deeper understanding of how to effectively communicate and interact with individuals with cognitive differences or sensory needs, employing industry best practices and the latest research in these areas.

IBCCES also created AutismTravel.com, a free online resource for families that lists certified options and connects families to other resources and each other. Each destination listed on the site has met the Certified Autism Center™ (CAC) requirements.

###

About the Museum of Innovation and Science

Located in Schenectady, New York, miSci is a center for learning, imagination, and creativity that presents exhibitions, programs, and events designed with its mission in mind: to inspire people to celebrate and explore science and technology – past, present, and future. It is housed in a 44,270-square-foot facility that includes gallery space, the Suits-Beuche Planetarium, and classrooms. The Museum’s collections and archives include more than 15,000 science and technology artifacts, and more than two million photographs documenting the history of electricity, electronics, and the impact of technological change.

About IBCCES

Delivering The Global Standard for Training and Certification in The Field of Cognitive Disorders – IBCCES provides a series of certifications that empower professionals to be leaders in their field and improve the outcomes for the individuals they serve. These programs are recognized around the world as the leading benchmark for training and certification in the areas of autism and other cognitive disorders.

Media Contacts:

Caelynn Prylo, VP of Education, miSci
caelynn.prylo@misci.org
Phone: (518) 281-3374

Meredith Tekin, IBCCES President
meredith@ibcces.org
Phone: (904) 508-0135, (904) 434-1534