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State Museum Announces New Blockbuster Exhibit, *RACE: Are We So Different?*

COLUMBIA, S.C., Thursday, May 19, 2016— The South Carolina State Museum is proud to announce its new blockbuster traveling exhibit, *RACE: Are We So Different?* presented by Central Carolina Community Foundation. Opening to the public June 4, a project of the American Anthropological Association in collaboration with the Science Museum of Minnesota, the exhibit will explore a cultural, scientific and historical look at race throughout history and the reasons we should all celebrate our differences.

This isn't the first time the State Museum considered the idea of bringing this exhibit to South Carolina, but because of scheduling issues it wasn't the right time. Fortunately, 2016 brought an opportunity for the perfect match for *Race: Are We So Different*, the State Museum and Central Carolina Community Foundation. The Science Museum of Minnesota remembered that the State Museum was once interested and called to see if the museum still wanted to bring this compelling exhibit to South Carolina, due in large part to their awareness of the events that had occurred in our state last summer. It couldn't have come at a more ideal time for the State Museum and our state, as [South Carolinians](#) from all backgrounds came together, unified in the face of the tragic events of 2015. The discussion on race and race relations has since continued. *Race: Are We So Different?* is the perfect host to drive and direct these discussions in a thoughtful, engaging approach.

This exhibit was made possible by Central Carolina Community Foundation's Connected Communities grant. *RACE: Are We So Different?* will connect our community through conversation and exploration of a subject that often challenges us. The Community Foundation's Community Impact Committee believes that this exhibit is an opportunity to continue building a welcoming community as, communities are strengthened when their residents allow themselves to explore challenging and sometimes uncomfortable topics together. And, when people regardless of who they are feel welcome, their level of attachment to their community grows and they become personally invested in working with others to improve the place they call home.

ABOUT THE EXHIBIT:

Throughout history economic interests, popular culture, politics, and the struggle for power have played a role in shaping the understanding of race. Four areas in the history section of the exhibit will emphasize how race has evolved in the United States. The Creating Race station tells the story of how race in the United States was used to legitimize forced labor in the 17th and 18th centuries leading to a legalized system of slavery of Africans. Human (Mis)measure, focuses on the pursuit of "race science" in the 19th and 20th centuries, used to legitimize racial and ethnic inequalities.

In the science portion of the exhibit, visitors will discover that human beings are more alike than any other living species, and investigate what science tells us about human variation and its connection to ideas about race. Visitors can use a computer simulation to experiment with the dynamics of gene flow and hear from scientists discussing what their research reveals about human variation and how it differs from common conceptions of race.

Through the Everyday Experience, visitors will explore personal perspectives on race in our schools, health care systems, neighborhoods, sports and entertainment industries and more. “Who’s Talking” is an interactive experience that challenges visitors assumptions of racial and ethnic differences. Here, visitors will try to match the voice they hear to one of the photos they see in front of them. A recreated rowhouse will serve as a setting for stories about unfair housing practices, land ownership and wealth. Visitors will also be able to read stories of the near-genocide of American Indians. A pharmacy will offer a setting for exploring racism in health care. One of the most compelling pieces of this exhibit is a video playing in re-created high school cafeteria of students giving their view on race and how their experience is different from previous generations.

“The events of the past year in South Carolina have made us all pause and ask ourselves deeper questions. Today, conversations about race and issues dealing with race are happening around kitchen tables, in work break rooms, and classrooms across the state,” said Willie Calloway, executive director of the South Carolina State Museum. “I am hopeful that by presenting this exhibit, the State Museum will help to answer those questions and perhaps even in our own small way, provide opportunities for healing and understanding across our state.”

Race: Are We So Different? fulfills the museum’s vision to be an innovative institution reflecting the essence and diversity of South Carolina, and a catalyst for the cultural and educational development of our state. The State Museum will host a member preview day on Friday, June 3, from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m. To purchase a membership visit scmuseum.org.

The State Museum is open Monday, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.; Tuesday, 10 a.m. – 10 p.m.; Wednesday – Friday, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Sunday, 12 – 5 p.m. General admission to the museum is \$6.95 for children 12 and under, \$7.95 for seniors and \$8.95 for adults. Visit scmuseum.org to learn more.

About the South Carolina State Museum: *As the state’s largest and most comprehensive museum, the South Carolina State Museum offers a unique, entertaining and educational experience to visitors throughout its 225,000 square foot facility located in the heart of downtown Columbia’s Congaree Vista. The State Museum is housed in one of its largest artifacts, an 1894 old textile mill full of character and charm. Guests can explore outer space in one of the largest planetariums in the Southeast, watch an interactive 4D movie and look through a vintage telescope in a one-of-a-kind observatory. These opportunities are all in addition to the four floors of South Carolina art, cultural history, natural history and science/technology. Visit scmuseum.org to learn more.*

About Central Carolina Community Foundation

Central Carolina Community Foundation, the Midlands’ expert on philanthropy, is a nonprofit organization that links charitable people and businesses with areas of need and opportunity in our region. The Foundation was founded in September 1984 by business leaders who wanted to establish a permanent endowment that would enhance the lives of citizens in the Midlands. Since our founding, our generous fundholders and trustees have awarded more than \$120,000,000 in grants to nonprofit organizations. For more information about the Foundation, visit www.yourfoundation.org or call 803.254.5601.