



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Sarah McCall, Director of Marketing and Communications  
[sarah@steppingstonesmuseum.org](mailto:sarah@steppingstonesmuseum.org)  
203 899 0606, ext. 230

**NOTE TO EDITORS:** Renderings of the three AIA award-winning sculptures are available for download at <http://steppingstonesmuseum.org/press-photos/expansion/kinetic-energy-sculpture.jpg>

**Stepping Stones Museum for Children's Architectural Firm Receives  
2008 AIA Connecticut Design Award for Creation of Kinetic Garden Sculptures**  
*Outdoor "Follies" Part of Museum's Environmentally-Focused Expansion\* and Link Between  
Downtown Norwalk and Mathews Park*

Norwalk, CT (February 19, 2009) — Beinfield Architecture, Stepping Stones Museum for Children's architectural firm spearheading the museum's expansion project, received the 2008 American Institute of Architects (AIA) Connecticut Design Award: "Encompassing Art" for its design of three outdoor energy-powered sculptures.

The sculptures are a series of three garden "follies" and will be an integral part of the museum's expansion\* plans by demonstrating simple principles of energy generation and creating percussive music. The structures also will assist in creating a pedestrian link between downtown Norwalk and Mathews Park and the park's cultural institutions, including Stepping Stones Museum for Children, the Lockwood Mathews Mansion and the Center for Contemporary Printmaking.

Designed to be educational and whimsical, the pieces will draw their power from natural resources, including the sun, wind and water and will take the form of:

- **Solar Cymbals** — A solar panel that will harness the power of the sun, causing drumsticks to strike three metal cymbals.
- **Wind/Gong Chime** — The song and sound of an oversized, wind-powered wind-chime will be driven by occurrences in the weather. A giant propeller atop the sculpture will capture the wind, and glass prisms will add sparkle and movement. All of the moving parts of the structure will be visible, creating a "cause-and-effect" learning experience for visitors.

- more -

- **Rain Maker** — This structure will be powered by rainwater spilling through a simple treadmill propulsion system. The spilling process will activate four large “rain sticks” that pivot on axels and create natural music.

“We are extremely proud of Beinfield Architecture for their receipt of this prestigious award,” said Rhonda Kiest, executive director, Stepping Stones Museum for Children. “They clearly understand how to create an environment that is highly efficient, educational and magical at the same time.”

“This particular aspect of the museum expansion project has been a wonderful, creative challenge for us, and we are looking forward to its next stage of development,” said Bruce Beinfield, principal, Beinfield Architecture. “We view these sculptures as ‘sentries’ in the garden, providing a friendly, watchful presence that educates and entertains.”

**Stepping Stones Museum for Children**, a 501(c)3 private non-profit organization, is an award-winning children’s museum committed to broadening and enriching the lives of children. Museum exhibits, educational programs and special events complement efforts in schools, childcare centers and homes. With four main galleries, a toddlers-only gallery and more than 100 hands-on activities, Stepping Stones offers children ten and under plenty to explore and discover. To learn more, visit [steppingstonesmuseum.org](http://steppingstonesmuseum.org).

**Beinfield Architecture PC** is an award-winning, full-service architecture firm founded in 1983 with offices located in the heart of historic South Norwalk, Connecticut. Over the last 20 years, they have received over 50 design awards, a testament to the creativity, care, and professionalism that go into all of their projects. Beinfield Architecture is dedicated to solving architectural problems innovatively with environmentally sustainable solutions that are simple and direct, expressive of structure and program, and supportive of the varied patterns of human life. Their work spans a wide variety of project types, some of which you can view at: [www.beinfieldarchitecture.com](http://www.beinfieldarchitecture.com).

# # #

**\*About the Stepping Stones Museum for Children Expansion:**

*Stepping Stones Museum for Children’s \$15 million expansion will include the addition of 22,000 square feet to the east side of the building in Mathews Park, the addition of new exhibits and exhibit space with a focus on energy-themed education, and outdoor features, including an array of gardens to teach visitors about ecology and the sources and purpose of renewable energy. The expanded facility will be Gold LEED Certified\*\* and include solar panels, a wind turbine and a green-planted roof.*

**\*\*About LEED Certification:**

*Developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), LEED provides a comprehensive system of standards for environmentally sound practices across all aspects of development and construction.*

*LEED status is given in four categories—Certified, Silver, Gold and Platinum—which address six major areas: sustainable sites, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, indoor environmental quality, and innovation and design process. When a building is submitted for certification, points are awarded for compliance in these areas.*