



News Release

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BODY WORLDS Vital
Drawing Crowds
to State Museum

Columbia, S.C. --- *BODY WORLDS Vital*, the South Carolina State Museum's blockbuster exhibit featuring real donated human bodies, is attracting a record number of visitors seeking to find out what makes them tick and how they can better take care of themselves.

Since opening in mid-November, 23,895 visitors have come through the gate through December, as opposed to 13,995 during the same period last year. During December, attendance to the *BODY WORLDS* blockbuster was 11,147, three-and-a-half times the 3,077 who saw the *Pirates* blockbuster last December.

"This 11,147 figure represents a 62 percent capture rate, which means that 62 percent of the museum's general admission visitors also saw the *BODY WORLDS Vital* exhibit," said Director of Education Tom Falvey. "This is a fantastic figure because generally, 40 percent capture rate is considered to be very good."

In addition, during the week following Christmas, nearly 1000 people a day visited the museum. The total attendance for December was a record-breaking 18,000, which exceeded the old record, set in 2008, by 33 percent.

South Carolina schoolchildren also have visited in greater numbers. In November and December, 8044 students came to the museum, an improvement of 20 percent over the same period of 2010. Also, while 554 visited the *Pirates* blockbuster during the same time last year, eight times that number - 4476 students - have taken in *BODY WORLDS Vital*. Many more have booked visits in the coming weeks.

“It’s really no surprise given the highly educational nature of the exhibit,” said Falvey. “Everyone who has seen it, student or adult, has been awed by the complexity and wonder of the human body.”

The purpose of the exhibit is to teach people about the wonders of the human body, how its organs and systems are interconnected, and to encourage visitors to make healthy lifestyle choices. By making choices not to smoke, to eat healthy foods and get regular exercise, the exhibit can help people live longer, healthier and happier lives.

“We’ve really been pleased that people are turning up in large numbers to see *BODY WORLDS Vital*, because, like its title, it really does have important information to impart,” said Falvey. “The exhibit’s previous versions have traveled the world to rave reviews and have been seen by more than 33 million people.

“One result has been that thousands of people have quit smoking after seeing the lungs of a smoker compared to those of a non-smoker. This shows that the exhibit can, and has, had the effect of actually saving lives. So we’re very glad people are seeing the wisdom in educating themselves about their bodies through this exhibit.”

BODY WORLDS Vital is at the museum in Columbia for a limited engagement. The museum is open extended hours on Tuesdays (10 a.m. – 8 p.m.) and Saturdays (10 a.m. – 6 p.m.) in addition to its normal hours of 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. It is also open 1-5 p.m. Sundays.

Media sponsors for the exhibit include WIS –TV, WCOS-FM, The State, Lamar Advertising and Time Warner Cable.

Admission to *BODY WORLDS Vital* is \$11 for adults, \$9 for senior citizens and \$7 for ages 3-12, in addition to general museum admission. South Carolina students in groups are admitted to the exhibit for \$5.

Tickets can be purchased, and information can be found, on the Museum’s Web site, scmuseum.org.

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CUTLINE FOR BODY WORLDS VITAL

The South Carolina State Museum's new blockbuster exhibit *BODY WORLDS Vital* has attracted crowds of people eager to learn about their bodies, how they work and how they can take better care of them.

[Click here to view/download hi-res photo](#)

Photo by Susan Dugan/courtesy S.C. State Museum

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