

For Immediate Release

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LEGOLAND® CALIFORNIA EXPANSION
CREATES OPPORTUNITY OF A LIFETIME
National tour kicks off Feb. 20 at Art Institutes campuses nationwide

CARLSBAD, Calif. (Jan. 26, 2006) – A job search, a competition of creativity and determination and an opportunity of a lifetime...LEGOLAND® California is searching the nation for the next member of the family theme park's prestigious Model Builder team. In a seven-city tour spanning the country, LEGOLAND is putting thousands of adults up to the challenge. The Art Institutes, a system of 32 education institutions across North America, will be the official host location in each city.

"We recently announced the largest expansion in LEGOLAND California's seven year history. Pirate Shores opens this summer with four new water play attractions. This addition requires incredible minds who can help create the whimsical and charismatic LEGO® models that delight our guests," said Julie Estrada, LEGOLAND spokesperson. "We're combing the nation in search of adults that never gave up their love of designing and building with LEGO bricks."

The current team of Park Model Builders design, build and maintain the more than 15,000 LEGO models that make LEGOLAND California a one-of-a-kind vacation destination. Candidates applying for this dream job are given a 10-pound bucket full of assorted LEGO play materials and have one hour to create a model on the requested theme.

"Since Pirate Shores is the focus for 2006, it seems only appropriate the theme in each city is pirate related," said Patrick DeMaria, manager of the Model Shop at LEGOLAND California. "Just when we think we've built the coolest LEGO model possible, we get the opportunity to build something even better. That's truly the best part of the job: being able to dream of something, make it a reality in the Park and then see the guest's reaction when they stop to wonder at the models."

The nationwide search kicks off President's Weekend at LEGOLAND California, Feb. 18 – 20. The weekend event includes two days of "Model Builder University" where Park guests will have the once in a lifetime opportunity to learn tips and tricks from current Model Builders as well as watch those Model Builders tag-team with celebrities to show guests just how difficult it is to create a model under pressure. On Monday, Feb. 20, the first applicants in the 2006 Model Builder Search have their opportunity to build a pirate-themed model in a short time frame.

After kicking off at LEGOLAND California in Carlsbad, the official LEGOLAND Model Builder Search will head to the following Art Institutes locations: The Art Institute of California – Los Angeles, The Art Institute of California – San Francisco, The Art Institute of Phoenix, The Art Institute of New York City, The Art Institute of Dallas, and The Illinois Institute of Art - Chicago. Finalists from each city will be invited to travel to LEGOLAND California to compete against other winners and interview for the coveted spot as the sixth Model Builder.

"We're excited to be working with The Art Institutes as our location hosts for the Model Builder Search. The campuses are expected to be great partners in helping us create high energy interest and excitement around the events," says Estrada.

A special Web site enables people to track the progress of the Model Builder competition. Log on to LEGOLANDModelBuilder.com to see photos of the finalists' models from each city and learn more about how the LEGOLAND Model Builder team makes LEGO come to life at LEGOLAND California.

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The Model Builders have developed a celebrity-status among Park guests and frequently answer a barrage of questions while sharing building tips at the Park. "While it's true that you're getting paid to play with toys, the job is truly much more challenging than that," said DeMaria. "You are actually part of an attraction at LEGOLAND as guests can visit the Model Shop and watch every move you're making. If you can build in three dimensions with an audience and under pressure, you're the right person for the job."

Throughout the 128-acre family theme park, the ingenuity of the Model Builders is obvious. Many of their creations can be seen in Miniland USA, an area where seven geographical regions are replicated in LEGO brick in a smaller scale. Park guests are awed by the displays of intricate detail and accuracy such as in the Empire State Building, the White House and the Kennedy Space Center. In 2005, Model Builders tackled the tallest building to ever be built in Miniland, a 28-foot Freedom Tower designed after the original to be built in New York City. Using more than 30-million LEGO bricks, their projects have ranged from an 1,100-pound Brachiosaurus that peers down at guests in Dino Island, to a pumpkin no bigger than a child's fingernail. Even while enjoying the rides guests can see the Model Builder's creative minds at work. When riding Fairy Tale Brook, guests can spy a prince carrying a cell phone or watch an animated skunk "mist" golfers as they putt at Wild Woods Golf presented by La Jolla Club Golf Company.

There are a mere 20 Model Builders at all four LEGOLAND Parks. Five of them work here at LEGOLAND California. Coming from various backgrounds and skills, they all have two things in common: They use every ounce of creativity in their daily work, and they're passionate about it. Beginning Feb. 20, talented and creative applicants have the chance to show they have what it takes to inspire and create at LEGOLAND California.

LEGOLAND® California is a 128-acre interactive theme park dedicated to families with children between the ages of two and 12. Just like with LEGO® play materials, kids are the ones who create the action at the Park. They drive, pedal, squirt, climb, jump, stomp, slide, steer, pull, click, push, gallop, laugh, build and program their way through more than 50 rides, shows and attractions. There are three other LEGOLAND Parks in the world – LEGOLAND Billund in Denmark, LEGOLAND Windsor outside of London and LEGOLAND Deutschland near Günzburg, Germany. The LEGOLAND theme parks are a part of Merlin Entertainments Group. For the most current information, log on to www.LEGOLAND.com or call (760) 918-LEGO.

The Art Institutes system of 32 education institutions located throughout North America, provides an important source of design, media arts, fashion and culinary arts professionals. The parent company of The Art Institutes, Education Management Corporation (www.edmc.com) is among the largest providers of private post-secondary education in North America, based on student enrollment and revenue. Student enrollment exceeded 72,000 as of fall 2005. EDMC has 72 primary campus locations in 24 states and two Canadian provinces. EDMC's education institutions offer a broad range of academic programs concentrated in the media arts, design, fashion, culinary arts, behavioral sciences, health sciences, education, information technology and business fields, culminating in the award of associates through doctoral degrees. EDMC has provided career-oriented education for more than 40 years. For more information visit The Art Institutes website at www.artinstitutes.edu/legoland.

