



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**FIRST NIGHT COLUMBUS TO FOCUS ON SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY  
HEALTH AND FITNESS**

Tuesday, Franklin County Commissioners unanimously approved a community partnership in the amount of \$8,500 to support the promotion of safety and alcohol awareness during a family-friendly New Year's celebration known as First Night Columbus.

First Night Columbus provides family-oriented activities that are safe, affordable, and engaging while being drug and alcohol-free. First Night activities involve the imagination and creativity of all participants as well as ethnic and diverse entertainment performed simultaneously at more than 10 different indoor venues in downtown Columbus.

Activities include a Children's Festival, People's Procession, Teen Idol and an electrifying fireworks' display.

And, for the first time, Commissioners noted that First Night Columbus is highlighting some new environments related to science, technology, health and fitness offering hands on activities, displays of award-winning creative projects, fun-fitness activities and nutrition elements for youngsters, along w/ the COSI experience for all ages.

"I hope our Franklin County families take advantage of this great celebration," said Commission President Mary Jo Kilroy. "This is a good way to end one year and usher in a new year and maybe even start a new year's resolution a little early by visiting the fun fitness zone being offered for the first time this year."

First Night started over 20 years ago in Boston and is part of a nationwide network of more than 200 celebrations geared towards bringing pride and unity to the community while providing a safe and family oriented manner in which to celebrate New Year's Eve.

"This drug- and alcohol-free event is a safe way to spend quality family time together," stated Commissioner Paula Brooks. "Whether they're singing in the Teen Idol contest or watching the creative People's Procession, all Franklin County families can take part in this fun and exciting celebration."

“I really love this program,” noted Commissioner Marilyn Brown. “This year’s focus on health, fitness, science and entertainment – all in our vibrant Columbus downtown neighborhood is a great opportunity for our families to celebrate New Year’s in a safe and family-friendly environment.”

First Night events take place from 4:30-midnight in a series of INDOOR locations showcasing the heart of Downtown Columbus. For more information call (614) 481-0020.