Berkshire Museum Press Release
For Immediate Release: July 21, 2016
Media contact: Lesley Ann Beck, Director of Communications
413.443.7171 ext. 320; lbeck@berkshiremuseum.org

Images available on request.

Berkshire Museum hosts JV InvenTeam™
Monument Valley Regional Middle School students learn about invention and innovation through hands-on activities

[Pittsfield, Mass.] - This summer the Berkshire Museum is partnering with the Lemelson-MIT Program in mentoring a JV InvenTeam™ at Monument Valley Regional Middle School in Great Barrington. Lemelson-MIT JV InvenTeams™ are comprised of students who hone their hands-on skills and enrich their STEM education through invention-based design activities.

Berkshire Museum educators are leading the classes based on materials and coursework provided by the Lemelson-MIT Program. Thirty-two fifth- and sixth grade students are participating three days a week, July 5 through August 3. The middle-schoolers at Monument Valley have completed a unit on designing and prototyping shoe soles, creating soles for a range of different activities. The students came up with ideas for their shoe soles, modeled them in clay and cast them in urethane to complete their prototypes. They are now working on sound: they have dissected earbuds to learn about speakers, created their own electromagnets from common household objects, and build speakers out of paper plates.

The Lemelson-MIT Program continues to celebrate outstanding inventors and inspires young people to pursue creative lives and careers through invention. JV InvenTeams are currently located in four states: here in Massachusetts and in Texas, Oregon, and California.
Students participating in JV InvenTeams learn how to safely use tools and explore new materials to use in hands-on projects. Teams of students practice invention-based design activities and apply their learned skills to create useful and unique projects. They build confidence and curiosity around STEM areas including structures, electricity, materials, and robotics.

**About the Lemelson Foundation**
Jerome H. Lemelson, one of U.S. history’s most prolific inventors, and his wife Dorothy founded the Lemelson-MIT Program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1994. It is funded by The Lemelson Foundation and administered by MIT’s School of Engineering. Based in Portland, The Lemelson Foundation uses the power of invention to improve lives. Inspired by the belief that invention can solve many of the biggest economic and social challenges of our time, the Foundation helps the next generation of inventors and invention-based businesses to flourish. The Lemelson Foundation was established in the early 1990s by prolific inventor Jerome Lemelson and his wife Dorothy. To date the Foundation has made grants totaling over $200 million in support of its mission.

**About the Berkshire Museum**
Located in downtown Pittsfield, Massachusetts, at 39 South St., the Berkshire Museum, a Smithsonian Affiliate, is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is $13 adult, $6 child; Museum members and children age 3 and under enjoy free admission. For more information, visit www.berkshiremuseum.org or call 413.443.7171.

In association with the Smithsonian since 2013, Berkshire Museum is part of a select group of museums, cultural, educational, and arts organizations that share the Smithsonian’s resources with the nation.

Established by Zenas Crane in 1903, Berkshire Museum integrates art, history, and natural science in a wide range of programs and exhibitions that inspire educational connections between the disciplines. **Finding Raven: Art and Stories**
of the Northwest Coast is on view through October 30. Tiny Titans: Dinosaur Eggs and Babies is on view through August 28. Living on Earth: The Work of Robert Hite, a solo show of sculpture and photography co-presented by the Berkshire Museum and Hancock Shaker Village, is on view at both venues through October 30. Little Cinema is open year-round. Spark!Lab, Feigenbaum Hall of Innovation, Worlds in Miniature, Aquarium, and other exhibits are ongoing.

# # #