

For Immediate Release

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IBEX: Search for the Edge of the Solar System Premieres at the McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center

CONCORD, NH – On Saturday, October 10th, *IBEX: Search for the Edge of the Solar System* will premiere at the McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center at noon. This brand new planetarium show features scientists and engineers from the University of New Hampshire (UNH) who are investigating the boundary between our solar system and the rest of our galaxy. Viewers will discover how the Interstellar Boundary Explorer (IBEX) mission was developed and how the spacecraft was created to collect high-speed atoms that are being used to create a map of our solar system's boundary.

IBEX is a NASA-funded Small Explorer Program (SMEX) satellite. The mission is led by the Southwest Research Institute in San Antonio, TX. The satellite was built in collaboration with several institutions including UNH.

IBEX's mission is to create the first maps of the boundary between the reach of our Sun and the rest of the galaxy. The invisible boundary of our solar system is created by the interaction between particles from the Sun that are streaming outward, the solar wind, and material between the stars – the interstellar medium.

Studying this region of space will allow scientists to understand how the solar wind and interstellar medium interact, and to map the overall shape of the “bubble” called the heliosphere, which is the first layer of protection against high-energy cosmic rays. IBEX is also mapping the flow of interstellar neutral gas, which blows like a fast wind through our solar system thereby giving us insight into the state of our cosmic neighborhood.

IBEX co-investigator, Dr. Eberhard Moebius of UNH's Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans, and Space and Department of Physics, will introduce each show with a brief, live presentation of the IBEX mission. Other members of the UNH/IBEX team will be on hand to display actual IBEX equipment.

The premiere showing of *IBEX: Search for the Edge of the Solar System* begins at noon, with additional showings at 1, 3 and 4 PM. Demonstrations on how the IBEX spacecraft and mission work will be given throughout the day.

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Additionally, special guest speaker Margaret Gillespie from the Squam Lakes Natural Science Center will make an unrelated presentation at 12:45 PM on “Animal Technology”, focusing on animal adaptations on stage with live animals.

Planetarium show ticket is \$3 with purchased general admission. \$9 Adult, \$6 Child (3-12), \$8 Student/Senior. Member benefits apply.

The new McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center is a lively science center, featuring 21st century interactive exhibits on aviation, astronomy, Earth and space sciences, a state-of-the-art planetarium and a variety of science, technology, engineering and math programs.

The engaging, robust educational programs are geared towards families, teens, seniors, students, community groups, and lifelong learners. For more information, visit www.starhop.com. For further information on the IBEX mission visit <http://www.ibex.swri.edu>.

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