

For Immediate Release

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**MCAULIFFE-SHEPARD DISCOVERY CENTER OPENING CELEBRATION
MARCH 6, 2009: OFFERING FREE ADMISSION FOR THE WEEKEND**

CONCORD, NH – On Friday, March 6, the new McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center will welcome the public to explore, discover, and be inspired from 4 to 9 p.m. Admission to the Discovery Center is free for the opening weekend, Friday, March 6 through Sunday, March 8, courtesy of Northeast Delta Dental.

"We are pleased to sponsor this opportunity for the public to visit the new Discovery Center," said Tom Raffio, President & CEO of Northeast Delta Dental. "As neighbors and ongoing supporters, we are excited about the learning opportunities that the Discovery Center will provide as a regional resource."

The McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center will be constantly evolving. New exhibitions, programs and simulation experiences will be added in three major phases, beginning with this Phase One opening on March 6. Special Phase One opening weekend programming includes:

Friday, March 6; 4 to 9 p.m.

- Guided tours through the exhibits
- Educational programs and demonstrations
- Dawn of the Space Age will be featured in the planetarium
- Free guided sky watch outside, courtesy of NH Astronomical Society (weather permitting)

Saturday, March 7, and Sunday, March 8; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

- Guided tours through the exhibits
- Educational programs, demonstrations, guided observatory sky watches
- Dawn of the Space Age featured in the planetarium, along with Tonight's Sky,
- Oasis in Space, Our Place in Space
- Special guests Fritz Weatherbee (Saturday) and caricature artist Erica Golter (Sunday)

For a full schedule of Opening Weekend programming, visit www.starhop.com.

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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 and engineering programs.

The engaging, robust educational programs are geared towards families, teens, seniors, students, community groups, and lifelong learners of all ages. The Discovery Center will also offer space for conferences and special events, and a NASA Educator Resource Center.

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