

For Immediate Release

August 24, 2009

Contact: Jennifer Jones
Marketing Coordinator
jjones@starhop.com
(603) 271-7827 x110

Observing the Heavens – The Observatory at the McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center Celebrates Grand Opening

CONCORD, NH – With the flick of a switch, the 58” plasma screen will come alive next Friday, September 4th, featuring images from the new observatory telescope at the grand opening of the McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center's new observatory dome.

The dome houses two telescopes for viewing day and nighttime skies. The primary telescope, a Celestron 14” Schmidt-Cassegrain, uses a Celestron PRO mount, computerized for tracking planets, nebulae, galaxies and other nighttime objects. The second telescope is a 100mm Lunt, designed especially for solar viewing of sunspots and other activity. Either telescope can be hooked up to the plasma screen, located by the observatory's entrance, making images from the telescopes accessible to all.

“The observatory has been a long awaited addition to the Discovery Center,” said educator Tiffany Nardino. “We are really excited to make this wonderful tool available to the public, as it can only enhance the visitor's experience to the Discovery Center.” The observatory's objective is to augment the fundamentals of astronomy, orbital mechanics, stellar and planetary formation and other concepts, offering the opportunity to see first hand real objects of the day and night skies.

The celebration will kick off at Noon with cake and tours of the new observatory. At 12:15 PM will be a special presentation of the Discovery Center's newest planetarium show, Two Small Pieces of Glass, taking visitors centuries into the past to explore how a simple adjustment to a child's spyglass launched our eyes deeper into the beauty and wonder of space. Special demonstrations on “Telescopes and Optics” will also be given throughout the day.

At 7 PM, the Super Stellar Friday program will feature “Jupiter and Its Moons”. Visitors will enjoy planetarium show Tonight's Sky and learn about Jupiter, with a live look via the new observatory telescopes.

\$9 Adult, \$6 Child (3-12), \$8 Student/Senior. Free for Members. If General Admission is purchased before 5 PM, ticket for Super Stellar Friday program is \$3.

The new McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center is a lively science center, featuring 21st century interactive exhibits on aviation, astronomy, and Earth and space sciences, a state-of-the-art planetarium, and a variety of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programs. For more information on the Discovery Center, visit www.starhop.com.

###



www.starhop.com 603.271.7827