



The Franklin Institute
Science Museum

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CELEBRATE THE UNIVERSE AT THE FRANKLIN INSTITUTE
From the Earth to the Stars Activities and Events for All Ages

Philadelphia, PA. – April 13, 2007 – Celebrate the earth, the stars and the moon on National Astronomy Day, **Saturday, April 21st** beginning at 10AM at The Franklin Institute.

The students of PACTS, (*Partnerships for Achieving Careers in Technology and Science*), have traditionally hosted Earth Day at The Franklin Institute, and this year is no exception. The PACTS program offers science enrichment, career development, mentoring, and leadership opportunities for diverse middle and high school students in the Philadelphia area, and provides them with opportunities to experience science through hands-on workshops and student designed experiments. They've enlisted the aid of various organizations in the Delaware Valley, including Academy for Aquatic Scientists, The Boys Scouts, NetworkArts, Philadelphia More Beautiful Committee (PMBC) and The Girl Scouts to help teach area youth about the importance of caring for the environment. Everyone is invited to take the annual "Earth Day Birth Day" pledge to protect our environment, and to observe and/or participate in demonstrations on conserving energy, stopping pollution, and reducing gasoline consumption.

After honoring the Earth, visitors can travel to the moon and stars with Chief Astronomer **Derrick Pitts**, who will roll back the roof of the new **Joel N. Bloom Observatory**. Visitors can take a look at sunspots through one The Franklin Institute's three new reflectors, or through the newly refurbished Zeiss refractor telescope, with its state-of-the-art computer tracking system. Tours of the NASA Lunar Lander Module will also be available, and visitors will discover the

science behind astronauts' gear in the demonstrations *World's Cheapest Space Suit* and *Space Boot Camp*.

On the first floor, throughout the day in The Fels Planetarium, presented by Lockheed Martin, viewers can travel back to the days of ancient Egypt with "*Stars of the Pharaohs*" to learn how science was used to create calendars and align buildings, as well as the belief Egyptians held about the stars; or, explore the possibilities of modern space including aliens and other life forms in "*Search for Life*," narrated by Harrison Ford. Everyone can enter to win a telescope from Meade Telescopes, and will receive a free gift from Astronomy Magazine. Finally, any items purchased from the Astronomy Section of The Franklin Institute's Sci-Store, will be 10% off.

DETAILS:

Earth Day and Astronomy Day activities are included with admission to The Franklin Institute, and will take place from 10 AM to 3 PM. One Planetarium Show is included in the price of admission.

- PACTS **Earth Day** events, including face painting, coloring stations, Earth Day Birth Day Card Pledge, PACTS demonstrations and tips, and green birthday cake will be located in The William Penn Gallery and Key Hallway on the 2nd floor of The Franklin Institute.
- **Astronomy Day** activities will take place in Space Command, on the first floor, and in Key Hallway on the second floor.
- The **Joel N. Bloom** Observatory is located on the Fourth Floor of The Franklin Institute, and will be **open from 10 AM to 9 PM, weather permitting.**
- The Fels Planetarium Schedule for April 21, 2007
 - *Search for Life* at 11:30 AM
 - *The Sky Tonight* at 2:00 PM
 - *Stars of the Pharaohs* at 10 AM, 12:15 PM, 1 PM, 2:45 PM, and 4:15 PM.

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<p>Founded in honor of America's first scientist, Benjamin Franklin, The Franklin Institute opens its doors to over 1 million visitors each year. Today, the Institute continues its dedication to public education and creating a passion for science by offering new and exciting access to science and technology in ways that would dazzle and delight its namesake. For more information, please call 215-448-1200 or visit www.fi.edu.</p>
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