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Liberty Science Center Opens the Largest Planetarium in the Western Hemisphere Dec. 9

Jennifer Chalsty Planetarium to Debut Never-Before-Seen, Immersive Visualization of Orion Nebula

JERSEY CITY, NJ (Nov. 30, 2017) – Its diameter is almost twice as long as a bowling alley lane. Its screen is taller than four giraffes. It offers a true 8K projection. Its lights produce trillions of colors. And it will provide breaking space and astronomy news and discoveries in real time.

It is Liberty Science Center's greatest experience yet—the largest and most technologically advanced planetarium in the entire Western Hemisphere. The only three that are bigger are in Beijing, China, and Nagoya and Niihama, Japan.

And it opens just in time for an “out of this world” holiday season.

Liberty Science Center, the largest interactive science center in the NY-NJ metropolitan area, will officially open the Jennifer Chalsty Planetarium on December 9, 2017.

Jennifer Chalsty, a New Jersey philanthropist and LSC Board Member, donated \$5M to create the planetarium. The gift provided for the conversion of the IMAX Dome Theater from film to digital, the addition of software and hardware necessary for the theater to also function as a planetarium, the replacement of the screen, and the refurbishing of the entire theater.

When it comes to planetariums, size really does matter. Thanks to its tremendous screen and scope of its programming and technological innovations, LSC's planetarium will provide an unsurpassed learning opportunity for school groups, families, and adults in the region and draw tourists to Jersey City, according to Paul Hoffman, LSC's President and CEO.

“You can fit any other planetarium in the Western Hemisphere inside the Jennifer Chalsty Planetarium,” said Hoffman. “Add in the state-of-the-art technology and you have a spectacular unique theater like none other in the world. Visitors will be able to fly through the universe, experience the grandness and vastness of space, roam planetary surfaces, navigate asteroid fields, and watch the latest full-dome movies.”

The Jennifer Chalsty Planetarium will enable visitors to experience breaking space-related news in a visually stunning way. For the opening live planetarium presentations, the Science Center has partnered with the Space Telescope Science Institute to premier a beautiful, high-definition visualization of the Orion Nebula prior to its official release at the American Astronomical Society in Washington DC in January 2018.

“The Orion Nebula is one of the crown jewels of the night sky,” Hoffman explained, noting that the Space Telescope Science Institute has developed the high-definition, 3-D model of the Orion Nebula based on the Hubble Space Telescope's findings. “Inside this vast world of gas and dust, so distant that even its light takes 1,400 years to reach our eyes, we see star and planet formation in more beauty and detail than in any other place in the cosmos. Our full-dome, immersive recreation of the

Orion Nebula will allow our planetarium visitors to experience what it's like to travel into the heart of this nebula in a level of detail never before seen.”

Other unique features of the Jennifer Chalsty Planetarium include:

- A dome that has a diameter of 27 meters, or about 89 feet. That means if you made a straight line from one end of the dome to the other, it would be 1.5 times the length of a bowling alley lane.
- From the bottom of the theater to the top of the dome screen is 60 feet, the same height as 4 giraffes.
- 588 perforated aluminum panels are seamlessly joined together to form the domed screen with a surface area of 1,145 square meters, or 12,345 square feet. That's a nice size four-bedroom, two-bathroom home in terms of area.
- The 10-projector system features an 8K resolution of 88 million pixels.
- The sophisticated software allows for downloads of the latest animations and images from NASA to keep up with breaking science news.
- The lighting system can produce over 281 trillion individual colors, which can allow the planetarium dome to look like the blue Earth daytime sky, the red sky of Mars, or a rapidly changing pattern to enhance laser shows. A human can see about 10 million colors, while a computer screen displays about 16.8 million colors for a “full-color” image.
- In addition to out-of-this-world planetarium experiences, guests will also enjoy immersive 8K films on the wraparound dome screen courtesy of a brand new digital projection system.

The opening of the Jennifer Chalsty Planetarium comes on the heels of the Science Center's announcement of its 25th Anniversary \$25M Campaign. The Center will host an official kickoff on January 25, 2018 honoring lead supporters of the campaign, five of New Jersey's most distinguished philanthropists: Betty Wold Johnson, Josh Weston, Joseph D. and Millie E. Williams, and Jennifer Chalsty.

About Liberty Science Center

Liberty Science Center (LSC.org) is a 300,000-square-foot not-for-profit learning center located in Liberty State Park on the Jersey City bank of the Hudson near the Statue of Liberty. Dedicated to bringing the power, promise, and pure fun of science and technology to people of all ages, Liberty Science Center houses 12 museum exhibition halls, a live animal collection with 110 species, giant aquariums, a 3D theater, live simulcast surgeries, a tornado-force wind simulator, K-12 classrooms and labs, and teacher-development programs. More than 250,000 students visit the Science Center each year, and tens of thousands more participate in the Center's offsite and online programs. Welcoming more than 650,000 visitors annually, LSC is the largest interactive science center in the NYC-NJ metropolitan area.