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ADLER PLANETARIUM & ASTRONOMY MUSEUM TO OPEN GROUNDBREAKING CYBERSPACE GALLERY DECEMBER 5, 2001

Imagine having the opportunity to hold a real-time conversation with an astronaut, participate in a question and answer session with a speaker half a continent away or take a virtual tour of the International Space Station - while these experiences may seem to be the stuff of sci-fi, science fiction becomes scientific reality in the Adler Planetarium & Astronomy Museum's new CyberSpace Gallery which opens to the public on December 5, 2001.

State-of-the-art in 1930 when it opened as the first planetarium in the Western Hemisphere, the Adler once again is on the cutting edge of technology. A radical departure from the typical museum gallery, Cyberspace offers a totally new and exciting visitor experience. Designed with the ability to be reprogrammed with the click of a mouse, CyberSpace features compelling computer-based interactive exhibits, VisionStations providing realistic virtual reality experiences of the Universe and computer video classrooms for distance learning. The high-tech classrooms link to

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CyberSpace/Add1

extremely broad bandwidth networks using fiber optic technology 2,700 times faster than the average home modem. Capable of both broadcasting original Adler programming and facilitating linkages with NASA. These two-way telecasts can be sent electronically

anywhere in the world. CyberSpace dissolves the walls of the museum and extends its reach exponentially. "CyberSpace can bring the world into Adler and Adler to the world, " remarks Ken Kobus, CyberSpace Project Director and Adler Director of Information Systems.

CyberSpace is the central component of the Adler's new Center for Space Science Education which is partially funded by NASA and the U.S. Department of Education. Developed over a three-year period, CyberSpace offers a revolutionary approach to presenting the rapidly changing science of astronomy. Providing the perfect medium to change of museum exhibits, CyberSpace's adaptive and programmable nature overcomes the pervasive problem that many science museums face in opening a new gallery. In many cases, by the time exhibits open to the public, the data contained within may be superseded by new information. The advantage of CyberSpace is that it can almost instantaneously present the latest in the ongoing discoveries about the wonders of our Universe.

CyberSpace uniquely positions the Adler to deliver educational programming to a wide range of audiences. It has the potential to be an extremely valuable educational tool in advancing scientific literacy in the state of Illinois and the entire nation. Interactive video will serve as a primary vehicle for bringing the Adler's resources into classrooms to support kindergarten through high school education. The initial pilot programs will target schools in the local Chicago area, and will provide the

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CyberSpace/ Add 2

opportunity to test video-based curriculum and our strategies for the most effective use of the technologies as instructional tools. Following this pilot phase, a menu of programs will be made available to schools throughout Illinois and across the country, emphasizing astronomy-related themes as a context for fundamental math and science concepts to be taught in the school curriculum. These distance learning efforts will enable students and teachers well beyond the regional audience to access the Adler, transforming its role from simply a field trip destination to a more active participant in classroom teaching and learning.

The interactive video capability of CyberSpace and Adler's partnership with

NASA will offer access to additional educational resources, to expand the visitor experience. This new level of programming was tested on October 24 by establishing an interactive video link with the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas. An excited group of fourth and fifth grade students from Cloverdale School in Carol Stream visiting the Adler were able to talk to NASA astronaut, Joe Tanner. He presented an overview of his shuttle mission, and the students were able to ask questions about his experiences in space. "This ability to access NASA resources brings a new element to the Adler's educational efforts, expanding our reach and the experiences for our visitors," comments Adler Director of Education Bryan Wunar.

Adler Planetarium & Astronomy Museum hours:

9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Closed Thanksgiving and Christmas

On the first Friday of each month the Adler offers special programs with extended hours from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Regular Admission:

Ultimate Universe Adventure is \$15.00 for adults and \$14.00 for children 4 – 17 and senior citizens over age 65.

This package includes admission and the choice of two sky shows.

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CyberSpace/Add 3

Galaxy Passport is \$10.00 for adults and \$9.00 for children 4 – 17 and senior citizens over age 65. This package includes admission and choice of sky shows. Each additional sky show is \$5.00.

The Adler Planetarium & Astronomy Museum is the first planetarium in the Western Hemisphere. Its astronomy programs have reached over 35 million people during the past 71 years. Seven state-of-the-art exhibition galleries located in the stunning new Sky Pavilion and the recently renovated landmark 1930s building present modern space exploration along with the history of astronomy. The world's first StarRider™ Theater, the most technologically advanced, audience-interactive planetarium, fuels the imagination of visitors during virtual flights through the cosmos. With a staff of over 200, the Adler pursues its mission to present the human quest to better understand the universe. Adler scientists and historians, who hold joint appointments at the University of Chicago and Northwestern University, are working at the forefront of research in astronomy and its fascinating history. The Adler is leading the way into the new "Space Millennium."

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL (312) 922-STAR
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