

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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CONTACT: Dawn Kappel
Director of External Communications
312-322-0524

STRANDED IN AN ALIEN LAB

OPENING JUNE 28, 2003

AT ADLER PLANETARIUM

Fifth Third Bank presents an Alien Space Adventure this summer in Chicago!

Imagining themselves as space explorers marooned on a strange rocky planet, billions of miles from their home, children enter the laboratory of an alien scientist in *Stranded in an Alien Lab* a special new exhibit opening June 28, 2003 at the Adler Planetarium & Astronomy Museum. While investigating this fun and interactive exhibit, children use the clues hidden throughout to solve the mystery about the scientist and her work. The exhibit is made possible by the generous support of Fifth Third Bank and continues through September 1, 2003.

Designed specifically to appeal to children ages 8 – 11 (but so engagingly presented that even adults want get in on the fun) the exhibit puts a twist on the search for extraterrestrials, in this lab the aliens are looking for Earthlings. Using the real science of astrobiology as a base, the exhibit's activities are modeled after the actual work being done on Earth to look for indications of life elsewhere in the Universe.

In the "lab," children find evidence of strange scientific experiments and are able to peer into a "magnifying tool" to check out microorganisms, build robotic explorers, discover captive alien species, hear messages that space aliens might be sending and investigate an experiment observation station. The exhibit asks visitors to think about the diversity of life on Earth and to imagine that if life can exist on the sunlight free ocean floor of Earth, why couldn't it live in the underground oceans on Europa, one of Jupiter's

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moons? Taking a creative and fun approach through the use of a variety of hands-on activities, *Stranded in an Alien Lab* allows children to learn that life comes in all shapes and sizes.

The exhibit is free with paid museum admission but no alien trek is complete without experiencing the two exciting new sky shows that also deal with the search for alien life (separate admission fee required for each).

Alien Encounters in the StarRider Theater allows audiences to travel to yet-undiscovered planets in the far reaches of space to search for life in the Universe. Using scientific theory as a starting point, the show creates exotic worlds filled with fantastic creatures. Along the way, you'll discover worlds with environments radically different from Earth where living creatures such as giant insect-like life forms exist on low-gravity planets and highly muscular star-shaped creatures live on high-gravity worlds. Will Klingler of WTTW's "Wild Chicago" provides the narration.

In the Sky Theater, *Search for Alien Worlds* poses the question: Are we alone in the Universe? A decade ago there were no known planets beyond our solar system, but in the last several years a tremendous burst of discoveries have revealed more than one hundred planets circling other stars. Narrated by Aaron Freeman, this intriguing and fun show uses real astronomical data but presents scientific concepts and theories in a family-friendly and entertaining manner. Incorporating an exclusive interview with world-renowned "planet hunter" Dr. Geoff Marcy, *Search for Alien Worlds* explores how common these alien worlds might be, whether they are anything like our Earth, and most importantly, whether they could support life.

The alien adventure continues in CyberSpace, the Adler's cutting edge electronic gallery and video studio. The *Alien Experience* digital playground includes an opportunity for visitors to see themselves as an extraterrestrial with "infrared eyes" would see them. Interactive plasma displays will feature topics such as extrasolar planets, extreme life forms found right here on Earth, how Hollywood envisions aliens, and the role UFO's have played in the public consciousness throughout the years. A special feature of the gallery is the electronic Alien Art Exhibit with over 150 works by renowned artists Frank R. Paul, Wayne Douglas Barlowe and Adolf Schaller, all noted for their unique and imaginative depictions of alien worlds and their life forms.

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Daily Summer Activities at the Adler

The Adler's Education staff offers out of this world fun for the entire family every day between June 28 and August 10 from 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. with activities such as "Moon Phases" demonstration, "Create a Constellation" activity, temporary Zula Patrol tattoos, alien related games, visits by the Adler's alien mascot and continuous showings of "The Day the Sky Went Dark" and "The Case of the Vanishing Stars," Zula Patrol videos for young visitors.

GENERAL INFORMATION

HOURS

Monday-Friday	9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Sat-Sun	9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

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

Summer Hours

June 1 through September 1, 2003

Saturday - Wednesday	9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Thursday - Friday	9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.

REGULAR ADMISSION:

Ultimate Universe Adventure is \$18.00 for adults, \$17.00 for seniors 65 and older and \$16.00 for children 4 - 17. This package includes admission and the choice of two sky shows. Galaxy Passport is \$13.00 for adults, \$12.00 for seniors 65 and older and \$11.00 for children 4 - 17. This package includes admission and choice of one sky show.

The Adler Planetarium & Astronomy Museum was founded in 1930 as the first planetarium in the Western Hemisphere. Its astronomy programs have reached over 40 million people during the past 73 years. Ten state-of-the-art exhibition galleries located in the glass-enclosed Sky Pavilion and the renovated landmark 1930s building present modern space exploration along with the history of astronomy. The StarRider Theater featuring Digistar 3 is the most technologically advanced, audience-interactive planetarium, fueling the imagination of visitors during virtual flights through the cosmos. With a dedicated and professional staff, the Adler pursues its mission to present the human quest to better understand the Universe.

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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 partially supported by a CityArts Program 4 grant from the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency. The Adler gratefully acknowledges the generous support it receives from the Chicago Park District on behalf of the citizens of Chicago.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL (312) 922-STAR

TTY: (312) 322-0995

www.adlerplanetarium.org.

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