



AMERICA'S FIRST PLANETARIUM

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MEDIA ADVISORY

ROBOT TEAMS TO MEET AT ADLER PLANETARIUM

This Saturday, October 9th, ten student teams participating in the **First Lego League robotics competition** will interact with scientists at Carnegie Mellon University. Using Adler's distance learning studio, they will be able to ask questions of the researchers who face similar engineering challenges to the ones the students face in their competition.

EVENT: First Lego League teams (ages 9-14) will videoconference with robotics scientist from Carnegie Mellon University.

DATE: Saturday, October 9, 2005.

TIME: 1-3 p.m.

PLACE: Adler Planetarium - Distance Learning Studio
1300 South Lake Shore Drive

NASA'S ASTROBIOLOGY PROGRAM:

Carnegie Mellon University's three-year, \$3 million project, "Limits of Life in the Atacama," is part of NASA's astrobiology program focusing on finding life in harsh environments. Researchers will utilize the Atacama, whose desert environment is similar to Mars, to refine robotic, remote life-seeking technologies that may be used in future missions to Mars.

The robot will be guided remotely from Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh by scientists from NASA, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, the University of Tennessee, the British Antarctic Survey and the European Space Agency.

"Our goal is to make genuine discoveries about the limits of life on Earth and to create technology that can be applied to future NASA missions," said David Wettergreen, associate professor at Carnegie Mellon's Robotics Institute and leader of the project.

"Ultimately, we want to create an astrobiology without a space suit," said Nathalie Cabrol, a planetary scientist at NASA Ames and the SETI Institute, who will lead the science team for the Atacama investigation.

FIRST LEGO LEAUGE:

The FIRST LEGO League (FLL) is the result of a partnership between FIRST and The LEGO Company. FLL inspires and celebrates science and technology for children aged 9 through 14, using real-world context and hands-on experimentation. Using LEGO bricks and other elements such as sensors, motors, and gears, teams gain hands-on experience in engineering and computer programming principles as they construct and program their unique robot inventions.

For more information on the Atacama project: <http://www.frc.ri.cmu.edu/atacama/>

For more information about First League: <http://www.firstlegoleague.org/>

Explore the Universe at America's First Planetarium - the only museum in the world with two full-size planetarium theaters.

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