



News Release

5050 Oakland Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63110

Voice: 314.289.4400
Fax: 314.289.4420

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For Immediate Release

MISSION: MARS SAINT LOUIS SCIENCE CENTER TO OPEN NEW EXHIBITION NOV. 21

ST. LOUIS, MO (Nov. 20, 2015) – On Nov. 21, the Saint Louis Science Center is opening Mission: Mars, an interactive exhibition designed to immerse visitors in the exploration of Mars in the current day and in the future. Developed by the Saint Louis Science Center in partnership with Washington University in St. Louis, NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory and NASA’s Johnson Space Center, this unique exhibition will engage visitors in two separate but connected locations within the facility. The opening will be marked by a ribbon cutting ceremony at the James S. McDonnell Planetarium at 9:30 a.m.

“We are living in an incredible time with the exploration of Mars, and want to give our visitors the chance to experience the technology behind this exploration first-hand through Mission: Mars,” said Christian Greer, chief education and programs officer for the Saint Louis Science Center. “Through this immersive exhibit, visitors will be able to engage in the exploration of Mars by actually learning how to program rovers that are modeled like the real rovers that are on the planet right now. We hope this one-of-a-kind exhibit ignites curiosity and inspires our younger visitors to continue to support and participate in space exploration.”

Guests have two portions of the exhibit to choose from to begin their Mars experience. In the Saint Louis Science Center’s main building (located at 5050 Oakland), guests can engage with one area of the exhibit, named Mission: Mars – Control. In this portion of the exhibit, guests experience current day exploration operations by assuming the role of an engineer at a NASA Engineering Lab, designing and building a robotic rover to explore Mars. They will have the opportunity to program a rover and experience the challenges of driving it in a simulated time delay, while seeing the planet from the perspective of a rover.

The second portion of the exhibit in the James S. McDonnell Planetarium is called Mission Mars – Base, and is resembles a realistic work environment on Mars in the year 2076. Taking on the role of an astronaut living on Mars, visitors will be able to perform science operations at key locations on the planet, using a rover much like the one used on Mars now.

Two rovers were specially designed for this exhibit, and were named Intrepid and Adventure, names that were selected by the public through an online poll.

The content with the Mission: Mars exhibition reflects the goals of NASA’s Office of Education: to engage citizens in NASA’s missions and share NASA’s current understanding of the planet.

The Mission: Mars exhibit is particularly meaningful within the St. Louis community, given the city’s rich history in space exploration dating back to McDonnell Aircraft Corporation’s involvement in the Mercury and Gemini missions, which sent the first Americans into space. Today, St. Louis is a key hub for NASA’s planetary exploration mission through the work of researchers at Washington University in St. Louis’ Earth and Planetary Remote Sensing Laboratory (EPRSL). Directed by Dr. Ray Arvidson, EPRSL is involved with the

planning and programming of both the Curiosity and Opportunity rovers currently exploring Mars. Dr. Arvidson served as a scientific advisor for the development of the exhibit.

“Washington University in Saint Louis has had a long and deep involvement with NASA in robotic exploration of the solar system through our McDonnell Center for the Space Sciences. I look forward to sharing, through the new Saint Louis Science Center and its new exhibits, some of the excitement associated with exploring Mars, a planet whose rocks reveal unequivocal evidence for past warm, wet conditions, with rivers and lakes in abundance.”

Mission: Mars is free to all visitors. There will be paid, educational programs offered to groups in both exhibit locations. For more information, please visit slsc.org.

Trademarks

Thank you for your interest in the Saint Louis Science Center. We ask that you include the full names of our institution: Saint Louis Science Center, OMNIMAX® Theater, Boeing Hall and James S. McDonnell Planetarium when writing your story.

Saint Louis Science Center

The mission of the Saint Louis Science Center is to ignite and sustain lifelong science and technology learning. It is one of the top 15 science centers worldwide and was named one of the “Top 10 Science Centers for Families” by Parents magazine. The Saint Louis Science Center complex includes a five-story OMNIMAX® Theater, Boeing Hall and the James S. McDonnell Planetarium. For more information about the Saint Louis Science Center, please visit slsc.org.

Media Contact: Mindy Peirce, 314.289.4683, mindy.peirce@slsc.org