

San Diego Region's First Science Festival to be Launched March 2009

Over 250 free events scheduled for the public at UC San Diego, Salk Institute, Burnham Institute, The Scripps Research Institute and other venues throughout San Diego County

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Have you ever wanted to sit down and chat with a Nobel Laureate? Did you know that red wine not only goes well with steak, but also has anti-aging properties? Have you ever wanted to uncover the mysteries of baseball's knuckleball pitch? Were you curious about the science behind Harry Potter's magic? These and other intriguing questions will be answered at the inaugural San Diego Science Festival (SDSF), planned as one of the biggest-ever celebrations of science on the West Coast.

The Festival will descend on San Diego with events throughout the county in March and April 2009 with something for everyone, from the smallest child to even the most established scientist. The first of its kind on the West Coast, the San Diego Science Festival promises to be the ultimate multi-cultural, multi-generational celebration of science and technology.

Inspired by international science festivals that currently draw crowds in the hundreds of thousands, the goal of the San Diego Science Festival is to increase community awareness of science and inspire our nation's youth to consider entering science-related careers. At the same time, the Festival will unite our community and showcase the amazing science and innovation taking place in San Diego.

BioBridge, a "hands-on" science education initiative conducted by the University of California, San Diego in partnership with local school districts, is taking the lead on organizing the region's first major science festival in collaboration with the San Diego Science Alliance, Connect, Biocom and other key organizations.

"UC San Diego is proud to be a major collaborator in the San Diego Science Festival," said Marye Anne Fox, chancellor of UC San Diego and a world-renowned chemist. "This important event is a great way to show our local community that science and technology are essential for our county and nation to thrive in the new global economy. The Festival will also demonstrate that a basic understanding of science is critical in making day-to-day decisions."

From the science of wine to the physics of surfing, the San Diego Science Festival promises to make science accessible, interactive and fun, highlighting the impact of science and innovation on our lives.

Designed as a multifaceted, multicultural event modeled on art, movie and music festivals, the 2009 San Diego Science Festival will feature:

Science Month, March 2009 For the entire month of March, 50 of San Diego's top scientists - dubbed the "Nifty Fifty" - will tour schools around the county to inspire students and build momentum for the Festival. In addition, the San Diego Science Festival will host the San Diego Science Alliance's High Tech Fair where over 50 of San Diego's leading technology companies will mesmerize middle and high school students with captivating science exhibitions.

Discovery Week, March 28-April 3, 2009 The Festival will host an event-filled week open to the public, including forensic science at one of San Diego's premier biotech companies, Biogen Idec. "Lunch with a Laureate" will offer a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to have an informal lunch with Nobel Laureates. And some of San Diego's premier research and educational institutions such as General Atomics, the Burnham Institute, High Tech High and UC San Diego will offer open house and science days.

The Science of You Expo, April 4, 2009 The focal point of the San Diego Science Festival will be a concentrated celebration of science exploration and discovery. Festival-goers can participate in workshops, behind-the-scenes tours, talks, performances and film screenings. Many of the events are interactive and geared to kids and their families. But there will also be adult-centered events such as "The Physics of Golf," where experts will demonstrate how knowledge of velocity, momentum and force can make better golfers.

"This celebration of science and technology can serve as inspiration and nourishment for our youth, while providing a venue for scientists at all levels to coalesce and reaffirm the fundamental truths of nature while searching the mysteries of life and the cosmos," said Medtronic chief technology officer Steve Oesterle. "It well may be the Woodstock of this millennium."

"Lockheed Martin is committed to inspiring interest and excitement in science and engineering careers," stated Ray O. Johnson, Lockheed Martin Corporation senior vice president and chief technology officer. "We look forward to participating in the San Diego Science Festival as an opportunity to encourage students to pursue technical careers which are critical to our corporation and to our nation in the years ahead."

Part of an international network of science festivals, the San Diego Science Festival has developed strategic partnerships with both the highly successful East Coast Cambridge Science Festival - a joint effort among a number of leading institutions including MIT and Harvard - and the long-running Science Festivals in England and Australia.

The Advisory Board of the San Diego Science Festival includes nine Nobel Laureates as well as chief technology officers from many multi-national firms and world-renowned translational scientists and educational leaders.

Organizations and entities collaborating with the San Diego Science Festival include Action Sport Innovators, American Woman in Science (AWIS), Aquatic Adventures, UC San Diego BioBridge, Birch Aquarium at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, Biocom, Burnham Institute for Medical Research, California Science Center, California State University San Marcos, Connect, CRES, Elementary Institute of Science, Expanding Your Horizons, General Atomics, Girls Incorporated, Girl Scouts, High Tech High, LEGOLAND California, Mad Science, MCAS Miramar, NanoBioNexus, NanoBusiness Alliance, NanoTumor Center, National Defense Industry Association, National Defense Education Program, NOBCCHE, Office of Naval Research, PowerfulLatinas.com, Ruben H. Fleet Science Center, The Scripps Research Institute, Salk Institute for Biological Sciences, San Diego Mensa, San Diego Museum of Art, San Diego Science Educators Association, San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation, San Diego Science Alliance, San Diego State University, San Diego Supercomputer Center, San Diego Zoo, ScholarNexus, The Bishop's School, UC San Diego Division of Biological Sciences, UC San Diego Division of Physical Sciences, UC San Diego Jacobs School of Engineering and the UC San Diego Rady School of Management.

"The San Diego Science Festival is a magnetic force," said Nancy Taylor, executive director of the San Diego Science Alliance. "The K-12 science community is highly attracted to all the possibilities and ways to participate in the Festival."

The San Diego Science Festival is generously supported by Larry and Diane Bock, Agilent Foundation, Alexandria Real Estate Equities Inc., Biogen Idec Foundation, Gen-Probe Incorporated, Illumina, Lockheed Martin Corporation, Avalon Ventures, Celgene, Genomics Institute of the Novartis Research Foundation, Lilly, NanoBusiness Alliance, Neurocrine Biosciences, Wuxi PharmaTech, Accelrys Inc., Amgen, Merck, Amylin Pharmaceuticals Inc., Howard C. Birndorf - Nanogen Inc., Harry Gruber and Joan Cunningham, Cenco Physics, K&L Gates, Nanosys and Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati. Sponsorships are still available.

"The San Diego Science Festival is just the type of public/private partnership that is necessary to supplement the education of our youth and get them interested in careers in the sciences," said Randy Ward, San Diego County superintendent of schools. "We are excited to be working with the Festival organizers."

"The San Diego Science Festival is THE opportunity to see for yourself the incredible scope and breadth of modern science that impacts, on a daily basis, every aspect of our lives," added David Webb, vice president of research for Signal Pharmaceuticals.

For more information about the 2009 San Diego Science Festival, including schedule details, frequently asked questions and comments from science community leaders, please visit www.sdsciencefestival.com or join our Social Network at www.MySDScience.com.

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