



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Celebrating 5 Years**

***'Imiloa's Family Free Day sponsored by KTA Super Stores***

Hilo, Hawai'i –Save the date, Sunday February 13. The public is invited to 'Imiloa Astronomy Center's 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration with a Family Free Day, Sunday, February 13, 2011. Thanks to the generous sponsorship of KTA Super Stores, this celebration is free to the community.

This Family Free Day starts at 9 a.m. and runs until 4 p.m. The first 500 keiki visitors will receive a special 'Imiloa kite to take home. In addition to having its exhibits hall and planetarium open, there will be birthday cake, and a "make your own" ice cream station while supplies last. KTA Super Stores will have teri sandwiches and hot dogs for sale.

The day's special programs will include short planetarium experiences for this day starting at 9 a.m. and will be offered every 20 minutes to accommodate the expected large numbers. The audiences will be treated to a night sky presentation, and a "sampling" of 'Imiloa shows. Hourly astronomy talks coordinated by the "Journey Through the Universe" team on the hour will start at 9:30 a.m. Astronomy professionals Doris Daou, Scott Fisher, Kevin Grazer, Brian Day, Sandra Dawson, and Tim and Stephanie Slater will have inspiring presentations for visitors. Astronomers from the observatories, rangers from the Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, HELCO's model home representatives, and master gardeners "sustainable gardening" will have informative booths in and around the center. A Voyaging exhibit by Gary Eoff, antique car showcase, solar telescope viewing, and hands-on activities for the kids are available throughout the day.

"We have appreciated the support of the local community these past years, and want to say 'Mahalo' and invite the public to the Center. The local community has supported 'Imiloa's presence in a way that we never imagined and we are incredibly grateful for their loyalty and belief in our mission.

Opening our doors free to the community is our way of showing gratitude for that support, made possible by the generosity of the KTA Super Stores ‘ohana,” said Ka‘iu Kimura, executive director of ‘Imiloa Astronomy Center of Hawai‘i. “We want to thank Barry Taniguchi and the entire KTA ‘ohana for their kōkua.” Kimura also noted that the community has embraced ‘Imiloa and this Family Free Day as a celebration for the whole community and a day for ‘Imiloa to express its mahalo to its many supporters.

‘Imiloa partners with “Journey through the Universe”, a program offered to communities across the nation to provide an authentic window on science as a human endeavor, using sustainable programming designed to both inspire and educate. Special programming and a Family Science Day are planned as part of the annual celebration.

Hilo’s “Journey Through the Universe” is a full week of cosmic exploration, star-studded space and science education, and will run Thursday February 10 through February 18, 2011. The program engages local communities of students, teachers and parents in a whirlwind of activities and learning. Gemini Observatory and the Department of Education Hilo/ Laupahoehoe/ Waiakea Complex Area have sponsored “Journey through the Universe” in Hilo since 2004. The Hilo site has been nationally recognized as the flagship “Journey” program in the nation. Visit [www.gemini.edu/journey](http://www.gemini.edu/journey) for more information.

The Sky Garden Restaurant will open early for breakfast at 7 a.m. and remain open until 4 p.m. with its daylong breakfast menu, selection of sandwiches, salads, and soups, and weekend lunch buffet. The Center will have outdoor benches and tables available for outdoor enjoyment and picnics. Sky Garden Restaurant will also stay open late for Sunday dinner starting at 5:00 p.m.

‘Imiloa Astronomy Center of Hawai‘i opened in February 2006. The world-class destination intertwines the Hawaiian cultural and navigational understanding of the stars with real-time information direct from Maunakea’s world-famous astronomy observatories. It is open to the public from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesdays through Sundays (closed Mondays). For more information, visit the Web site at [www.imiloahawaii.org](http://www.imiloahawaii.org) or call (808) 969-9703.

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