



For Immediate Release

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'Imiloa Planetarium Upgrade and Closure
Week of February 27 to March 6

Hilo, Hawai'i – 'Imiloa Astronomy Center will be installing a state of the art computer cluster in the planetarium from February 27 to March 6, during which time the planetarium will be closed to the public. The necessary upgrade will give the 'Imiloa planetarium the ability to produce its own cutting-edge content which can be shared with 3D Fulldome planetariums around the world. Exhibit halls will remain open; special live, hosted presentations on the Science on a Sphere and in a portable planetarium environment will be offered for one week only from February 27 to March 6 during regularly scheduled planetarium showtimes.

The planetarium will be closed for the computer installation and upgrades, however, most of the current daily planetarium content will be offered in a Digitalis portable planetarium dome in the Earl and Doris Bakken Moanahōkū Hall. In addition, live, hosted presentations will be offered on the Science on a Sphere, a global display system that uses computers and video projectors to display planetary data onto a six foot diameter sphere, analogous to a giant animated globe.

'Imiloa's Four Dimensional Digital Universe (4D2U) Theater will also be the site of a live 3D presentation using Mitaka software, a special software used to visualize the known universe with up-to-date observational data and theoretical models. Developed by the 4D2U project of the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan, Mitaka navigates across the universe seamlessly from the Earth to the edges of the known universe offering visitors an unparalleled journey through time and space.

“This week of special live programming highlighting the Science on a Sphere, the Mitaka, and the Digitalis portable planetarium enhances our guest experience by engaging and encouraging dialogue between live presenters and visitors who come here to learn about science,” said Jeff Harman, Imiloa’s marketing manager, “We are excited about the opportunity to offer educationally enriching content to our visitors and our community and we look forward to being able to produce and market more of our own shows after our upgrade is complete.”

Imiloa Astronomy Center of Hawai‘i weaves today’s newest astronomy findings and Hawai‘i’s cultural heritage into a compelling story of star exploration. The Center features more than 100 exhibits including an interactive meteor display, a replica of the sacred Maunakea mountain with the night sky overhead within its 12,000-square-foot exhibit hall. The planetarium is the World’s first 3D stereoscopic system, adding a rich dimension to the planetarium experience. It is one of the first discovery centers in Hawai‘i to incorporate both Hawaiian and English languages to enhance the cultural and learning experience. Located on nine acres of lush ethno-botanical gardens in Hilo on Hawai‘i’s Big Island, the Center’s 40,000-square-foot facility opened to the public in February 2006. Visitors can enjoy the planetarium, exhibit halls, learning center, restaurant and museum store. 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 or call (808) 969-9703.

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