



Over 1,500 Science Center Leaders to Gather in Albuquerque for ASTC Annual Conference

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Albuquerque, New Mexico will be the setting when more than 1,500 leaders of the global science center community, representing 42 countries, will convene October 19-22, for the 2013 Annual Conference of the Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC). ASTC 2013 will be hosted by Explora, the National Museum of Nuclear Science and History, and the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science, and held at the Albuquerque Convention Center and the Hyatt Regency Albuquerque Hotel.

Highlights of this year's conference – once again the premier professional development opportunity for the global science center community – include:

- Over **100 conference sessions** addressing everything from education, outreach, management, development and fundraising, marketing and public relations, equity and diversity, exhibits, and more.
- An **opening keynote address** on Saturday, October 19 by **Eugenie Scott, executive director of the National Center for Science Education**, a not-for-profit membership organization that works to improve the teaching of science as a way of knowing, and the teaching of evolution, and the teaching of climate change.
- A **keynote presentation** on Sunday, October 20 by **Ramu Damodaran, deputy director for partnerships and public engagement for the United Nations' Outreach Division**.
- **Keynote dialogue** on Monday, October 21, called **"Thinking Big: A Conversation with Neal Stephenson,"** features **award-winning science fiction author Neal Stephenson** (author of books such as *Cryptonomicon*, *Snow Crash*, and *REAMDE*); **Ed Finn, director of Arizona State University's Center for Science and the Imagination**; and **Alexander Zwissler, executive director and CEO of Chabot Space and Science Center** in Oakland, CA.
- **"Ten Years of Going to Work on Mars Every Day,"** a featured session with **Larry Crumpler, research curator at the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science**, and a science team member of the Mars Rover Mission, will also be held on Monday, October 21.
- The **ASTC Exhibit Hall**, featuring **more than 110 exhibitors** representing a wide range of products and services.

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- The **Digital Planetarium Demonstrations**, where attendees will have a unique chance to see the technology and content that planetariums, museums, and science centers are choosing to educate, excite, and inspire audiences, and the always popular **Big Screen Day**, sponsored by the Giant Screen Cinema Association, featuring eight of the latest giant screen films. Both events will be held at the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science during Museum Open House Day, when special events, including the **Science in the Park** public festival at Tiguex Park, will be held at all three host museums on Tuesday, October 22.

With more than 95 million visits worldwide each year, science centers are sites for informal learning, and are places to discover, explore, and test ideas about science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), serving families, schoolchildren, homeschoolers, teachers, and citizens. They play a valuable role within their communities, serving as a hub for learning, exploring, and engaging. Science centers encourage the innate curiosity that resides in all of us, providing opportunities for education, awareness of social and global issues, even recreation.

For more information on ASTC's 2013 Annual Conference, visit conference.astc.org.

About ASTC

The Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC) is a global organization providing collective voice, professional support, and programming opportunities for science centers, museums, and related institutions, whose innovative approaches to science learning inspire people of all ages about the wonders and the meaning of science in their lives. Through strategic alliances and global partnerships, ASTC strives to increase awareness of the valuable contributions its members make to their communities and the field of informal STEM learning. Founded in 1973, ASTC now represents over 650 members in nearly 50 countries, including not only science centers and museums, but also nature centers, aquariums, planetariums, zoos, botanical gardens, and natural history and children's museums, as well as companies, consultants, and other organizations that share an interest in informal science education. For more information about ASTC, or to find a science center near you, visit www.astc.org.

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