

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Apollo 11

*Planetarium to offer programming highlighting the significance of the Apollo moon program*

**SALT LAKE CITY (July 20, 2009)** — On July 20, 1969 man first stepped on the surface of an alternate world in what was the greatest single technological achievement of all time. At 8:17 p.m. (MST) astronaut Neil Armstrong took the famous “small step for man” on the surface of the moon. As we commemorate this event 40 years later, the human need for exploration still lives strong.

“I remember watching Armstrong’s first step on our black and white TV. To me, this was both thrilling and yet an entirely logical progression towards the stars – it seemed to me to be completely natural. I’d followed the Mercury and Gemini programs closely when I was in elementary school and I was a fan of the ‘new’ show on TV called *Star Trek*. The movie *2001: A Space Odyssey* had recently played at the Villa Theatre and it was the most amazing thing I’d ever seen. From the perspective of my 14 year-old outlook on life, human footprints on the moon were inevitable,” said Clark Planetarium Director Seth Jarvis.

On July 20, 2009 Clark Planetarium will host a series of film screenings and a special presentation on the importance of space exploration to honor the Apollo 11 anniversary. At 12 noon, 2:45 and 6 p.m. the film, “*Magnificent Desolation: Walking on the Moon 3D*” will play in the ATK IMAX Theatre. This special screening of the film tells the incredible story of the 12 astronauts that walked on the moon from 1969 - 1972.

Then at 7 p.m., Clark Planetarium’s Programs Manager, Mike Murray, will host a presentation in the Hansen Dome Theatre on the Apollo expeditions to the moon and the future of lunar exploration. Audience members will explore panoramic views from the Apollo landing sites along with detailed views from lunar orbit. This discussion will also examine the implications and benefits from past exploration as well as give insight into what the future holds for science and industry on the moon.

“Through using the capabilities of our digital dome theatre, people will be able to experience a very detailed and immersive view of the moon. Not only will we be showing detailed views of past moon landing sites, we will show recently released imagery from the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter spacecraft and its quest to find water,” Murray explained.

To help celebrate Apollo 11’s 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, tickets for these events will be available to the public for just \$1 each and will be available at the planetarium on the day of the event.

Clark Planetarium’s mission is to create and present stimulating educational programs that effectively share astronomy and space exploration information with Salt Lake County residents, Utah students, educators, families and visitors from around the country and the world.

### SIDEBAR:

**About the film:** In the history of mankind, only 12 men have stepped on the surface of the moon ... *Magnificent Desolation* is their story. From 1969, the year of the first lunar exploration by NASA, to 1972, the last time a manned mission was sent to the moon’s surface, only 12 men have experienced the feeling of walking on extra-terrestrial ground. During those years, man spent almost 300 hours exploring and documenting the surface of the moon, and has not returned in over 30 years.

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Buzz Aldrin, of the Apollo 11 NASA mission and the second man to walk on the moon, uttered the now famous descriptor "Magnificent Desolation" to express the sensation of being on the moon as well as the landscape he observed.

**About Mike Murray:** As the Programs Manager for Clark Planetarium, Mr. Murray oversees the production department responsible for creating shows that play in the Hansen Dome Theatre and are sold across the world. Since 1990 he has worked in the domain of digital planetariums, experimenting with new approaches and techniques for public presentation and science education programs. He boasts 32 years of experience in the planetarium and informal science education field, serving at six different organizations around the country.

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