



BELLARMINE UNIVERSITY
IN VERITATIS AMORE



UofL, Bellarmine event celebrates the heavens

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – The 2009 International Year of Astronomy marks the 400th anniversary of Galileo Galilei's first telescopic view of the heavens. The University of Louisville and Bellarmine University are joining the celebration with an unveiling of unprecedented new NASA images of our galaxy and a panel discussion on Nov. 19.

The event, co-sponsored by the universities, begins at 7 p.m. in the Gheens Science Hall and Rauch Planetarium at UofL. At 7:30 p.m., the panel discussion begins in the dome.

Galileo spent the last several years of his life under house arrest because his teaching that the planets rotated around the sun went against the position of the Catholic Church and the science of his day. The panel of scientific and religious scholars will discuss the history of faith and reason, Galileo's contribution to space science and the next generation of space observation.

Panelists include: James Lauroesch, assistant professor of physics and astronomy, UofL; Rachel Connolly, director, Gheens Science Hall and Rauch Planetarium; Katherine Bulinski, assistant professor of geosciences, Bellarmine University; Akhtar Mahmood, associate professor of physics, Bellarmine and J. Milburn Thompson, chair, theology dept., Bellarmine.

The unveiling includes a giant 6-foot-by-3-foot image that presents a unique view of the galaxy in near-infrared light observed by the Hubble Space Telescope, infrared light observed by Spitzer Space Telescope and X-ray light observed by Chandra X-ray Observatory. This combined image was carefully assembled from mosaic photo surveys of the Milky Way's core by each telescope. It provides the most wide-ranging view ever of our galaxy's mysterious hub.

The universities will also unveil a matched trio of Hubble, Spitzer, and Chandra images of the Milky Way's center on a second large panel measuring 3-feet-by-4-feet. Each image shows the telescope's different wavelength view of the central region of our galaxy that illustrates not only the unique science each observatory conducts, but also how far astronomy has come since Galileo.

Additional information about the Hubble Space Telescope is available at <http://hubblesite.org/>. Additional information about the Spitzer Space Telescope is available at <http://www.spitzer.caltech.edu/>. Additional information about the Chandra X-ray Observatory is available at <http://chandra.harvard.edu/>. Additional information about NASA's celebration of the International Year of Astronomy is available at <http://astronomy2009.nasa.gov/>.

Refreshments will be provided and free parking for the event is available on a first come, first served basis beginning at 7 p.m. in the red lot by building 83 on the map at this link: <http://louisville.edu/planetarium/visit/BELKNAPmap.pdf>. Inexpensive pay parking is available at the Speed Art Museum parking garage, next to the planetarium.

The new images will remain on display for public viewing at the Rauch Planetarium and in Bellarmine's Norton Health Science Center.

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