



Media Contact: David Perry, DP&A, Inc.: (415) 693-0583 / news@davidperry.com

First Annual Bay Area Science Festival: October 29-November 6, 2011

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Over 100 Free Events Bring Together Region's Science & Educational Leaders

14 July 2011 -- SAN FRANCISCO: The San Francisco Bay Area is known for its groundbreaking work in science and technology, yet many who call the Bay Area home have little to no opportunity to experience the wonder of science.

From October 29 to November 6, 2011, the public is invited to participate in the first annual **Bay Area Science Festival**, (www.bayareascience.org) a series of events designed to showcase the region's catalytic role in scientific progress and provide innovative opportunities to build community around science, technology and engineering.

Led by the **University of California, San Francisco (UCSF)**, the Bay Area Science Festival has brought together an unprecedented brain trust of the region's scientific and educational partners to produce what is expected to be one of the largest science-based events ever held in the United States. Most of the activities are free.

"The Bay Area has long been a worldwide leader in science and technology innovation and this region remains an incubator of countless breakthroughs," said UCSF Chancellor Susan Desmond-Hellmann, MD, MPH. "The Bay Area Science Festival is a region-wide celebration of our unique innovative spirit; a celebration that will showcase our area's incredible resources to help re-invigorate a passion for science and technology among Bay Area residents. UCSF is pleased to lead the inaugural Bay Area Science Festival and we hope that it will continue for years to come."

Featuring more than 100 fun, interactive science and technology events at local venues from Santa Rosa to San Jose, the Bay Area Science Festival will include provocative lectures, hands-on activities, exhibitions, tours of cutting-edge facilities, guided hikes and neighborhood stargazing. Activities will include:

- **Discovery Days:** Three large-scale free events – One each at Cal State East Bay in Hayward (Saturday, October 29), Infineon Raceway in Sonoma (Saturday, November, 5) and at AT&T Park in San Francisco (Sunday, November 6),– will be scientific happenings akin to education-based rock concerts, with hands-on experiments, demonstrations, exhibits and family-oriented musical and theatrical performances.
- **Bay Area Star Party:** On the evening of Saturday, November 5, a number of local observatories will be open, and both professional and amateur astronomers will be on hand at public sites to offer telescope viewing and observing tips to participants.
- **Wonder Dialogues:** A series of provocative conversations featuring accomplished scientific researchers, the Wonder Dialogues will take participants to the edge of scientific understanding with compelling discussions - ranging from the limits of the human brain to the origins of the universe.

The Bay Area Science Festival is partnering with the **San Francisco Public Library** and **Peninsula Library System** to encourage the community to read “**Packing for Mars,**” in which Bay Area author **Mary Roach** tackles the strange science of space travel. A series of book clubs, author discussions and evening events inspired by the best selling nonfiction work will be held at public library branches throughout the Bay Area.

“To plan the festival, we have brought together the Bay Area’s leading academic, scientific, corporate and nonprofit institutions with the collective aim of providing accessible science programming to every Bay Area resident,” said **Kishore Hari**, who joined UCSF’s Science & Health Education Partnership program in November 2009 to lead the science festival. “By putting science at everyone’s fingertips, we hope to engage our communities in its wonders and inspire the next generation of scientists and engineers.”

UCSF is a leading university dedicated to promoting health worldwide through advanced biomedical research, graduate-level education in the life sciences and health professions, and excellence in patient care.

In addition to UCSF and the National Science Foundation, partners for the Bay Area Science Festival include **Astronomical Society of the Pacific, BayBio, the Buck Institute for Age Research, the California Academy of Sciences, California State University East Bay, Chabot Space & Science Center, KQED, the Lawrence Hall of Science, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute, Stanford University, San Francisco State University, the San Jose Children's Discovery Museum, SETI Institute, the Tech Museum, the University of California, Berkeley, and the United States Geological Survey.**

Specific event and venue details about the first annual Bay Area Science Festival will be announced in August at a special event for the public and media, featuring regional and national political and scientific leaders.

For ongoing information about the events, visit the Bay Area Science Festival website www.bayareascience.org / [twitter@bayareascience](https://twitter.com/bayareascience) / #basf11 www.facebook.com/bayareascience

What Bay Area Science Festival Partners Have to Say:

Stanford University is proud to be a partner of the first-ever Bay Area Science Festival. We look forward to sharing the excitement of science with our community and to bringing people inside the university for a first-hand look at innovation. Our faculty and their graduate students and research staff, in areas ranging from chemical engineering to seismology, are eager to share our scientific discovery through lab tours and hands-on exhibits here at Stanford.

-- *John L. Hennessy, President, Stanford University*

KQED is pleased to be part of the first ever Bay Area Science Festival. Providing science news and information to the public through media and supporting science teachers in the classroom are part of KQED's mission. We hope the festival will inspire even more people to explore the wonders of science.

-- *John Boland, KQED President and CEO*

California State University East Bay's College of Science has a tradition of opening its facilities to the community with the goal of bringing science awareness to the largest possible audience. By joining forces with the Bay Area Science Festival, we will make that happen. We look forward to outside exhibitors joining our faculty and students in making our festival very special. The Science Festival is an important event to the university, as Cal State East Bay is committed to an increased focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education as a way of preparing our students to fill the current and future workforce needs of this region.

-- *Michael Leung, Dean for the College of Science, California State University East Bay*

BayBio and the life sciences industry have a responsibility to ensure that today's leaders are committed to the mission of sustaining our region's competitiveness. We must improve our community's understanding of science in order to assist our students and teachers in raising the next generation of scientists.

-- *Gail Maderis, President and CEO BayBio*

As someone who has spent most of his career working to enhance the public understanding of science, I am delighted to see a regional science festival come to the Bay Area at last. Our region is such a hotbed of scientific inquiry and innovation, and there is so much public interest in the sciences, it's high time one of these festivals was started here. This is such an exciting time in the sciences. In my own field, astronomy, we are discovering hundreds of planets around other stars including some possible earthlike planets, we have found that the expansion of the cosmos is speeding up, and we are in the midst of the most detailed exploration of neighboring worlds ever undertaken. Since so much of science today is supported by public funds, it is only right that scientists take the time to share the excitement of their research with the public at large.

-- *Andrew Fraknoi, Chair, Astronomy Department, Foothill College*

Every day at Chabot Space & Science Center is a Science Festival. We're excited to share our passion for science discovery with the region through our giant, historic telescopes, space artifacts, hands-on exhibits and provocative guest lectures. Our exhibition Chabot's Bill Nye's Climate Lab is creating a generation of citizen climate scientists who will be at the vanguard of new energy solutions discovered through scientific processes we champion. We are proud to be a partner with the Bay Area Science Festival .

-- *Alexander Zwissler, Executive Director/CEO, Chabot Space & Science Center*

I like to think that there is a lot of scientist in some of us, but at least a little scientist in all of us. For anyone who has ever wondered about the natural world, why things are the way they are, or wanted to get hands on with nature, here is your chance!

-- *Dr. Marcia McNutt, Director, US Geological Survey*

By igniting a person's curiosity about science, we invite them to explore the world we all live in. Science is all about exploring and exploring is fun. The Bay Area Science Festival is a celebration of science - an opportunity for local scientists and organizations to engage with our communities and share the fascination. At the California Academy of Sciences, we fascinate visitors with the natural world every day through innovative exhibits and memorable encounters. We look forward to seeing sparks of curiosity fly during the exciting lineup of festival events.

-- *Gregory C. Farrington, Executive Director of the California Academy of Sciences*
