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Mars Comes Alive With Images and Music at Cal Poly Kennedy Library Nov. 7 – Jan. 12

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Experience another world in a unique and engaging way with “Mars Within Reach: Arctic Melodies and Science from the Red Planet,” an interactive exhibit scheduled at Cal Poly. The free and public exhibit is scheduled to run Nov. 7 through Jan. 12 in the Kennedy Library Gallery at the Commons. An opening reception is set at the same location for Friday, Nov. 14 from 4:30 to 6 p.m.

The exhibit will allow visitors to touch, hear, and interact with data from several recent Mars missions. It blends planetary science, engineering, and music to demonstrate scholarship related to the exploration of the Martian Arctic, with special attention to making the content accessible to persons with visual impairments.

Visitors will explore Martian volcanoes, valleys, and craters using tactile models, and will be able to touch rock samples that have been drilled into by a rock abrasion tool identical to those found on the arms of the Mars Rovers Spirit and Opportunity.

In addition, the exhibit will feature an interactive display that allows visitors to hear data from Mars through a process know as sonification, a musical composition created by coding data from the Mars Odyssey spacecraft from water ice and dry ice in the arctic regions of the planet.

Sonification is explored further with a special one-day workshop, "A Walk on the Sun: Knowledge Through Music" hosted by composer Marty Quinn and Cal Poly Physics Professor and Cal Poly Planetary Scientist John Keller. The workshop is geared towards the visually impaired, mentors, educators and the general public. Participants will be able to explore "images" of the sun, Mars, and other planets by moving their bodies through a virtual reality space, listening to music corresponding to respective features of each celestial object.

“Mars Within Reach” also will feature scale models of the Phoenix Mars Lander, high-resolution images of Mars, and materials from Mars in Science Fiction such as original copies of books by author Edgar Rice Burroughs.

The exhibit is possible thanks to the collaborative efforts of Keller, Quinn, the NASA Mars Exploration Program at JPL, the NASA Phoenix Mars Lander Mission at the University of Arizona, and the Disability Resource Center and Robert E. Kennedy Library at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo.

The exhibit will be open during normal library hours. For more information on “Mars Within Reach,” visit the Library’s Web site at *www.lib.calpoly.edu*/ or call 805-756-2305. For library hours, visit *www.lib.calpoly.edu/about/hours*.

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