The Herbert F. Trackman Planetarium

2017-2018 Program

Show & Group Information

All public shows at the planetarium last approximately one hour. They start with a trip through the current skies using the OmniStar digital projector and conclude with a Q&A session.

All shows are free and suitable for all ages. Seating is first come, first serve. Grade school and high school groups are encouraged to attend special programs presented during the school day. These programs are often combined with a visit to the 150-year-old Cronin Schoolhouse, which is also located on campus.

Social and civic organizations are also invited to schedule programs. These programs are available during the day on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and on select Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Reservations are required for the special programs.

Making Reservations for Special Shows

To make reservations for your school group or organization, contact Field Trip Coordinator Gina Foote at (815) 280-2525 or gfoote@jjc.edu.

Astronomy Courses

JJC offers the following college-level astronomy courses. These are designed for non-science majors. No prior science courses are required to enroll.

Descriptive Astronomy (ASTR 101) –

Learn about the concepts, principles and methods that lead to our present understanding of the solar system, stars, galaxies and the universe. It includes a historical perspective of how our understanding of the universe has progressed over the years. This course is offered during the fall, spring and summer semesters.

Life in the Universe (PHSCI 125) –

This course covers the possibility of finding life beyond Earth, how we search for life outside of Earth, and the feasibility of humans traveling in and colonizing space. Professor Noella Dcruz teaches this course in the fall and spring semesters.

For more information about classes, contact the Department of Natural Sciences and Physical Education at (815) 280-6682.

Contact Information

Joliet Junior College
1215 Houbolt Road, Joliet, IL 60431
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For more information
about the Trackman Planetarium, contact:
Art Maurer, Director
amaurer@jjc.edu • (815) 280-2601

The JJC Foundation

Much of the funding to operate the Herbert Trackman Planetarium comes from generous contributions from the JJC Foundation. The JJC Foundation is the not-for-profit arm of JJC that collects funds to be used for scholarships and major projects not included in the college's budget. These contributions come from our alumni, individuals, organizations and corporations. We are grateful for the opportunity to offer shows to the community and to the thousands of children who visit us on school trips each year.

If you are interested in helping with these ancillary projects at JJC, please contact Resource Development at 815-280-2353.

Information subject to change. 0817-DP

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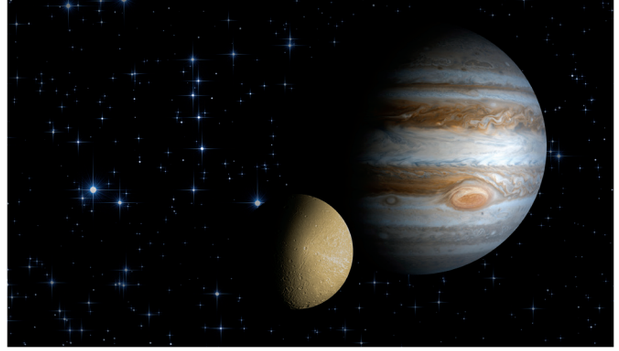
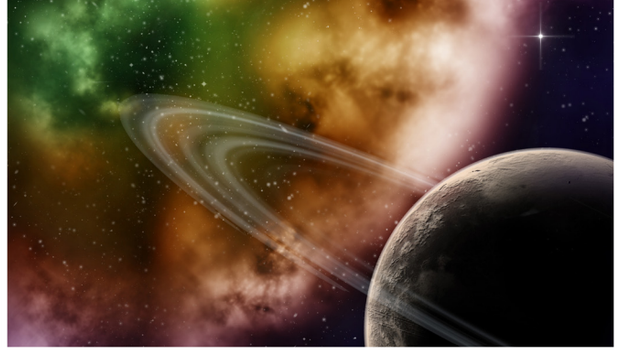
jjc.edu/info/planetarium


About The Planetarium

Visitors can discover the wonders of space and travel through the universe at JJC's Herbert Trackman Planetarium. The planetarium opened in 1973 thanks to the enthusiasm of former JJC President Doug Graham, and since then has received two generous donations: one from alumnus Herbert F. Trackman in 1988, and another in 2014, when the JJC Foundation provided funds to install a new OmniStar digital projection system. This system displays an accurate arrangement of the stars and planets on the planetarium's dome and has given viewers the opportunity to see professionally produced shows. All shows are continuously updated to reflect the latest information from NASA. Nearly 10,000 people visit each year to enjoy these educational shows offered for free thanks to the generosity of the JJC Foundation.

2017-2018 Schedule

PLEASE NOTE: *Public shows are at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and 6:30 p.m. on Thursdays. Shows marked with an asterisk are designed for the very young astronomer.*

Tuesday Shows (7:30 p.m.)

9/12/17	Seasonal Skies
9/26/17	Dark Matter
10/10/17	Sunstruck
10/24/17	Orbits
11/7/17	Two Small Pieces of Glass
11/21/17	How to Choose a Telescope
12/5/17	Story of the Christmas Star
12/19/17	No Show. See show on 12/17.
1/2/18	Solar System
1/16/18	Dark Matter
1/30/18	Galileo
2/13/18	Sunstruck
2/27/18	Mars
3/13/18	Two Small Pieces of Glass
3/27/18	Seasonal Skies
4/10/18	Humans and Robots in Space
4/24/18	Orbits
5/8/18	Asteroids and Comets
5/22/18	Black Holes
6/5/18	Seasonal Skies

Sunday Holiday Show (2:30 p.m.)

12/17/17	Story of the Christmas Star

Thursday Shows (6:30 p.m.)

9/21/17	Sunstruck
10/5/17	Larry Cat in Space*
10/19/17	Solar System
11/2/17	The Little Star that Could*
11/16/17	Dark Matter
11/30/17	We Go to the Moon*
12/14/17	Story of the Christmas Star
12/28/17	No Show – School Closed
1/11/18	Seasonal Skies
1/25/18	Larry Cat in Space*
2/8/18	Galileo
2/22/18	The Little Star that Could*
3/8/18	Seasonal Skies
3/22/18	Humans and Robots in Space
4/5/18	Sunstruck
4/19/18	We Go to the Moon*
5/3/18	Larry Cat in Space*
5/17/18	Solar System
5/31/18	Seasonal Skies
6/14/18	Dark Matter

Show Descriptions

Asteroids and Comets: Learn about the giant rocks that share the solar system with the planets. This show includes a history of terrestrial hits that have occurred since the beginning of the solar system, plus chances of collisions in the future.

Black Holes: What are black holes and where do they come from? What happens when something falls into a black hole? The audience will walk away from this show having learned more about one of the most interesting phenomena in astronomy.

Dark Matter: Did you know that only 4 percent of the universe is made up of regular matter (stars, planets and people)? The rest is made up of dark matter (23 percent) and dark energy (thought to be 73 percent). Viewers will learn more about dark matter in this thought-provoking program.

Galileo: Discover the story of Galileo, his science experiments and the telescope.

Humans and Robots in Space: Learn about the use of robots versus humans in space exploration.

Larry Cat in Space: This all-time children's favorite is back. "Larry Cat in Space" is a story about a cat who sneaks aboard a rocket for a trip to the moon.

The Little Star that Could: This animated story is about a new star that goes in search of its identity and finds a planet of its own. Accurate descriptions of the different types of stars are provided.

Mars: Mars is a future destination for manned space trips. Learn about the red planet and what is needed to survive a trip to this terrestrial land.

Orbits: Without orbits, Earth would crash into the sun and the moon would crash into Earth. Learn how orbits work in this entertaining show.

Seasonal Skies: This program will take you on a trip through the current season's skies.

Solar System: This show is about the sun, planets, plutoids, dwarf planets and other objects that orbit the sun. The show is continually updated to remain current and concludes with a look at the possibility of aliens.

Story of the Christmas Star: Learn about the history of the winter solstice celebration and why Christmas is celebrated at this time of the year. This show also addresses what the Christmas star might have been, what year the birth described in the Bible might have happened and the story of the three kings. Biblical, historical and astronomical data is used to prepare this show.

Sunstruck: How does the sun generate radiation? How hot is the sun and how long will it last? Get all your questions about the sun answered in this program.

How to Choose a Telescope: In this program, learn about the different types of telescopes and how to choose one you can afford. If you are planning to purchase a telescope and cannot attend this show, you can still contact the planetarium with questions.

Two Small Pieces of Glass: Learn how telescopes work and how they are used.

We Go to the Moon: Ever wonder what it would be like to go to the moon? Find out in this show! Students will also get a chance to discuss what they would need for their lunar voyage.

PLEASE NOTE:

Visitors should arrive early, as seating is limited and once the chamber is dark it is difficult to move around. Doors are closed once the chamber is filled.