Planetarium debuts new immersive shows

By Victoria Cruz
News Writer

The university Planetarium, located in Morrill Hall, has officially reopened with a brand-new catalogue of shows. Each Wednesday, the Planetarium will debut a new 30-minute show, starting at 12:15 p.m.

The program creates an opportunity for students to engage with educational material in an exciting and immersive way.

"The show was spectacular. The visuals of the planets, stars and nebulae were absolutely stunning," music major Jack Flanagan, a junior, said.

The Planetarium has long served as a resource for both students and faculty interested in astronomy and earth sciences.

As an educational tool, the combination of visual storytelling with scientific information makes complex topics easier to understand.

For many students, the experience offers a rare opportunity to explore astronomy in a hands-on way without leaving campus.

The platform programming comes from a range of global producers, and this content has a long-standing history of being financially unattainable for small venues.

Thanks to the work of the earth sciences department and Physics Professor and Admin Department Technician Eric Anderson, the Planetarium secured 10 new shows.

This provided a major boost to their programming variety.

The first show in the series explores the origins of the universe, covering topics such as the Sun's life cycle and eventual fate, planetary features and Earth's unique composition.

Attendees can expect a blend of science, spectacle and some unexpected entertainment not originally intended for planetarium screenings.

Anderson has also encouraged students to request programs of interest, helping make the Planetarium an engaging and enjoyable experience for everyone.

As a result, the weekly showings will extend beyond traditional astronomy content.

The Planetarium will feature science fiction, nature films and audience-driven selections.

Faculty members hope the shows will spark interest in astronomy and physical sciences.

For students who may not normally take physics or astronomy courses, the Planetarium offers an accessible introduction to those subject areas.

The Planetarium is both an educational resource and a community space. From the origins of the Big Bang to the mysteries of black holes and the story of evolution, it invites visitors of all ages to explore, learn and be inspired.

Students in attendance for the first screening of the semester expressed excitement for the initiative and are looking forward to what the future has in store for the space.

"The Planetarium experience was very cool. A hidden gem, and I'm excited that I went. I will be back, and I'm looking forward to it," business management major Eric Wischow, a senior, said.

Organizers hope the weekly events will encourage students from all majors to attend.

Because the shows are short and scheduled during the day, they provide a convenient opportunity for students to stop by between classes and experience something new.

Students are highly encouraged to contribute ideas and requests for programming, by reaching out directly to Eric Anderson at andersonel@southernct.edu.

With new content rolling in and an open-door policy for audience input, the space is designed to be a lively hub for communal discovery.



PHOTOS | VICTORIA CRUZ

A show featuring images of the universe in Room 104 of Morrill Hall on March 11.



One of the immersive shows featuring stars.



The doorway to the Planetarium in Room 104 of Morrill Hall on March 11.

Renée DiNino shares insight on her career

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By Victoria Cruz
News Writer

DiNino emphasized the importance of carefully managing one's professional image, especially in modern day media, when personal and professional lives can easily intersect.

"Everything I put out, I monitor. I never put anything out that I wouldn't show or say publicly. Decide early on what you want to put out in public, and then behave accordingly," DiNino said.

For students hoping to become authentic leaders, DiNino encouraged them to first understand their own values and voice.

"The only way you can be authentic is to figure out what your voice is and what you will allow into your life. You have to control the narrative. Remember how you got there, and be open, honest and kind," DiNino said.

Throughout the talk, DiNino described the media industry as increasingly structured and corporate compared to when she first entered the field.

Having studied business law, she explained that understanding the business side of media is essential to navigating the profession today.

"The industry is very corporate now. Business people are essential to making sure there is a structure and protection within the industry," DiNino said.

In addition to her work in broadcasting, DiNino has devoted much of her career to community advocacy.

DiNino said that one of her proudest accomplishments was helping pass the animal protection legislation in Connecticut.

In connection to Desmond's Law, which is the law that allows courts to appoint advocates to prosecuting attorneys in cases involving animal cruelty, DiNino expanded on this foundation.

She also spoke about the difficulty of balancing advocacy work with personal and professional responsibilities.

"Sometimes, people feel like you have to save the world. I have to help the world; I don't have to save it. I would like to, but I have to remember, I have people who depend on me too," DiNino said.

Despite those challenges, DiNino said she remains optimistic about the future, particularly when speaking to students and young professionals.

Students who attended the event said that they found DiNino's honesty about her journey to be inspiring.

Business major Doriska Bosquet, a senior, said that as a student who currently works many jobs, she viewed DiNino's words as motivation.

"It was very informative and inspiring. Seeing someone who doesn't have a degree who was able to make a career for herself is inspiring," Bosquet said.

Business administration major Joel Brown, a junior, also appreciated DiNino's transparency.

"I like that she is very transparent and open to talking about her past experiences," Brown said. "I took away that you should never sell yourself short because you are more than that."



PHOTO | VICTORIA CRUZ

Hello Connectict Host Renée DiNino after her PEP Talk, standing with K-9 Jules and other attendees of the discussion.

Celebrating women's history

By Brianna Wallen
News Editor

As March blossomed, so did the opportunity to honor and recognize the impact women have had across history and in everyday life.

Women's History Month serves as both a reminder of past struggles and a celebration of present achievements by highlighting how far women have come and the paths they continue to pave.

"Every day is a great day to be a woman," psychology major Kash Patrick-William, a senior, said.

For many students like Patrick-William, this month is about appreciating their identity and the women that came before them.

"What's most empowering about this month is recognizing how much women have accomplished; how hard we've worked and evolved throughout the years," Patrick-William said.

Powerful figures like Rosa Parks, who helped spark the civil rights movement, Marie Curie, who broke barriers in science, and Malala Yousafzai, who continues to advocate for girls' education, represent just a few of the women who have made their mark.

"From mothers to powerful female leaders in this world, it's very inspiring to be in a spot in life where I am able to be successful in ways that weren't allowed before," Patrick-William said.

Patrick-William connects that legacy of resilience and courage to spark change to her own journey.

"Imagine, women once could not go to college to earn a degree, and now women all around the world do so much more than that," Patrick-William said. "I will be graduating with a psychology degree as a first-generation student."

Patrick-William said that she sees her success as part of that continued progress and hopes other women appreciate and celebrate how much they have succeeded as well.

"That is something truly amazing. I should be proud of myself, and any women working hard to accomplish goals in their life should be proud of themselves as well," Patrick-William said.

Along with self-appreciation, other women celebrate this month by uplifting their fellow sisters in womanhood.

Social work major Julissa James, a sophomore, said she plans to celebrate Women's History Month through acts of service.

"To celebrate, I make it an effort to shop at Black female-owned businesses this month," James said. "So, I buy hair care from Camille Rose Naturals and lip gloss from Fenty Beauty."

James' celebration also includes carrying out simple acts of kindness to loved ones.

"I also bought my mom flowers last weekend to put a smile on her face," James said.

For some, the message of Women's History Month is something they carry year-round.

Nursing major Armando Mejias, a junior, shared that his approach does not change based on the calendar.

"I don't treat it any different than any other month because I treat women with the highest respect," Mejias said. "I make sure I'm checking in with them as often as possible. It's the little things that count."

With Women's History Month in full swing, it stands as both a celebration and a reminder that women's progress and stories do not end here.

"We can only continue to be great by supporting each other as women. Being represented and appreciated during this month is not the start but definitely not the end," Patrick-William said.



PHOTO | BRIANNA WALLEN

Social work major Julissa James, a sophomore, on the second floor of Buley Library on March 10.