



We Bring the World to New Jersey

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NJSEA and Bergen Community College Announce Partnership For Operation of William D. McDowell Observatory

LYNDHURST, N.J. – The New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority (NJSEA) and Bergen Community College today announced that the College will provide free public programming at the Authority’s William D. McDowell Observatory, enhancing opportunities for visitors to enjoy and learn about the wonders of the universe.

The Observatory will operate every Wednesday beginning Aug. 5 from 8:30 to 10:30 p.m. In addition, the NJSEA and Bergen will host a special viewing of the Total Lunar Eclipse that is scheduled to take place from 8 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 27, to 1:30 am Monday, Sept. 28. The peak of the event, when the Earth is positioned completely between the Full Moon and the Sun, will take place at approximately 10:45 p.m. The event, which begins at 7:30 p.m., will include a talk on the history of eclipses and telescope viewing of other astronomical objects, including Saturn and Neptune.

“The NJSEA is committed to providing quality educational opportunities to the public and we are pleased that Bergen Community College’s expert astronomers will be staffing the William D. McDowell Observatory,” said Wayne Hasenbalg, President and CEO of the NJSEA. “These educators have a wealth of experience that will greatly benefit visitors and inspire a healthy curiosity and interest in science education among young people.”

The popular viewing nights attract some 3,000 residents to the Observatory each year to view and learn about planets, constellations and other celestial bodies. The state-of-the-art facility located in DeKorte Park features a research-grade, Classical-Cassegrain telescope with a 22-inch mirror housed beneath a six-meter retractable dome. The telescope is capable of viewing objects millions of light years away.

The precision instrument is equipped with a variety of tools, including specialized cameras to capture images of astronomical objects, light-pollution filters, and devices that measure the brightness of stars and analyze wavelengths of light to determine the chemical composition of light-emitting objects.

“As an institution of higher education committed to the study of the sciences, we are very proud to now operate the only two public observatories in Bergen County,” College President B. Kaye Walter,

Ph.D., said. “Southern Bergen residents will be amazed by what they see in the skies above and our distinguished faculty’s knowledge and passion for astronomy.” The College houses the Emil Buehler Trust Observatory at its main Paramus campus.

The William D. McDowell Observatory’s namesake was appointed as the first Executive Director of the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission (now the NJSEA) in 1969. He was also the first Bergen County Executive, a North Arlington Mayor and Councilman, Bergen County Sheriff, and Director of the Bergen County Freeholder Board.

About the NJSEA: The New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority is the planning and zoning agency for the 30.4-square-mile Meadowlands District, which consists of portions of 14 municipalities in Bergen and Hudson counties. The NJSEA also provides environmental public education programs and workshops for all ages through its Meadowlands Environment Center. In addition, the NJSEA provides for the ongoing operation of the MetLife Sports Complex and support to MetLife Stadium and the New Meadowlands Racetrack. www.njmeadowlands.gov.

About Bergen Community College: Based in Paramus, Bergen Community College a public two-year co-educational college, enrolls 16,000 students at locations in Paramus, the Philip J. Ciarco Jr. Learning Center in Hackensack and Bergen Community College at the Meadowlands in Lyndhurst. The College offers associate degree, certificate and continuing education programs in a variety of fields. More students graduate from Bergen than any other community college in the state. www.bergen.edu

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