Spitz Institute 2009

Spitz Inc invites you to attend the fifth annual summer Institute. The 2009 Institute will focus on diverse topics for astronomy education the planetarium. We'll present dozens of courses, related to teaching and presentation using new technology. Planetarians will share their ideas for space science education. Courses cover a range of topics from basic software use, to advanced simulation and lesson creation with Starry Night. Lesson development, live presentation, digital media creation and show production will also be explored. While attending, you can also experience attractions in the Philadelphia region and the historic Brandywine River Valley.

The `09 Institute will include shows and lessons by Institute participants, local astronomers and presentations by Spitz and the staff of Starry Night software.

Goals

Each year, the Institute focuses on aspects of space science education. Beginners learn Starry Night and many other digital planetarium techniques. Experienced attendees explore advanced simulation, and how the planetarium can be used to improve their teaching, and curriculum.

The Institute offers diverse sessions, and provides many opportunities for planetarians to share their programs, and teaching methods. Included in this year's Institute:

· **The Basics:** Comprehensive training in Starry Night, including lesson preparation and space science simulation.

· **Advanced Starry Night:** Software features, custom effects and operator enhancements for effective fulldome education.

· **Presentation:** How realtime simulation and effective show scripting create memorable astronomy lessons.

· **Content:** Finding and using graphic and video assets from sources like STScI, NASA and others.

· **Multi-media:** Photo editing, audio, and panorama creation for the digital planetarium.

· **Automated Planetarium Shows** Creating complete, scripted planetarium programs using Spitz' digital systems.

Schedule

The Spitz Institute will be held in Chadds Ford and other locations near Spitz. Dates: July 20 – 24.

The Institute includes a two–day program, and a three–day program, both focusing on related topics. Attendees can choose the first two day session only, the second three days, or all five days.

July 20, 21

Courses focus on space science education, including comprehensive instruction for Starry Night beginners – and advanced classes for experienced users. Staff from Starry Night lead many of the activities. Session 1 includes activities for new attendees, administrators, and anyone planning a digital theater or upgrade. Courses on theater planning, fundraising, design, and planetarium upgrades will be offered.

July 22, 23, 24

Sessions cover planetarium show production and presentation. Along with Starry Night Dome and Spitz automation software, participants learn graphics formatting, panorama creation, realtime production techniques, and automation. Groups apply their learning by developing short planetarium presentations.

Rates

July 20, 21 2–Day Session $220

July 22, 23, 24 3–Day Session $325

July 20 – 24 5–Day Session $500

Registration

Please complete and mail the enclosed form with a deposit check (we are not able to take credit card payment). You may also fax the form and mail a check (please include the original copy of the form). Payment is required to secure attendance. The number of attendees is limited and payments must be received by May 22 – first come, first served. Send completed form and payment to:

Spitz Inc
PO Box 198
Chadds Ford PA, 19317 USA
Attn: Joyce Towne
Fax: 610–459–3830

Preliminary Agenda

July 20, 21

Astronomy education and presentation with Starry Night and other digital tools, including:

Comprehensive introduction to Starry Night software

Advanced Starry Night and ATM–4 for SciDome

Lessons demonstrations using Starry Night Edu software

Customizing and adding data to Starry Night

New curriculum for the classroom and dome

Finding and using images and video content for education

Planning a planetarium: costs, requirements, specifications, budgets, etc.

July 22, 23, 24

Presentation, production, and automation using digital tools

Digital image manipulation

Photoshop basics for dome presentation

Digital audio – beginning and intermediate audio techniques

Converting legacy media (slides, video, audio) to digital formats

Automation – how to build an automated astronomy show

Panoramas – photography, stitching and formatting

Advanced Automation – ATM–4 for experienced users

Presentation/Workshop Submissions

Attendees can share their ideas or planetarium lessons in the form of a 45–minute workshop. Topics should focus on live lesson presentation, planetarium curriculum, teaching with Starry Night, or related subjects. Workshop presenters must be experienced Starry Night or ATM–4 users, or have attended the Institute at least once.

To submit a workshop proposal, please fill out the enclosed form including a title, and abstract for the presentation. Mail or fax by June 12. Paper and workshop times are limited, so please submit early.

Group Activity

In Session 2, attendees create a show or lesson as a group activity. Participants test their knowledge of digital presentation and production by creating a short planetarium demonstration, including opportunities for show scripting, graphic and audio preparation, realtime Starry Night presentation and show automation. Advanced users and beginners will participate.

Computers and Software

Software for the Digital Institute will be provided by Spitz. Attendees will need to bring a laptop computer. Please see our specifications or contact us for minimum requirements.

Who Should Attend the Spitz Institute?

Anyone who wants to learn more about teaching or developing shows with digital technology should consider attending. This includes:

Planetarium operators and adminstrators planning a new facility or an upgrade

Teachers and planetarium operators who want to share their lessons and view a variety of astronomy presentations

Planetarians who want to use or learn Starry Night products

SciDome operators