

News Release | For Immediate Release | Friday, September 11, 2015

“In Search of the First Light” Public Lecture to Explore How New Telescopes Are Revolutionizing Astronomy

(Vancouver, BC) – UBC Department of Physics & Astronomy, Science World British Columbia, and TRIUMF are delighted to bring the next installment of the Unveiling the Universe series – “In Search of the First Light: How the 30m Telescope will Revolutionize Astronomy.” This free public lecture will take place Wednesday September 16 at TELUS World of Science. Professor Paul Hickson from UBC Physics & Astronomy will take us on an illuminating journey through the galaxies and explore how telescopes are revolutionizing astronomy. This talk is part of the popular Unveiling the Universe lecture series presented by TRIUMF and Science World British Columbia, and is the kickoff event to celebrate the centennial of UBC Physics & Astronomy.

How many of us have pointed our telescopes toward the sky, hoping to discover a star that was never observed before, imaging what it is like out there, wondering how the Universe came about? Telescopes have come a long way - advanced astronomical telescopes enable astronomers to look billions of years back in time to when the Universe was young. They allow us to study the central regions of nearby galaxies in detail, revealing the presence of giant black holes more than a million times more massive than the Sun. Representing Canada as the Co-chair of the Thirty Meter Telescope Science Advisory Committee, Professor Hickson will explain how this giant telescope will work, and illustrate ways that it will advance our knowledge of the Universe. Expect mesmerizing imagery of the universe and fascinating insights into the Thirty Meter Telescope project.

The Unveiling the Universe lecture series is a partnership of Science World British Columbia and TRIUMF that has fascinated thousands of local science lovers since 2012 with talks from some of the world’s top physicists. This particular event on September 16 also marks the beginning of UBC Department of Physics & Astronomy’s celebration for its centennial as a founding department of the University of British Columbia.

Where: In the OMNIMAX Theatre at TELUS World of Science

When: Wednesday, September 16. Doors open at 6:15pm and the lecture begins at 7p.m. There will be an audience Q&A to follow.

RSVP/tickets: Tickets are free but registration is required - for ticket information visit: <https://utu-firstlight.eventbrite.ca>

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About Dr. Paul Hickson

Dr. Paul Hickson is a Professor in the Physics and Astronomy Department at the University of British Columbia. He came to UBC in 1978, after receiving a Ph.D. in Astrophysics from the California Institute of Technology. Dr. Hickson's research interests include galaxies, the large-scale structure of the Universe, optics, telescopes and instrumentation. He has contributed to the development of several astronomical facilities including the International Gemini Observatories and the James Webb Space Telescope. He represents Canada as Cochair of the Thirty Meter Telescope Science Advisory Committee, and has contributed to the adaptive optics programs of the TMT and the European Extremely-Large Telescope projects.

About UBC Department of Physics & Astronomy

The Physics and Astronomy Department at the University of British Columbia is one of the largest and most diverse physics and astronomy departments in Canada. We are a vibrant community that engages in a wide range of research directions, from probing the origin of the universe to exploring emergent phenomena in complex systems, that provide deep insights into the nature of the universe and practical solutions that will help define the world of tomorrow. As a founding department of the University of British Columbia, 2015-2016 marks the Department's centennial. To learn about upcoming centennial celebration events, visit <http://www.phas.ubc.ca/centennial-celebration>

About TRIUMF

TRIUMF is Canada's national laboratory for particle and nuclear physics. Together with its partner AAPS, Inc., TRIUMF also seeks to commercialize its technologies for the benefit of all Canadians. Located on the south campus of the University of British Columbia, TRIUMF receives operating support from the Government of Canada through a contribution agreement via National Research Council Canada; the Government of British Columbia provides capital for new buildings. Visit us at www.triumf.ca and follow us on Twitter/Facebook/Instagram @TRIUMFLab

About Science World British Columbia

Science World British Columbia is a not-for-profit organization that engages British Columbians in science and inspires future science and technology leadership throughout our province.