

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (November 28, 2023)**

## **International Dark Sky Discovery Center Announces Groundbreaking**

**Fountain Hills, AZ, (November 28, 2023)**

Development of a nonprofit STEM-based International Dark Sky Discovery Center will soon be underway in Fountain Hills.

“We are over-the-top happy” said Joe Bill, President,” to share that our Board unanimously voted to begin construction of the International Dark Sky Discovery Center. Groundbreaking is planned for March 2024.”

The Discovery Center will have a Dark Sky Observatory, Hyperspace Planetarium, Inspiration Theater, a Night Sky Experience Exhibit Hall, and an Einstein Exploration Station.

The observatory will have the largest telescope in the Greater Phoenix Area, which has led to discussions with Arizona State University about collaborative opportunities. “As a leader in STEM education and space exploration, ASU is excited by the creation of the International Dark Sky Discovery Center,” said ASU President Michael M. Crow. “The Center reinforces Arizona’s commitment to expanding our understanding of the universe, and we look forward to working with them to advance new research and learning opportunities.”

Part of the mission of the Discovery Center is to help preserve dark skies, an important objective for the astronomy state of Arizona. “Dark skies are an increasingly important part of Arizona’s tourism offerings,” said Lisa Urias, Executive Director of the Arizona Office of Tourism, “and the Discovery Center admirably represents our state’s dedication to astronomical research and education.”

Getting designated as an International Dark Sky Community is rare for a community so close to a major metropolitan area. “Fountain Hills is the perfect location for the Discovery Center,” said State Senator John Kavanagh. “With its dark skies and proximity to millions of people, the Center will benefit the entire state of Arizona.”

The Discovery Center is a 23,000 sq. ft., nonprofit, STEM science facility. Its STEM science mission of dark sky preservation relates to astronomy research, protection of nocturnal animals, and human health.

The facility was designed by Swaback Architecture and construction will be done by McCarthy Builders. As a beacon of cosmic and technology education, the Discovery Center seeks the support of philanthropic partners to put the finishing touches on this first-of-its-kind facility.



Caption: An architectural rendering of the International Dark Sky Discovery Center to be built in Fountain Hills, Arizona.

Video and photo assets are [HERE](#).

**About the International Dark Sky Discovery Center**

The International Dark Sky Discovery Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to establishing and operating a world-class STEM education center in Fountain Hills, Arizona. Its science-based mission is to educate the public about the importance of protecting the vanishing night sky. Children and adults alike will be introduced to the awesome wonders of the cosmos and will leave with a better understanding of the universe and how to protect dark skies for the benefit of all life on Earth. More information, including a narrated 3D flyover of the Discovery Center and support statements from leaders throughout the state, is available at [darkskycenter.org](http://darkskycenter.org).

**Media Enquiries**

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