

Oct. 31, 2007

## **World's First Regenerative Medicine Digital Dome Planetarium Show Debuts in Pittsburgh, Teaches about Juvenile Diabetes**

The interdisciplinary project Regenerative Medicine Partnership in Education proudly presents the planetarium show, *Our Cells, Our Selves*, a story about juvenile diabetes with an accompanying immunology-based videogame, *Immunologiee*.

Told through the eyes of 7-year-old Sylvie, who has just learned that she has juvenile diabetes, the animated show explains the biology behind the condition and highlights current biomedical research, especially regenerative medicine, with scientific accuracy and stunning visuals.

Media are invited to a special event showcasing *Our Cells, Our Selves* at the Carnegie Science Center on Friday, Nov. 9. The event will start with breakfast at 9:30 a.m. and will include comments by:

- John Radzilowicz, director of visitor experience at the Carnegie Science Center
- L. Tony Beck, program officer with the National Center for Research Resources, a part of the National Institutes on Health; through a Science Education Partnership Award (SEPA), this group made the project possible by providing \$1.3 million in funding
- Dr. John Pollock, project director and associate professor of biology at Duquesne University
- Don Marinelli, executive producer of the Entertainment Technology Center, Carnegie Mellon University
- Peter Kavic, team manager of ETC, who will demonstrate the *Immunologiee* video game, which will be available to play.

The sixth-grade class from the Winchester Thurston School, Pittsburgh, which provided input in the development of the materials, will be special guests at the premier, which will start at 10:30 a.m.

"This is a new style of educational video presentation, with a new level of scientific accuracy," Pollock said. "We are creating a show very content rich but it is something that should be very accessible to young learners, even 7 year olds. There certainly is more in this show than anybody could take home after one viewing, though visitors will come away with awareness of the immune system, basic biology and regenerative medicine."

To help reinforce that learning, the Regenerative Medicine Partnership in Education team has created teacher and student workbooks, available free

online at [www.sepa.duq.edu](http://www.sepa.duq.edu). The show and the workbooks are written with curriculum and assessment standards in mind, Pollock said.

That is a big plus for Mark Percy, director of the Williamsville Space Lab Planetarium in Williamsville, N.Y., who previewed part of the show last month. "I was actively shopping for content," said Percy, who plans to bring the show to his Buffalo-area planetarium. "I was very impressed with the work. I think it's a great example of how the dome theater can go beyond traditional astronomy to teach other areas of science."

After this premier, *Our Cells, Our Selves* will be added to the schedule at the Henry Buhl Jr. Planetarium and Observatory at the Carnegie Science Center and will be available for showings to school groups, as well as for use at other planetariums.

### ***Duquesne University***

Duquesne is a private, coeducational university with more than 10,000 students. An extensive selection of undergraduate and graduate degree programs is offered across 10 schools of study. Duquesne is consistently ranked among the nation's top Catholic universities for its award-winning faculty and 129-year tradition of academic excellence.

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**\*\* Media interested in attending and obtaining free parking at the Carnegie Science Center should contact Public Affairs at Duquesne University.**

**\*\*Photos and videoclips are available online at [www.sepa.duq.edu](http://www.sepa.duq.edu).**

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