



Audubon Aquarium  
of the Americas  
*A Facility of Audubon Nature Institute*

Audubon Aquarium of the Americas  
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<http://audubonnatureinstitute.org/aquarium>

## Multimedia Presentation by NASA Scientists in Entergy Giant Screen Theater

PLUTO-PALOOZA New Orleans: Tuesday, December 12, 2017 , 6 p.m. -  
7:30 p.m.

Visitors to Entergy Giant Screen Theater at Audubon Aquarium have a rare chance to hear directly from NASA's New Horizons research team on Tuesday, December 12, 2017 from 6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. in a fast-paced, multimedia presentation featuring stunning images and science gathered by the New Horizons spacecraft that flew by Pluto and its moons. HD video illuminates key mission milestones, including a preview of the spacecraft's next encounter – a flight past a still-more-distant Kuiper Belt Object (KBO) known as “2014 MU69” on New Year’s Day 2019.

“This is the greatest thing since the invention of sliced bread, and we are delighted to have these amazing scientists with us to share their life and work,” said Tricia LeBlanc, Audubon Nature Institute's Director of Education Programs. “We’re also going to be hosting a special [Teacher Workshop](#) at Audubon Louisiana Nature Center, using its new Planetarium to fly educators to Pluto along with the spacecraft, so that the unique and exciting STEM lessons associated with NASA’s New Horizons will live on in Louisiana classrooms in coming months and years.”

NASA researchers will share both the science and behind-the-scenes personal stories of the mission during the presentation in the Theater. Speakers include:

ALAN STERN, principal investigator from Southwest Research Institute (SwRI) and the driving force behind a mission to Pluto since 1989. An author, dreamer, pilot, space entrepreneur, former NASA associate administrator and a New Orleans native, Stern regards New Horizons as an inspiring American and human success story.

HAL WEAVER, project scientist from the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory (APL), who discovered two of Pluto's five moons using the Hubble Space Telescope and coordinates the nationwide mission science team. He'll share images of Pluto's nitrogen ice glaciers, water ice mountains and possible ice volcanoes.

CATHY OLKIN, deputy project scientist from SwRI, and an expert on the icy worlds in the far reaches of our solar system. She's flown aboard NASA research aircraft including the "Vomit Comet" and is a proponent of encouraging all Americans, especially young women, to engage in STEM careers. She'll describe some of the mysterious discoveries made about Pluto's giant moon, Charon, and other aspects of the Pluto system.

MARC BUIE, an LSU grad and science team co-investigator from SwRI is, like Alan and the others, a longtime "Plutophile." Using Hubble, after an arduous search, he discovered the tiny KBO which is the spacecraft's next flyby target, slated for January 1, 2019. He also led Earth's most ambitious and complex occultation campaign ever, using distant starlight to characterize the color, shape and size of MU69, sending 23 telescopes to Argentina and South Africa, and also using NASA's SOFIA flying observatory. Exclusive HD video will document that grand adventure.

ALICE BOWMAN, the mission operations manager from APL, is a key force in the decades-long "rocket science" needed to keep the spacecraft safe on its journey of more than three billion miles (and counting). She'll describe the teamwork, practice and resilience under pressure that has led to New Horizons' continuing success.

Following the evening presentation at the Entergy Giant Screen Theater, the audience will have the opportunity for moderated Q&A with the guest researchers, and a chance to share "selfie" photos of themselves in front of giant backdrops of Pluto and MU69.

## [Register for this event - HERE](#)

For more information about New Horizons, please visit:

[https://www.nasa.gov/mission\\_pages/newhorizons/main/index.html](https://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/newhorizons/main/index.html)

Click here for press release, video and images:

<http://newsroom.audubonnatureinstitute.org/multimedia-presentation-by--nasa-scientists-in-entergy-giant-screen-theater>

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Audubon Nature Institute operates a family of museums, parks and research facilities dedicated to celebrating the wonders of nature. Through innovative live animal exhibits, education programs, and scientific discovery, Audubon makes a meaningful contribution to preserving wildlife for the future. Audubon Nature Institute flagships include Audubon Park, Audubon Zoo, Audubon Aquarium of the Americas, Entergy Giant Screen Theater, Audubon Butterfly Garden and Insectarium, Audubon Louisiana Nature Center, Freeport-McMoRan Audubon Species Survival Center, Woldenberg Riverfront Park and Audubon Wilderness Park. Ron Forman is President and CEO of Audubon Nature Institute.

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