

**ASTRONAUT CAPTAIN MARK KELLY TO LAUNCH  
THE 2017 ATLANTA SCIENCE FESTIVAL ON MARCH 14**

*Festival Announces Schedule of Events to Inspire Scientists of All Ages*

**ATLANTA** – February 6, 2017 – This year’s line-up of activities and events for the 2017 Atlanta Science Festival is truly out-of-this world. In its fourth year, the Festival shines a light on the science and technology community in our region, showcasing local discoveries, innovation, and learning opportunities. At 100 engaging events from March 14-25, the Festival features the businesses, universities, and cultural institutions that make Atlanta a science metropolis.

To officially kick-off the Atlanta Science Festival, highly decorated American astronaut Captain Mark Kelly will make a special appearance on Tuesday, March 14 at [Glenn Memorial United Methodist Church](#) at Emory University. The event blasts off at 5:30 p.m. with an opportunity to make and launch your own rockets. Starting at 7:00 p.m., Captain Kelly will share what it’s like to leave planet Earth and his insider perspective on the groundbreaking yearlong NASA experiment with his twin brother on how space affects the human body. Immediately following, Kelly will autograph copies of his children’s book series, “Mousetronaut” and “Astrotwins,” organized by [Little Shop of Stories](#). Copies of the books will be available for sale on-site before and during the event. Admission for the event is \$12, and \$8 for children 12 and under, if purchased online in advance ([AtlantaScienceFestival.org/launch](#)); and \$15 for all guests at the door. The event will run from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Attendees may come for the entirety of the event or only Captain Kelly's talk.

“Captain Kelly is a pioneer and an inspiration for people of all ages, which is why he’s the perfect representative to launch this year’s festival,” said Meisa Salaita, Ph.D., co-founder, Atlanta Science Festival. “The 2017 line-up is even bigger and better, and we’re excited that we can continue to bring awareness of science and technology to inspire the next generation of innovators.”

The Atlanta Science Festival, one of the largest science-driven events of its kind, marks its return March 14-25 featuring 100 interactive and mostly free STEM events in 65 locations throughout the Metro Atlanta area. The festival gathers scientists and educators from the region’s most well-known museums, universities, schools and corporations to guide participants of all ages through hands-on activities, interactive performances, facility tours and workshops.

The festival culminates on Saturday, March 25 at Centennial Olympic Park with a free, family-friendly Exploration Expo from 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. The Exploration Expo promotes science exploration, discovery and innovation through more than 100 interactive exhibits, hands-on experiments, mind blowing demos and performances.

Inspired by scientists, the Atlanta Science Festival was founded by Emory University, the Georgia Institute of Technology, and the Metro Atlanta Chamber. The event also has support

from over 80 partners, among them Gold Sponsors Delta Air Lines, Google; and Silver Sponsors Georgia Power, Georgia State University, Mercer University & Mercer Health Sciences Center, The Clorox Company and UPS.

Below are some festival highlights:

### **For Children**

#### **Robot Soccer**

Sunday, March 19, 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. (21st Century STEM Academy)

Come on out for a game of Robot Soccer! Kids will learn Lego Mindstorm coding and then be placed into teams for a friendly Robotic Soccer competition. Using sensors and programmed codes that are uploaded to the Lego Mindstorms, we will see the Robotic Soccer players come to life on our indoor soccer field! Space is limited, so register early!

#### **Nerdy Derby**

Saturday, March 18 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. (Hollis Innovation Academy)

Build your own innovative car and bring it to Nerdy Derby for some fun, crazy racing. Or come and create your own personalized vehicle to speed down the 30+ foot track. The Nerdy Derby is a twist on the Pinewood Derby, but where all rules are thrown out and the focus on rewarding creativity, cleverness and ingenuity. Competition categories include: slowest, fastest, funniest epic fail, cutest, and many others. Cars can be made from metal, wood, plastic, Legos, cardboard, cheese or whatever you can dream up. Just make sure the wheels are 1¾" apart and the car isn't more than 8" high or 5" wide.

#### **Compost Critters**

Sunday, March 19, 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. (Gaia Gardens/Love is Love Farm)

Come be an ecological explorer as we dig deep into the wonderful web of food and compost! We'll learn about critters that help compost and techniques to make your own backyard bin. Kids will get their hands dirty and learn a few songs, too! This event is an open event with drop in any time, so check online for a more detailed schedule of the afternoon's activities. Also, explore the farm on a self guided tour while you are here! Parking is available at Donald Trimble Mortuary on 2nd Ave.

### **For Teens**

#### **Drone Day**

Saturday, March 18, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (Salvation Army Peachcrest Boys and Girls Club)

DRONES! DRONES! DRONES! Drones flying everywhere! Bring your friends and family out to witness remotely operated drones showcasing how drones can be used for civilian use and

potential careers as a drone pilot! While you are here, fly drones, participate in fun competitions and games, and see what it takes to be a drone pilot!

### **Zombie Outbreak Game**

Sunday, March 19, 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. (Emory University)

Zombies are roaming Emory's campus, and you must stop the spread of the disease before it's too late. Investigate a mock zombie outbreak at Emory, using real-world tools employed by Emory and CDC scientists. Players will study the environment, perform a lab test, interview mock patients and investigate vaccine and drug development to get to the bottom of this mysterious outbreak. Get your team together and register online!

Recommended for ages 12 and up.

### **Rap Guide to Climate Chaos**

Saturday, March 18, 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. (Drew Charter School - Upper Campus)

In his latest one-man show, “peer reviewed rapper” Baba Brinkman breaks down the politics, economics, and science of global warming, following its surprising twists from the carbon cycle to the global energy economy. To paraphrase the Notorious BIG: “Mo’ carbon, mo’ problems.” A searing and heartfelt hip-hop manifesto addressing the world’s hottest topic.

### **For Adults**

#### **Trivia Night with HowStuffWorks**

Wednesday, March 15, 7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. (Rooftop, Ponce City Market)

On the picturesque rooftop of Ponce City Market, join HowStuffWorks hosts for an evening of brain-twisting trivia, music, and fun. You will have the opportunity to test your knowledge with the best and brightest Atlanta has to offer. Create teams or join one when you arrive! There will be amazing prizes for the winning team, along with props on the HowStuffWorks Facebook page. This event sells out quickly. Check online to get your tickets early! With ticket purchase, you get SweetWater beer (2 drink max), sandwiches, walking tacos and light bites.

#### **Science & Spirituality**

Thursday, March 16, 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. (First Christian Church of Decatur)

What are the intersections and shared pathways of science and spirituality, of physics and faith, of biology and belief? Belief in a loving God may be nice if you have it, but what if you aren't wired that way? What if your main mode of being is by thinking, wondering, and questioning? Who says the only way to encounter the holy is through faith? Can people connect via the mind, or intellectualism, or reasoning? A panel of local scientists and theologians will explore and offer a wide range of insights and offerings in a safe space for open dialogue.

### **You're The Expert**

Tuesday, March 21, 7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. (7 Stages Theatre)

You're the Expert is a live show and podcast. Through game show segments and hilariously misguided guesses, a panel of comedians including Atlanta native Shalewa Sharpe and Stuff You Should Know podcast host Chuck Bryant, will try to get to the bottom of what a distinguished scientist studies all day. You won't want to miss being part of the audience for this live show and podcast taping. You're the Expert is hosted by Chris Duffy and produced by Pretty Good Friends.

### **For Families**

#### **Circus Science**

Saturday, March 18, 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.; 4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. (Buck's Sports Barn)

Ladies and gentlemen! Boys and girls! Step right up and be a part of Circus Science! Immerse yourself in the circus arts while learning basic scientific principles that make these amazing feats of strength and balance possible. We will incorporate traditional circus disciplines, demonstrated by skilled Imperial Opa Circus acrobats, and scientific principles, explained by Georgia Tech "Science Clowns", to entertain and educate you. You will even have the opportunity to participate in learning several circus skills in order to experience the science within first hand!

#### **Rock 'n Walk**

Saturday, March 18, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. (Stone Mountain Park)

Millions of years ago, a massive magma chamber cooled below ground near Atlanta, never erupting through to the surface. Now, we call it Stone Mountain. Join GSU Geosciences on a hike to explore this unique granite dome. You can start the hikes or swing by for an information session at the visitor center in Confederate Hall where the geologists will explore the history of this notable natural landmark. Hikes will depart from the Confederate Hall Historical & Environmental Education Center. Groups will depart frequently.

#### **Chemistry Carnival**

Friday, March 24, 3:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. (Atwood Science Commons, Emory University)

Come one, come all, to the Chemistry Carnival! Learn about the cutting-edge research Emory studies--through carnival games like Peptide Jenga and Bacterial Telepathy! Prizes will be awarded and scientists will be on-site to explain the laboratory research hiding behind each fun game concept. Join us in the Atwood Science Commons at Emory to learn about science in our first Chemistry Carnival from the game makers themselves. Carnival snacks will be served!

When you are done, head on over to the Physics Live! event across the street at the Math & Science Center. Paid parking is available in the Peavine Visitor Lot (free after 5:00 p.m.) and the Oxford Road Visitor Parking Deck. Enter Atwood Science Commons from Dowman Drive.

A complete list of events can be found at [AtlantaScienceFestival.org](http://AtlantaScienceFestival.org). To keep up with the latest information on Atlanta Science Festival activities, follow the event on Facebook at AtlantaScienceFestival, Twitter at @ATLSciFest and on Instagram at @atlsCIFest.

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### **About Mark Kelly**

Captain Kelly is an American astronaut, retired United States Navy Captain, #1 New York Times best-selling author, and an experienced naval aviator and test pilot who flew combat missions during the Gulf War. He was selected by NASA as an astronaut in 1996, and flew his first of four missions in 2001 aboard Space Shuttle Endeavour, the same space shuttle that he commanded on its final flight in May 2011. He has also commanded Space Shuttle Discovery and is one of only two individuals who have visited the International Space Station on four different occasions. With 6,000 flight hours in more than 50 different aircraft, 375 aircraft carrier landings, 39 combat missions and more than 50 days in space, Mark Kelly is one of our country's most experienced pilots.

### **About the Atlanta Science Festival**

In its fourth year, the Atlanta Science Festival is an 11-day celebration of science and technology, with more than 100 events and activities held across Metro Atlanta. The grand finale of the festival is an all-day interactive Exploration Expo at Centennial Olympic Park. Scientists, experts and educators from local schools, colleges, universities, museums and corporations will uncover mysteries and explain discoveries in hands-on activities, facility tours, stimulating presentations, and riveting performances at venues across the city. The Atlanta Science Festival's mission is to celebrate the inherent integration of STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) in our lives today, to share the impact that STEAM has on our community, and to inspire us all to wonder about our future. The Festival, which will be held March 14-25, is produced by a collaboration of science, cultural, and educational institutions, founded by Emory University, Georgia Institute of Technology and the Metro Atlanta Chamber. To learn more, visit [AtlantaScienceFestival.org](http://AtlantaScienceFestival.org) or call (770) 322-4992.

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