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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

DFAC Lecture Series: LIGO's Detection of Gravitational Waves — Film Premiere

On September 14, 2015, the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory (LIGO) detected a signal that was later confirmed to be from a pair of merging black holes over 1 billion light years from Earth. It confirmed Einstein's 1905 prediction of gravitational waves, one of many stemming from his theory of general relativity. This event marked the first direct detection of black holes and the culmination of nearly 40 years of work by a global team of physicists.

Kai Staats, MSc has worked with LIGO as a documentary filmmaker since 2013, producing three NSF funded films. His third, "LIGO Detection" premieres at www.newscientist.com on February 7, and at the Anthem Civic Building on February 21. Co-presenter Dr. Michele Zanolin, is head of the LIGO supernova detection team at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott.

Staats recently joined Zanolin's research, leading the application of Machine Learning to isolate the signals of supernovae in gravitational-wave data, a challenging task since those signals are much weaker than any previously detected. Following a brief intro to LIGO, they will present "LIGO Detection," then conclude with a discussion of current research along with Q&A. This educational experience is made possible by the Desert Foothills Astronomy Club.

Date: Tuesday, Feb 21, 2017

Time: 7:00 - 9:00 pm (doors open at 6:30 pm)

Place: Anthem Civic Building, 3701 W. Anthem Way, Anthem, AZ 85086

Open to the public at no charge. Arrive early for good seats.

No RSVP required.

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