

For Immediate Release

Contact: Sevda Eris, Publicist QUEST

415.553.2835, seris@KQED.org

www.kqed.org/press

Screeners available by request.

**QUEST investigates Modern Zeppelins, Animal Chefs, Asteroid Hunters, and more
in a New Season of Science and Environment Stories,
Premiering March 17 on KQED 9HD**

Specials on California Climate Change, and Bay Area Open Spaces

San Francisco, Ca, March 6, 2009 - [QUEST](#), KQED's multimedia science and environment series, kicks off its third television season at 7:30pm on Tuesday, March 17 on KQED 9HD (Comcast 709), with new stories investigating the pioneering work of scientists and researchers across Northern California. *QUEST* also continues its multi-layered approach to reporting on science and environmental issues with stories produced for television, radio, and the web, along with educator guides that meet California's science teaching standards.

QUEST Television (30 minute episodes, Tuesdays at 7:30pm)

- **March 17** In its premiere television episode, *QUEST* takes to the skies above Mountain View, exploring the next generation of zeppelins and their fiery past. Then, meet the chefs from the **Monterey Bay Aquarium** and the **San Francisco Zoo**, who whip up krill shakes, squid tacos and chimp treats to keep their animal residents fully satisfied. Also, "Your Photos on QUEST" features San Rafael photographer Laura Watt's moody and intimate images of the precious water that surrounds us all.
- **March 24** Find out how Bay Area scientists are tracking the thousands of objects orbiting near Earth, from football field-sized comets to asteroids made of rock, metal and ice, and what might be done to prevent a direct collision with Earth.
- **March 31** *QUEST* takes us into the world's most powerful microscope, a \$27 million electron microscope at **Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory**, capable of making images to a resolution of half the width of a hydrogen atom.

NOVA Collaboration on *Rocket to Moon* and *Algae Energy*

QUEST continues its collaboration with the signature PBS science series, **NOVA** on two stories that will also air nationally on *NOVA scienceNOW* later this summer.

- **April 7** NASA scientists in Mountain View are building a spaceship that they will deliberately crash into the moon this summer in the hope of locating ice that could one day provide water for a moon base.
- **September 15** Berkeley researchers are trying to find and tweak microbes that secrete hydrogen. Their goal: to find a new energy source that could one day run your car on algae. No fossil fuels. No mess. No fuss.

QUEST TV Specials on California Climate Change and Bay Area Open Spaces

QUEST will produce four 30-minute specials in 2009.

- **February 17** "Chasing Beetles, Finding Darwin" was produced in celebration of Darwin's 200th birthday. Available online for streaming at www.kqed.org/quest.

- **April 14** *QUEST* in collaboration with KQED's multimedia series *Climate Watch*, takes an in-depth look at the science behind climate change and explores the big and small environmental changes already taking place throughout California, from the Sierra to Monterey Bay.
- **August 25** *QUEST* investigates how our power grid is transforming into a "smart grid" with the help of Silicon Valley researchers working to help utilities move power more efficiently—a big concern as more renewable energy comes online.
- **October** *QUEST* will produce a special about Bay Area open spaces to coincide with the upcoming Ken Burns 6-part PBS series, *The National Parks: America's Best Idea*.

Growing Online Audience

Since its inception two years ago, *QUEST* has reached a total of approximately 18 million viewers and listeners through its traditional TV and radio broadcasts. In an impressive expansion, *QUEST*'s web audience grew from 18% of its total audience in Season 1 to 33% of its total audience in Season 2. If *QUEST*'s web audience continues to grow at this rate, it is very likely that *QUEST*'s new media viewership will soon surpass its traditional broadcast viewership, a shift that is bringing a new, younger, more diverse viewers to PBS.

Largest Multimedia Project

Launched in February 2007, *QUEST* is KQED's largest multimedia project. Its ultimate aim is to raise science literacy throughout the Bay Area and inspire audiences to discover and explore for themselves. Going beyond its weekly television broadcast, *QUEST* features weekly **radio reports**, free **educator resources** and a dynamic website that includes: exclusive **web extras**, **flickr photos**, local science-based hikes called **Explorations**, and a daily **science blog** written by Northern California scientists. *QUEST* also works closely with **16 community partners**, not only on story idea collaborations and events, but also with helping to train partners in Web 2.0 strategies that have been so successful in growing *QUEST*'s own online audience.

This season *QUEST* will package **20 half-hour television shows** with three segments in each for a total of 60 segments. *QUEST* Radio will produce approximately **48 radio reports** that run 5-6 minutes each on KQED FM. *QUEST* also will produce **20 educator guides** to accompany select stories that complement California state curriculum standards for teaching science. *QUEST*'s **geographic coverage** spans from Mendocino to Monterey and from Sacramento to Santa Clara, and **focuses on nine content areas**: astronomy, biology, chemistry, engineering, environment, geology, health, physics and weather.

KQED received an unprecedented **\$7.7 million** from the National Science Foundation, Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation and other donors for the local production of *QUEST*. Funding is currently slated to run through 2009 with additional resources being sought for more seasons. For more background information about the *QUEST* project visit www.kqed.org/quest/about.

About KQED

KQED (www.kqed.org) is a service of Northern California Public Broadcasting, Inc. (NCPB). KQED Public Television, the nation's most-watched public television station, is the producer of local and national series such as *QUEST*; *Check, Please! Bay Area*; *Jacques Pépin: More Fast Food My Way*; and *Jean-Michel Cousteau: Ocean Adventures*. KQED's digital television channels include 9HD, Life, World, Kids and V-me, and are available 24/7 on Comcast. KQED Public Radio (88.5 FM in San Francisco and 89.3 FM in Sacramento), home of *Forum* with Michael Krasny and *The California Report*, is the most-listened-to public radio station in the nation with an award-winning news and public affairs program service. KQED Education Network brings the impact of KQED to thousands of teachers, students, parents and the general public through workshops, community screenings and multimedia resources. KQED Interactive offers video and audio podcasts and live radio stream at www.kqed.org, featuring unique content on one of the most-visited station sites in public broadcasting.

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