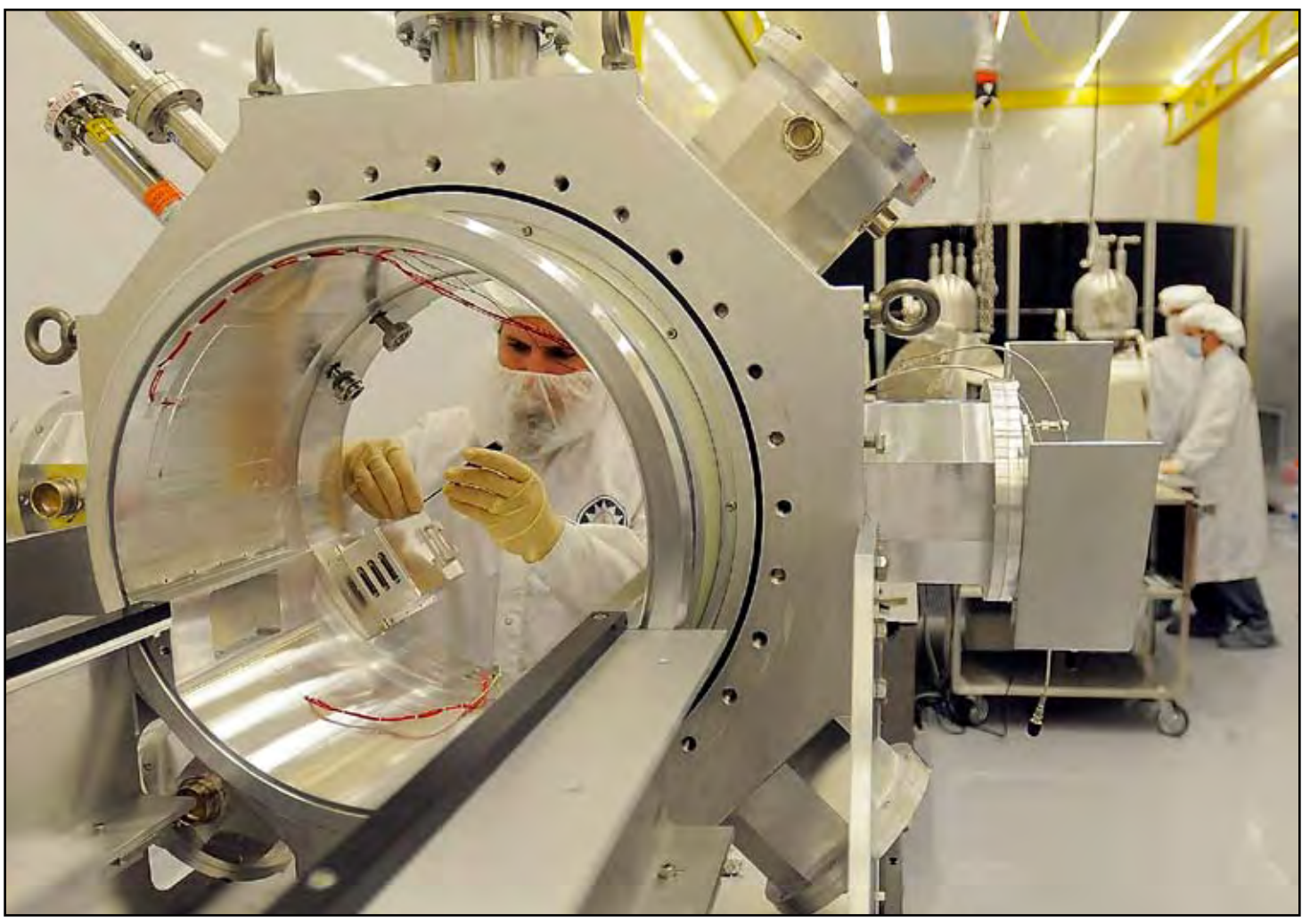
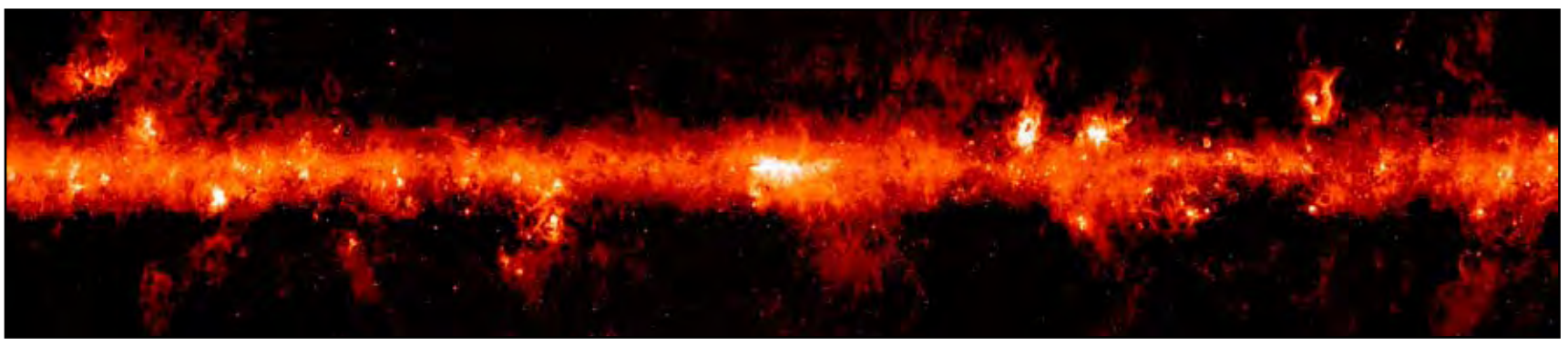


EXPLORING BEYOND



Space Dynamics Lab celebrates 50 years in space

During its 50-year history, Utah State University's Space Dynamics Lab has always placed a strong emphasis on guiding the next generation of aerospace engineers.

Since its founding in 1959, the company has employed 1,500 USU students, providing them with opportunities to research things like satellites and instrument calibration.

"Many of them have moved on to permanent positions at SDL," said Doug Lemon, the lab's director. "Some leave for others opportunities, then come back years later."

While most of SDL's educational efforts have focused on science-oriented Aggies, an upcoming event is designed to excite the youngest of space enthusiasts.

On Aug. 8, SDL will hold a 50th Anniversary Community Day from noon to 4 p.m. at its facilities on USU's Innovation Campus, 1695 N. Research Park Way in North Logan.

"If you've got a kid who likes gadgets, this is the place to bring them" said Jim Marshall, director of business development.

Activities will include science-related demonstrations with liquid nitrogen, crystals, bouncy balls and sun telescope demonstrations.

Kids are invited to test their mettle in the Human Slingshot, the Acro Bungee, an obstacle course, a rock climbing wall. Free hot dogs, snow cones and soda are available.

Inside SDL's calibration and optical research laboratory, visitors can see how sensors and other equipment are tested in massive chambers that replicates the harsh environment of space.

Information tables will showcase a number of current projects:

— WISE (Wide-field Infrared Survey Explorer), a telescope that will survey the entire sky, providing a complete stellar infrared map that is a thousand times more detailed than previous surveys.

— SOFIE (Solar Occultation for Ice Experiment), a sensor that studies clouds high in the atmosphere, which are thought to be good indicators of global climate change.

— EyePod, a 25-pound reconnaissance camera for unmanned aerial vehicles, which can be used for surveillance of war zones.

Lemon said he hopes that some of the young visitors to the SDL might decide that science and engineering is the path for them.

"I think 50 years ahead to the 100th anniversary of SDL, and who will be the director then," Lemon added. "They are probably in grade school. ... They are probably in second or third grade learning about science and getting excited."

By the way, Lemon himself is one of those kids. The Cache Valley native decided he wanted to be a physicist in middle school. He worked at the lab that became SDL while he was a student at Utah State.

"It has been a real thrill for me to come back where I started," he said. "I didn't know I would be back here as director some 35 years later."

Left: Machinists work on parts for projects at the Space Dynamics Laboratory.

Right: Dr. Douglas K. Lemon, Director, Space Dynamics Laboratory, right, talks with Director of Business Development Jim Marshall, left, in a conference room at the Space Dynamics Laboratory.

Top: Space Dynamics Laboratory employee Matt Sorensen works on the SDL Transfer Radiometer, a calibration device used to measure the characteristics of infrared light.
Above: This false color image of the center of the Milky Way made from data collected by the SDL-built SPIRIT III Sensor while in orbit. *(Photo courtesy Space Dynamics Laboratory)*

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