



**CARNEGIE
SCIENCE
CENTER**

One of the four Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh

MEDIA ALERT

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Susan Zimecki

Office: 412.237.1657

Blackberry: 412.290.1583

ZimeckiS@CarnegieScienceCenter.org

TORNADO ALLEY TO DEBUT AT CARNEGIE SCIENCE CENTER

OPENING WEEKEND TO FEATURE TORNADO INTERCEPT VEHICLE AND SEAN CASEY OF STORM CHASERS

Media Preview:

Tornado Alley

Monday, March 21

6:30 pm

Carnegie Science Center's Rangos Omnimax Theater

RSVP to Heather Jarrett, marketing communications manager, at

JarrettH@CarnegieScienceCenter.org or via telephone at **412.237.1537**.

PITTSBURGH, March 14, 2011 —Tornado season is fast approaching in the region of America's heartland known as "the severe weather capital of the world"—and on March 25, *Tornado Alley*, an explosive new giant-screen film, will translate nature's most dramatic weather phenomenon to a heart-pounding immersive experience at Carnegie Science Center's Rangos Omnimax Theater – Pittsburgh's largest screen and only domed screen.

Tornado Alley follows large-format filmmaker Sean Casey (star of the Discovery Channel's popular *Storm Chasers* series) and the researchers of the VORTEX2 initiative on a thrilling quest to witness the birth of a tornado. Armed with an IMAX® camera, the most advanced weather measurement instruments ever created, and a fleet of customized vehicles designed to withstand gale-force winds, torrential rains, and unrelenting hail, Casey and the VORTEX2 scientists take audiences on a mission to experience a tornado's destructive power while gathering the most comprehensive extreme weather data ever collected.

Sean Casey will be at the Science Center on Friday, March 25, and Saturday, March 26, with a tornado intercept vehicle (TIV-2) that visitors can climb into and investigate, from 10 am to 5 pm each day. From 7 to 9 pm on Saturday, a special program called Tornadoes with a Twist will feature a talk by Sean Casey, popcorn and fountain drinks, and a screening of *Tornado Alley*. Cost for this program is \$15 for members of Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh and \$18 for non-members.

Casey's talk will highlight his experiences as he and his crew raced after storms in TIV-2. Casey engineered and built this seven-ton armored tornado intercept vehicle to help him capture what he considers a cinematic "holy grail," a shot of a tornado from point-blank range. *Tornado Alley* is the culmination of Casey's efforts and will give audiences the chance to ride along—and to experience a

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visual powerhouse of never-before-captured tornado footage on the giant screen. “There’s a huge difference between filming a tornado from a couple miles away with a telephoto lens, and filming a

tornado that’s on top of you with a wide-angle lens,” Casey says. “After eight years, I’m thrilled to finally share these incredible experiences with audiences everywhere.”

“Carnegie Science Center is very excited to be bringing *Tornado Alley* to Pittsburgh,” says Ann Metzger, co-director of the Science Center. “This movie really embodies what giant screens are about: taking the viewer on an immersive journey into exciting and new frontiers, places people can’t go on their own. Especially in the dome, surrounded by the sounds as well as the sights of the tornado, this experience is dramatic. *Tornado Alley* combines the thrill and excitement of storm chasing with the hard science behind weather research.”

Tornado Alley, narrated by Bill Paxton (*Twister*, *Titanic*), takes viewers on a science adventure following leading researchers Joshua Wurman, Karen Kosiba, and Don Burgess, along with the scientists of VORTEX2, on their quest to penetrate a tornado’s inner workings. The most ambitious scientific mission of its kind, VORTEX2 comprises more than 100 severe-weather researchers from all over the world, their fleet of radar trucks, and the most sophisticated weather-measuring instruments ever created—used to literally surround tornadoes and the supercell storms that form them. Their ultimate goal: to better predict where and when tornadoes will strike, and to provide warnings that give those at risk a few more minutes to protect themselves and their families.

“Seeing this film in the Rangos Omnimax Theater will put viewers right next to Sean Casey as he makes a monumental scientific breakthrough,” says Ron Baillie, co-director of the Science Center. “This film is great because it has a huge wow-factor, even more so because it documents the first mission to collect data from the inside of a tornado. At the Science Center, our goal is to inspire the next generation of innovators, and *Tornado Alley* is the story of a team of researchers who accomplish the impossible through dedication and perseverance. These are the people that we want our youth to look up to.”

On April 10, 11, and 12, thanks to a generous grant from the National Science Foundation, a “Doppler on Wheels” radar truck will be onsite at Carnegie Science Center, along with two members of the VORTEX2 research team. Details for their visit are being developed.

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Weather is always on the radar at the Science Center. Forces of Nature, on the fourth floor of the building, presents numerous interactive stations that explore weather and weather-related technology and science. Visitors of all ages can see what it's like to be a meteorologist and host a simulated television weather report, control the twists and turns of a 4 ft. tornado, and much more.

Tornado Alley is a production of Graphic Films and Giant Screen Films. Major funding was provided by the National Science Foundation with additional support from the Giant Dome Theater Consortium. The film is distributed by Giant Screen Films of Evanston, Ill.

For more details on show times, grand opening events, and ticket information, visit CarnegieScienceCenter.org

About Carnegie Science Center

Carnegie Science Center is dedicated to inspiring learning and curiosity by connecting science and technology with everyday life. By making science both relevant and fun, the Science Center's goal is to increase science literacy in the region and motivate young people to seek careers in science and technology. One of the four Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh, the Science Center is Pittsburgh's premier science exploration destination, reaching more than 700,000 people annually through its hands-on exhibits, camps, classes and off-site education programs.

About Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh

Founded by Andrew Carnegie in 1895, Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh is a collection of four distinctive museums dedicated to exploration through art and science: Carnegie Museum of Art, Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Carnegie Science Center, and The Andy Warhol Museum. In 2009, the museums reached more than 1.2 million people through exhibitions, educational programs, outreach activities, and special events.

About Giant Screen Films

Over the past decade, Giant Screen Films (GSF) has established itself as a pioneer in the large format/IMAX® industry. Since 1997, the company has built a reputation for producing and distributing films that, through the magic of immersive sight and sound technologies, offer viewers an inspiring perspective on the world presented on giant IMAX® canvas. GSF's mission is to create and share films that push the boundaries of the large-format medium, challenging the imaginations of children and adults around the world. At the core of this mission is a dedication to the partnerships that bring a diverse range of subjects to the screen and, through meaningful educational collaborations, extend each film's impact far beyond the theater.

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