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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**WEDU PAYS TRIBUTE TO THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF
ASTRONOMY WITH NEW PBS DOCUMENTARY
*400 YEARS OF THE TELESCOPE***

Local events offer exclusive screening and stargazing

Tampa, FL – A sweeping film celebrating four centuries of astral discoveries will make its debut on **WEDU** when *400 Years of the Telescope; A Journey of Science, Technology and Thought* airs on Tuesday, April 14th at 9 pm; but local astronomy enthusiasts will have the opportunity to get a sneak peak at the one-hour documentary, followed by a special planetarium presentation of *Two Small Pieces of Glass*, at three events taking place from 6 pm -11 pm on **Saturday, April 11th**. Event guests will also have the chance to view Saturn and other celestial wonders through BIG telescopes, with local astronomy experts on hand to answer questions. Tickets are \$8 for adults, \$4 for kids (no charge for children under four), at the following venues:

Museum of Science & Industry (MOSI)

The Saunders Planetarium

4801 East Fowler Avenue, Tampa

Tickets for this location may be purchased by calling **813.254.9338**, ext. **3013** or online at **wedu.org**.

Telescope viewing courtesy of **MARS Club of Tampa**.

Ticket price does not include admission to the museum.

South Florida Museum

The Bishop Planetarium

201 10th Street West, Bradenton

Tickets for this location may be purchased by calling **941.746.4131**, ext. **17** or via e-mail at **tickets@southfloridamuseum.org**. Telescope viewing courtesy of **The Local Group of Deep Sky Observers**.

Science Center of Pinellas County

7701 22nd Avenue North, St. Petersburg

Tickets for this location may be purchased by calling **727.384.0027**, ext. **226**. Telescope viewing courtesy of **The St. Petersburg Astronomy Club**.

Tickets may also be purchased at the door at each location.
Seating is limited. Refreshments available.

In ***400 Years of the Telescope***, viewers take a visually stunning journey from Galileo's first look at the cosmos in 1609, to today's thrilling quests to discover new worlds and glimpse the formation of the first stars after the Big Bang. From reenactments of Galileo's invention and early pen drawings of the moons of Jupiter, to vivid multi-colored nebulas captured by the Hubble Space Telescope, ***400 Years of the Telescope***, narrated by astrophysicist **Neil deGrasse Tyson** (host of *NOVA ScienceNow*), takes viewers from their armchairs into the wonders of space exploration. With warmth and humor, the top astrophysicists enthusiastically discuss momentous discoveries, and define dark energy – a mysterious vacuum energy that is accelerating the expansion of the universe. Looking into the future, viewers will learn of emergent telescopes the size of stadiums, and a massive radio telescope array that will be perched on one of the highest plateaus on the planet - enormous new instruments that may detect life outside our solar system, and allow humans to view the initial moments of the Big Bang. Like Galileo's first telescopic observations, these new technologies will reshape our entire perception of the universe.

Emmy® award-winning writer and producer Kris Koenig and the Interstellar Studios production team traveled the globe, interviewing leading astronomers and cosmologists against a backdrop of the world's greatest observatories, to create a vivid film that presents the human quest of the past 400 years to understand the structure and nature of the universe. Beautifully photographed in 4k digital cinematography, ***400 Years of the Telescope*** is the first PBS documentary to be filmed on 35mm RED technology. Recorded at 4520 X 2540 pixels per frame, the output is RAW format, over five times the resolution of HD. To accompany these brilliant visuals, modern English composer **Mark Slater** was commissioned to create a vibrant musical score, performed by the London Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Slater created elements of the score based on the numbers 1,6,0,9 - the year Galileo made his discovery, with numbers correspond to pitch classes, in which numerical values are assigned to tones.

WEDU, a 501(c)(3) organization, is west central Florida's primary PBS station reaching 16 counties including the Tampa, St. Petersburg, Pasco, Polk and Sarasota areas through multiple media platforms including on-air broadcasting and online experiences that broaden horizons, transport and transform and open gateways to new ideas and new worlds. WEDU, recently received its fourth consecutive four-star rating by Charity Navigator, an honor only achieved by 6% of charities nationwide, is financially supported by its local community, and provides the highest quality education, information, and entertainment programming, special events and outreach activities. For more information about WEDU programming, TV schedules, channel guides, special events, outreach efforts and community partnerships visit www.wedu.org or call 800.354.9338.