



# BARSTOW COMMUNITY COLLEGE

*Public Information Office*

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Contact: Chris Clarke

Barstow Community College

(760) 252-2411 ext. 7350

cclarke@barstow.edu

## **FREE Telescope viewing of the Great Orion Nebula in Barstow**

Barstow, CA – Barstow Community College (BCC) will be hosting its first ever telescope viewing of the Great Orion Nebula on Thursday, March 22, starting at 7:30 p.m. BCC's Astronomy Professor, Scott Bulkley, will give a narration, and students from his Observational Astronomy course will also be on hand to answer questions and point out other interesting celestial objects.

The Orion Nebula is a magnificent cloud of gas and dust around 1,300 light years from Earth and is located just below the famed "Orion's Belt" in the constellation of Orion. It is a nursery for star formation and is the closest star-forming region to Earth. The Orion Nebula also contains the Trapezium star cluster, a tight group of young massive stars that provide much of the nebula's brightness.

Professor Bulkley remarked, "This is actually the second time that we have shot for a public viewing of this object. Our first attempt had to be canceled last year due to dangerous winds." Professor Bulkley continued, "This is the best time of the entire year to see the Orion Nebula because it is perfectly positioned in the evening sky. The public is in for quite a treat, as this is the brightest and most spectacular nebula in the sky."

The viewing will be conducted through our main Observatory Telescope which is a 16" Schmidt-Cassegrain Reflector on a permanent Equatorial mount. The magnification used varies between 100x and 1000x depending on the object observed and the viewing conditions.

The College Observatory is located on Veterans Parkway behind the College campus. Parking is available on Veterans Parkway. Admission is free. Weather permitting, all participants will look through the telescope to see this wonderful astronomical sight. People are urged to dress warmly since this is an outdoor event that will run from 7:30 p.m. until about 9:00 p.m.

For people interested in more astronomical adventures, BCC offers college level Astronomy classes. For the upcoming Summer Semester, online classes begin on June 4<sup>th</sup>.

## **ASTRONOMY (ASTR) classes offered at Barstow Community College**

ASTR 1 - INTRODUCTION TO ASTRONOMY – covers the basic principles of astronomy, including motions of the earth, time measurement, the solar system, stellar and galactic phenomena and cosmology, as well as star and constellation identification. (Offered Online during the Summer Term)

ASTR 1L – OBSERVATIONAL ASTRONOMY – is a laboratory course which examines the major principles of astronomy, and utilizes observations through the telescope to explore the planets and moons of the solar system, stars, nebulas, and galaxies. (Offered in the Classroom/Observatory during the Fall Semester)

For additional information about the BCC Observatory and the Public Viewing of the Orion Nebula, please contact Professor Bulkley at 760-252-2411, ext. 7301. For more information about the college and its programs, including the Astronomy Classes mentioned in this article, please visit the BCC website:

[www.barstow.edu](http://www.barstow.edu)