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## Walking the Solar System with the Force Behind Cosmos

By Jason Weinstein

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From the Sun at the Ithaca Commons to Pluto 1,200 meters away at the Sciencenter, you can walk the Solar System on the Sagan Planet Walk, named after Cosmos creator and one of the Sciencenter's early advisors Carl Sagan.

"We went to his widow Ann Druyan and presented the idea to her and it literally melted her heart. She broke down in tears and said this was probably the most wonderful thing that we could ever do for Carl," said Sciencenter Executive Director Charlie Trautmann.

All of the planet's are sized to scale and placed in relation to their orbit around the sun.

"It gives you a real sense, a visceral sense of the scale of the Solar System and the universe and our place in it. And Carl was very big on our place in the universe," said Trautmann.

But not all of the Planet Walk is in Ithaca.

"The star nearest the Sun is Alpha Centauri and that is on a radius of 5,000 miles around Ithaca, according to the scale that we're at. So that puts it at Hilo, Hawaii. So we have a station of the Sagan Planet Walk in Hilo," said Trautmann.

Going from Upstate New York to Hawaii makes the Sagan Planet Walk the largest exhibition in the world. And 18 months from now it will get exponentially bigger.

"There is a privately-funded mission to the Moon. We will put up a station on the Moon for the Sagan Planet Walk, representing a planet that is about 200 light years from Earth," said Trautmann.

A leap into space for a man who expanded understanding of the cosmos.

