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**Spring 2018
Harcourt “Ace” Vernon
Memorial Lecture
April 11, 2018
7:30 pm Clayton Hall**

Featuring Guest Speaker
Dr. Veronique Petit

Massive Stars

The Powerhouses of our Galaxy

Massive stars, which can have up to one hundred times the mass of our own Sun, are the powerhouses of our Galaxy. They shape their surroundings through their intense radiation and winds, trigger the formation of new generations of stars, and produce almost all of the heavy chemical elements in the Universe through nuclear reactions in their cores. Understanding the life-cycle of these stars is thus of great importance to astrophysics, even more so since the recent detection of gravitational waves, which originate from the coalescence and merger of black holes and neutron stars formed when massive stars die. These waves, now detected by the 2017 Nobel prize-winning LIGO experiment, are revolutionizing the field of



The massive Wolf-Rayet star (top) may someday produce a supernova like the Crab Nebula (bottom)

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These Hubble images show the beautiful massive star cluster Westerlund 2 (left) and star cluster R136 (right).