Using Stellarium to Find, Research and Image Deep-Sky Objects
The Las Cumbres Observatory (LCO) network of telescopes located at sites all around the world enable us to take images of deep-sky objects like Messier objects. Messier objects are a collection of 110 astronomical objects cataloged by the 18th Century French astronomer Charles Messier while he was searching for comets.

Here is a catalog of Messier objects.
Starting Your Research!

Go to the IASC website http://iasc.cosmosearch.org/LCO.html to download the necessary instruction guides:

- How to Take Images Through Our Solar Siblings
- How to Retrieve Images From Google Drive
- How to Retrieve Images From the LCO Portal
- Introductory Stellarium Guide

1. Have your students select five Messier objects then determine which objects received the most votes. **(For this exercise, let’s assume M1 received the most votes).**

2. To learn more about the object that received the most votes, search the Internet.

Wikipedia (https://www.wikipedia.org/) is a good source for information. Read about this object and find out what type of object it is, what constellation it is located in and its distances.
3. Open Stellarium.

Move your mouse to the lower left corner of the screen to open the menu panels.
4. Click on the Search window Icon.

5. Type M1 in the search window as shown in the image then press Enter or click the Search button.

6. Click on the Ocular view Icon located in the upper right corner menu panel (Top right corner of screen).
7. Click on the Center on selected object Icon.

Here is an example on how it should look.
How to Take an Image

Go to the IASC website http://iasc.cosmosearch.org/LCO.html and request an image of the Messier object that received the most votes by following the “How to take Images through Our Solar Siblings” guide.
Below is an image of M1 (Crab Nebula) from LCO and enhanced through Gimp software: