



by Janice Harvey

# Journey Through the Universe: *Another Successful Year*

*The 2012 Journey Through the Universe program in Hawai'i attracted more students, educators, observatory staff, and public than ever before in its eight-year history. This summary shares highlights from classroom visits to public lectures and other events that make this program Gemini North's flagship local outreach program.*

**Figure 1.**

*Brian Day from the NASA Lunar Science Institute shares with the students that the Moon is a far more interesting place than we previously thought.*

Journey Through the Universe (Journey), Gemini North's highly successful science education outreach program, entered its eighth year this March with a week-long schedule of activities that culminated with a guest appearance by Jeff Goldstein, the visionary who started the national program over a decade ago.



As with previous years, Journey 2012 reached thousands of students (some 7,000 this year) in 380 classrooms at 20 schools in the Hilo/Laupahoehoe/Waiakea Complex area. With passion and excitement, our team of local and national astronomers and astronomy educators helped students to explore their innate curiosity about our universe. They also pro-



**Figure 2.** Journey Through the Universe STEM conference participants. The conference was lead by Jeff Goldstein, founder of the national Journey program.

vided workshops for area teachers in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education, and offered Journey ambassadors (community assistants) the opportunity to visit classrooms alongside professional astronomers and educators.

Thousands of participants also attended and enjoyed family science events held at the Imiloa Astronomy Center and the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. Over 300 community members were captivated by Goldstein's lecture on the Earth's place in the universe; he also led a conference for local teachers in STEM education and provided inspiration for moving the program in new directions in coming years.

District Superintendent Valerie Takata was especially pleased with Journey 2012, noting that the joint initiative has helped the program become a "sustaining reality — a reality that will help with the District's vision for students to be career and college-ready when they graduate as a part of the educational system," Takata said. "Our complex area is overwhelmed with appreciation for the enthusiasm and energy this initiative has generated. We humbly thank

Gemini Observatory and all of our Journey partners for their continued support as we all work together towards a common goal: building a better future."

Jacqueline Luna, from Chiefess Kapiolani Elementary School, also shared her appreciation for Journey 2012. "Thank you for continuing this wonderful program," she wrote. "The students learn so much valuable information, and experiencing this program positively impacts students' learning!"

Journey has clearly impacted the Gemini North local community over the years. Enthusiastic teachers have heaped praise on the program from the beginning. Take, for instance what third grade teacher Kathy

**Figure 3.** Gemini's Astronomy Educator, Jeff Donahue, teaches optics at Chiefess Kapiolani Elementary School.



**Figure 4.**

*Doug Arion, designer of the Galileoscope, watches as the students at Waiakea Elementary School take turns viewing through the telescope.*



Sewake of E. B. de Silva Elementary School had to say in 2012 after years of participation: “The Journey program allows the students to make additional connections to concepts presented in the classroom,” she said. “It is a great opportunity for students to learn about science from other people in the community.”

As we look forward to Journey 2013, the Hawai'i Governor's office has expressed an interest in visiting two Journey school classrooms and attending our annual Journey Chamber of Commerce “thank-you” celebra-

tion. Jeff Goldstein will also return and provide a community day STEM event, which we encourage all to attend.

The future of America rests in our ability to work toward a more scientifically literate public, to train the next generation of scientists and engineers, and to make sure we open high technology job sectors to Gemini's local host community's students and reward them with good jobs (so they can work for us!). Science education is key to these goals, and Journey unlocks the door of advancement for many of Hawai'i's students.

For more information about this program, visit the Journey web pages at: <http://www.gemini.edu/journey> or to view additional teacher evaluation comments visit <http://www.gemini.edu/TeacherEvaluations>

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*Richard Crowe in one of his “signature” aloha shirts (made by his wife Debi) in front of the 'Imiloa Astronomy Center in Hilo.*

*The entire Hawai'i Journey Through the Universe team mourns the loss of our friend and colleague Dr. Richard Crowe. Richard played a key role in Journey each year by coordinating all of the classroom visits by observatory staff and educators. His dedication, devotion, energy, (and his laughter) will be missed by everyone who knew or worked with him. Richard's profound impact on the Journey program is part of the legacy that he leaves to our community.*