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Astronomy Educator Profiles



Alexis Ann Acohido

Gemini Observatory

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Alexis Ann Acohido graduated of the University of Hawaii at Manoa in 2015, where she obtained her Bachelor's of Science in mathematics. Born and raised on Oahu, she moved to Hawai'i island last year and is currently part of the Public Information and Outreach department at Gemini Observatory in Hilo, Hawai'i. In 2013, she was part of the Akamai Workforce Initiative and interned at the Institute for Astronomy on Maui where she worked on parallax ranging methods for point source objects.



Christian Andersen

PISCES

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Christian Andersen is the Operations Manager at the Pacific International Space Center for Exploration Systems (PISCES), and leads the agency's additive manufacturing & construction projects at its Laser Lava Lab. Andersen started his career conducting research in inertial confinement fusion at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Ecole Polytechnique, and Rutherford Appleton Laboratories. As Operations Manager, he's worked on a variety of PISCES projects in transitioning aerospace technologies to terrestrial applications and analogue field testing. Andersen is also a Lecturer and Affiliate Faculty in the Physics & Astronomy Department at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, and the Vice-Chair of the Space Resources Technical Committee for the AIAA (American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics). He holds a B.S. in Physics from San Jose State University and a M.S. in Engineering from U.C. Davis.



Virginia Aragon-Barnes
Thirty Meter Telescope Project
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Virginia Aragon-Barnes had a passion for science and a natural curiosity about how and why things worked from a very early age. After a few earthquakes and a one-day lesson on volcanoes in a junior high physical science course she was hooked on Geology. She moved to Hawai'i to pursue and successfully obtain a Bachelor's in Geology at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo and is currently pursuing a Master's degree. Since graduation, her career has taken her to workplaces such as the active lava flows of Kilauea, the beautiful summits of Mauna kea and Mauna loa and the lush native forests cared for and protected by our state. Currently, Virginia is the Environmental, Health & Safety Compliance Engineer for the Thirty Meter Telescope. Virginia continues to pursue her personal commitment of inspiring Hawai'i's keiki to become future scientists through educational outreach.



Jennifer Baer
NASA SSERVI
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Jennifer Baer is a graphic designer at NASA's Solar System Exploration Research Virtual Institute, SSERVI. After graduating with a BFA in graphic design from Iowa State University, she worked for Coudal Partners Advertising in her hometown of Chicago. She made her way out west to work at NASA Ames Research Center, Silicon Valley. She has worked with NASA's Mission Proposal teams collaborating on information design for space missions. Working with scientists and engineers, she has helped communicate design solutions by distilling complex data sets and technical details to refine and illustrate graphics in a concise, simplified and of course, very attractive product. Deft at creative problem solving of all manner of visual communication, Jennifer enjoys the disciplines of typography, illustration and design equally.

For the past seven years, she has worked for SSERVI, formerly the Lunar Science Institute, as a senior graphic designer focusing her talents on print media for conferences as well as coordinating public outreach graphics for the space enthusiast community at large. When she's not busy sketching on her iPad, she can be found riding her bike up the hills of Northern California.



Christoph Baranec is an assistant astronomer at the Institute for Astronomy. He designs, builds and uses adaptive optics systems — instruments that overcome the blurring effects of the Earth’s atmosphere.

Baranec won an Alfred P. Sloan Research Fellowship in 2014 and the UH Board of Regents’ Medal for Excellence in Research in 2017 for leading the development of the world’s first automated adaptive optic system, Robo-AO. Observations from this system appear in nearly 40 scientific publications. These include several adaptive optics surveys with the most numerous observations ever performed, including all of the several thousands of Kepler candidate exoplanet hosts and all known stars within 80 light years, observable from the northern hemisphere.

Baranec currently leads the effort to deploy an upgraded version of Robo-AO to the University of Hawai’i 2.2-meter telescope which will achieve resolutions approaching that of the Hubble Space Telescope.

Christoph Baranec
Institute for Astronomy, UH
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Kerri Beisser is Program Manager for the Space Dept. of the Applied Physics Laboratory at the university. Before coming to APL, Ms. Beisser worked for the Challenger Center for Space Science Education, where she was the Project Manager for national programs for NASA’s Cassini, STARDUST and Galileo missions. She also worked for the U.S. Space and Rocket Center and Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama. Here she conducted student and teacher training in the history of the space program and in the fields of aerospace, engineering, technology, and space station/space shuttle activities. She also led corporate training programs and special events for Space Camp, such as training the cast of the movie Apollo 13. Since joining APL in 1999 in the Space Department, Ms. Beisser has managed the education and public outreach programs and the engagement and communications program for NASA missions from the Sun to Pluto and beyond. These have included the Near Earth Asteroid Rendezvous (NEAR) mission, the NASA “Vision Mission” Innovative Interstellar Probe, the Thermosphere, Ionosphere, Mesosphere, Energetics and Dynamics (TIMED) mission, for the Solar-Terrestrial Relations Observatory (STEREO) spacecraft, the Compact Reconnaissance Imaging Spectrometer for Mars (CRISM) instrument for the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter (MRO), and the Radiation Belt Storm Probes Mission (RBSP). Currently, she is managing the engagement and communications programs for the New Horizons mission to Pluto and the Kuiper Belt, and the Parker Solar Probe Plus mission, slated to launch in July 2018.

Kerri Beisser
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Tishanna Ben
National Solar Observatory
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Tishanna Bailey Ben is the Hawai'i Community Outreach and Education Programs Leader for the National Solar Observatory (NSO). She graduated from the University of Hawai'i with a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in cell and molecular biology and a Master of Science (M.S.) in tropical conservation biology and environmental science. Prior to her position at NSO, she worked as a laboratory technician and graduate researcher with the Research Corporation of the University of Hawai'i (RCUH). She also taught middle and high school science courses at Ka'u High and Pahala Elementary School on the Big Island.



Hannah Blomgren
Gemini Observatory
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Hannah Blomgren is a Public Information and Outreach Intern for Gemini Observatory. She is a current undergraduate student in astrophysics, math, and international relations at the University of Utah. Before moving to Hilo, Hannah worked for Bryce Canyon National Park as an astronomy outreach intern, or Dark Ranger, giving lectures, presenting planetarium shows, and teaching visitors about the connections between the cosmos and the world around us. When she is not immersed in astronomy, Hannah can be found playing guitar, hiking, or writing poetry.



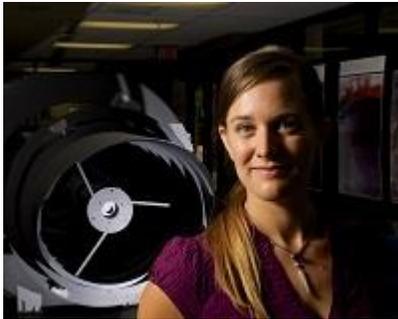
Kelly Blumenthal
UH Institute for Astronomy
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Kelly Blumenthal is a graduate student at the Institute for Astronomy at UH Manoa, and received her B.A. in astronomy and physics, with a minor in saxophone performance from Boston University in 2014. She is interested cosmology, or the study of how the Universe (and everything in it) formed and evolved. If you manage to find her not ruining her eyesight in front of a computer, Kelly is likely either reading some overly dense sci-fi novel, or trying desperately to teach herself to play the ukulele.



Alice Bowman
Johns Hopkins University APL
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Alice Bowman works for the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory in Laurel, Maryland, where she is the Mission Operations Manager—or “MOM”—for NASA’s New Horizons mission, which made the first visit to Pluto in 2015. She leads the team that controls the spacecraft, now about 3.7 billion miles from Earth. Her love of space exploration started as a child saving newspaper clippings of the Moon landing and other planetary visits. After studying physics and chemistry at the University of Virginia, Alice joined the California Institute of Technology, where she developed tumor-targeting micelles, which have successfully been used to treat cancer and fungal infections; programmed computer simulations to study how explosions affect soil compression and wave propagation; and developed silicon-based semiconductors that detected infrared waves emitted by cruise missiles and stars. From there, Bowman was a satellite technical advisor to U.S. Space Command, advising the agency on various infrared-signature detections. She joined the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory in 1997, and has served on various spacecraft teams such as the Midcourse Space Experiment and CONTOUR, in addition to New Horizons. In her time away from work, she and her husband lead a community jam session twice a month and play in a bluegrass band.



Veronica Bray
University of Arizona
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Veronica Bray is a research scientist at the University of Arizona’s Lunar and Planetary Laboratory. She started her research at University College London, measuring lava flows on Venus. She completed her PhD at Imperial College London studying comet impacts into Europa using both observations and computer modeling. She is now a science team member on a number of missions to rocky and icy worlds all over the solar system: LROC (the Moon), HiRISE (Mars), *Cassini* (Saturn system) and *New Horizons*. In addition to her specialty of impact cratering, Veronica brings expertise in “comparative planetology” to the Geology and Geophysics section of the *New Horizons* team. Veronica continues the theme of hard-hitting, fast moving projectiles in her hobbies: she is an archer and metal/rock drummer! She is a targeting specialist for HiRISE on board the *Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter*, and is also an adjunct lecturer of astrobiology.



Jerry Brower

Gemini Observatory

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Jerry Brower is the self proclaimed "Information Systems guy to the stars!" (literally the stars) He has over 25 years in the information technology field, including designing data centers, cyber security, and many industry certifications from Microsoft, Cisco, Comp TIA, SANS, and others. As a security consultant, he performed audits/penetration testing on financial institutions and performed independent security research. When not on the computer at work, he can often be found in such cyber places as Tatooine, Azeroth, or Jita in The Forge.



Marc Buie

Southwest Research Institute

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Marc Buie is a *New Horizons* Co-Investigator, currently working at the Southwest Research Institute in Boulder, CO. Pluto has been a major focus of Marc's research since 1983, and he was a founding member of the so-called "Pluto Underground" that promoted America's first mission to the 9th planet starting in 1989. Marc spent many years at the Lowell Observatory, where Pluto was first discovered in 1930. More recently he spent ten years searching for a Kuiper Belt Object that *New Horizons* might fly on to after the Pluto encounter. Marc was the first to spot this elusive body in 2014, now known as "MU69," using the Hubble Space Telescope, and has directed a large effort to understand this distant, cold and tiny world. He also has a project (tnorecon.net) that is enlisting students to help measure the sizes of other objects in the Kuiper Belt. Says Marc, "I may be thin-blooded transplant from Louisiana but my imagination always runs away with me when thinking about the super cold and complex environments on Pluto and elsewhere in the Kuiper Belt."



André-Nicholas Chené

Gemini Observatory

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André-Nicholas Chené is an assistant scientist at the Gemini North Observatory since early 2013. He obtained his Ph.D. in astrophysics from the Université de Montréal in 2007. He then moved across his home country ("A Mari Usque Ad Mare") to become a research associate for the National Research Council Canada at the Herzberg Institute of Astrophysics from 2007 to 2010. From 2010 to 2013, he held a joint post-doctoral position between the Universidad de Concepcion and the Universidad de Valparaiso, in Chile, and joined the science team of the VISTA Variable in Via Lactea survey. His main scientific interests are massive stars and young stellar open clusters. His expertise covers optical and near infrared imaging and spectroscopy. Two things he enjoys a lot since he moved to Hawai'i are long observing runs at Mauna Kea, and his daily bike ride to work up and down Puainako St.



Devin Chu

Univ. of California Los Angeles

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Devin Chu was raised in Hilo, Hawaii and graduated from Hilo High School in 2010. He received his Bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College in Physics and Astronomy in 2014 and Masters of Science in Astronomy from UCLA in 2016. He is currently a graduate student at UCLA working with Professor Andrea Ghez. His research involves studying the orbits of stars around the supermassive black hole at the center of the Milky Way. Devin was a frequent participant in Journey Through the Universe while growing up.



Christopher Clergeon

Subaru Telescope

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Kathy Cooksey, an assistant professor in astronomy, received her PhD in 2009 from UC Santa Cruz and was an NSF postdoctoral fellow at MIT until starting at UH Hilo in January 2014; both institutions enabled her to learn about science pedagogy and practice teaching. She researches the large-scale gaseous structure in the universe to understand how various elements cycle in and out of galaxies, over cosmic time. As for hobbies, she enjoys soccer, hiking, and camping (and crocheting and watching anime, on the sedentary side).



Kathy Cooksey

UHH Physics & Astronomy

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Sandra Dawson
TMT International Observatory
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Sandra Dawson is Manager, Hawai'i Community Relations, for the Thirty Meter Telescope Project. Dawson has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and a Master's Degree in International Studies from Claremont Graduate University. For 20 years as an employee of the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) she worked at Caltech's Jet Propulsion Laboratory on some of JPL's largest projects for NASA, including the Galileo, Cassini and Mars missions, and received numerous group and individual awards. With her husband, Dwayne, she moved to Hilo six years ago to work on the Thirty Meter Telescope project and has been engaged in many civic, nonprofit, and educational programs.



Brian Day
SSERVI/NASA
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Brian Day is the Lead for Citizen Science and Community Development at the Solar System Exploration Research Virtual Institute (SSERVI). In this role, he coordinates programs with numerous internal and external partnering organizations, focusing on providing opportunities for students and the public to directly participate in NASA science and exploration. He currently acts as SSERVI's project manager for NASA's Lunar Mapping and Modeling Portal (<http://lmp.nasa.gov>), a set of tools designed for mission planning, lunar science, and public outreach. From 2010-2014, Brian served as the Education/Public Outreach Lead for NASA's Lunar Atmosphere and Dust Environment Explorer (LADEE) mission to the Moon, which flew through and studied the Moon's tenuous atmosphere. From 2007-2010 he served as the E/PO Lead for NASA's LCROSS lunar impactor mission which discovered deposits of water ice at the Moon's South Pole. He has also participated in producing the Education/Public Outreach sections for numerous NASA mission proposals. Brian has played key roles in various NASA Mars Analog Field Studies, providing technical support in the field for webcasts and robotic rover tests in extreme environments here on Earth. In 2007, he flew on the Aurigid-MAC mission to record fragments of comet Kiess entering Earth's upper atmosphere. Brian is a frequently-requested speaker at local schools and community organizations. As a member of NASA's Speakers Bureau, he is sent by NASA to give talks on a wide range of NASA missions and research topics.



Kyla Defore
PISCES
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Kyla Defore graduated from the University of Hawaii at Hilo December 2016 with her Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Geology, focusing on planetary science. Kyla currently works for the Pacific International Space Center for Exploration Systems (PISCES) as a Geology Technician but was working as an intern every summer for the past three years. Kyla's current research mainly focuses on basalt manufacturing and Martian/Lunar exploration.



Tony Denault

NASA IRTF

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Tony Denault is a systems programmer for the NASA Infrared Telescope Facility (IRTF), Institute for Astronomy. He graduated from UH Manoa with a BA in Information and Computer Science in 1986, and has been with the IRTF since 1989. His primary responsibility has been the development and support of IRTF instrumentation, telescope control system, computer systems, and network.



Daniel Devost

Canada-France-Hawaii Telescope

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Daniel Devost is the Director of Science Operations at the Canada-France-Hawaii Telescope since 2008. He started at CFHT in 2007 as a Canadian Resident Astronomer and was the WIRCam Instrument Scientist. Before Moving to Hawaii, Daniel worked at Cornell University from 2000 to 2007 as an Instrument Scientist for the Infrared Spectrograph. The spectrograph is one of three instruments on board the Spitzer Space Telescope that was launched in August 2003. Daniel did his PhD at the Université Laval in Québec City, Canada in collaboration with the Space Telescope Science Institute in Baltimore where he spend three years. His science interests are the formation of massive stars and the amount of metals in the Universe.



Jeff Donahue

Gemini Observatory

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Jeff Donahue is Senior Laser Technician at Gemini Observatory. He supports the laser guide star, preparing the laser for each laser run. Jeff and his wife came from Oregon, where he spent 17 years at Hewlett Packard. Jeff also worked in Corvallis, Oregon as an electronic and laser maintenance technician supporting Inkjet Manufacturing. Jeff has a B.S. degree in Industrial Technology from Central Washington University and an A.S. degree in Electronic Engineering Technology from Linn Benton Community College. In addition to his laser activities, Jeff enjoys snorkeling and exploring the Big Island.



Angelic Ebbers

Gemini Observatory

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Angelic Ebbers is a Senior Software Engineer for Gemini Observatory. She is part of the Software Operations group as well as a Telescope Technical Manager. Angelic specializes in motion control systems, EPICS real-time development, and troubleshooting. Angelic earned a B.Sc. from York University in the Space and Communications Sciences stream, with Honors in Computer Science and Physics, plus a minor in Astronomy. Prior to joining Gemini, Angelic worked for The Herzberg Institute of Astrophysics as well as the University of Toronto Southern Observatory in Chile. Outside of work, Angelic can be found training/competing in Dog Agility, scuba diving, or reading a good science fiction book.



Jocelyn Ferrara

Gemini Observatory

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Jocelyn Ferrara recently joined the Gemini Observatory as a Science Operations Specialist. This native Californian moved to New York City to earn her B.A. in Physics & Astronomy at Barnard College of Columbia University, which she completed in 2014. An observing run at the NASA IRTF during undergraduate studies sparked her interest in working for telescope operations. She then worked at the Space Telescope Science Institute in Baltimore as an operations specialist for the Hubble Space Telescope and as both a test & systems engineer for the upcoming James Webb Space Telescope. As part of the Johns Hopkins Whiting School of Engineering for Professionals, Jocelyn is also working on a masters in space systems engineering, one course at a time. A driving force that keeps her sane and inspired in the field is working to improve diversity and inclusion in the workforce and enabling women & minorities to pursue and thrive in careers in STEM.



Laura Ferrarese

Gemini Observatory

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Laura Ferrarese is the Interim Director of the Gemini Observatory. A native of Italy, Laura moved to the US as an undergraduate in 1990: little did she know that she would still be in North America 27 years later! After receiving her PhD from Johns Hopkins University in 1996, she moved to the California Institute of Technology as a Hubble Postdoctoral Fellow. From there, she went back across the country to Rutgers University as a professor, only to move back west four years later as a research astronomer at the Herzberg Institute of Astrophysics in Victoria, British Columbia, where she plans to return at the end of her current Gemini appointment. Laura's research interests range from the study of nearby galaxies and galaxy clusters, to investigating "supermassive" black holes and the unexpected connections they share with the galaxies at whose center they reside, to measuring the Hubble constant and the age of the Universe. In her spare time, Laura enjoys cooking with her husband Pat, playing with their three cats, Kyokki, Suki and Tomo, practicing her cello, gardening, and a number of other things she is now resigned to defer until retirement!



Scott Fisher
University of Oregon
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Scott Fisher is a faculty member within the University of Oregon, Department of Physics, where he teaches astronomy courses and serves as the Director of Outreach for the department. Scott previously worked at the National Science Foundation in Washington, DC where he was responsible for selecting and funding astronomy programs across the United States. Before his time in Washington, Scott worked as a staff member of the Gemini Observatory as an instrument scientist and as a member of the Gemini Outreach team. Scott lived in Hilo-town for just over 10 years while he worked at Gemini. He obtained his Ph.D. from the University of Florida in 2001 after working his way through the Florida state school system, including a stint at Lake Sumter Community College. Scott's main area of research is searching for and studying planet-forming disks around young stars. He is also involved with the design, construction, and use of infrared camera systems that are used on some of the biggest telescopes in the world. He has spent approximately 350 nights observing from the summit of Mauna Kea since his first trip to Hawai'i in 1996. In addition to his love of astronomy, Scott is an amateur photographer and a Geocacher.



Miriam Fuchs
Submillimeter Array
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Miriam (Mimi) Fuchs is a telescope operator and outreach coordinator for the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory's Submillimeter Array on the Big Island of Hawai'i. She received her B.S. in Astrophysics and History at Haverford College in 2013. She went on to work in informal science education, and has helped run public observing programs, astronomy clubs and space camp. Mimi loves to spend her days making astronomy more accessible and engaging for learners of all ages! When she's not on the summit of Mauna Kea, you can find her snorkeling, dancing, and eating lots of Thai food.



Tom Geballe
Gemini Observatory
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Tom Geballe obtained a PhD in physics in 1974 under Prof. Charles Townes at U.C. Berkeley. Following postdoctoral fellowships at Berkeley and Leiden, and a Carnegie Fellowship at Hale Observatories in Pasadena, he became a staff astronomer at the United Kingdom Infrared Telescope in 1981. He was Astronomer-in-charge, Associate Director, and Head of Operations at UKIRT from 1987 until 1998, when he joined Gemini. Among his research interests are the Galactic center, the late stages of stellar evolution, H3+ as a probe of interstellar gas, the composition of interstellar dust, the surfaces, atmospheres, and aurorae of planets and moons, and brown dwarfs.



Jeff Goldstein

**National Center for Earth and
Space Science Education**

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Jeff Goldstein is a nationally recognized science educator and planetary scientist who has dedicated his career to the public understanding of science and the joys of learning. As Center Director for the National Center for Earth and Space Science Education, Jeff oversees the creation and delivery of programs that engage entire communities, train 3,000 teachers annually, and emphasize family learning. He led the inter-organization team that permanently installed the Voyage model Solar System on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., in front of the Smithsonian. The Voyage National Program is permanently installing low-cost replicas in 100 communities world-wide. Jeff also oversees the Student Spacelight Experiments Program (SSEP) that provides real research opportunities for pre-college students on the Space Shuttle and International Space Station. Jeff was the Keynote Speakers for the NSTA National Conference in San Francisco, California, in March 2011. Jeff was at the National Air and Space Museum for 8 years, departing in 1996 as acting Chair of the Lab for Astrophysics. He was on the senior staff at Challenger Center from 1996-2005. In 2005 he created the National Center for Earth and Space Science Education. Visit Jeff's website at <http://blogontheuniverse.org>.



Alyssa Grace

**Maunakea Visitor Information
Station**

Alyssa Grace was an administrative assistant for Journey through the Universe and a University of Hawaii at Hilo senior studying Psychology, Astronomy, and Biology. She has interned at Gemini Observatory in the Public Information and Outreach department for 4 months in which she developed a science communication program for college students and participated in various outreach events including a Family Day at the International Astronomical Union conference in Honolulu 2015. Alyssa is from Oahu but much prefers the Big Island. Her favorite activities include: volunteering at the Mauna Kea Visitor's center, hiking, yoga, and karaoke.



Olivier Guyon

Subaru Telescope

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Olivier Guyon is an astronomer at the Subaru Telescope. He started looking at stars from the age of 10, and he is now both an avid amateur astronomer and a professional astronomer. Olivier graduated from University of Paris 6 in 2002 (Ph.D. research topic: wide field interferometry), and now works with other scientists to directly observe exoplanets. Olivier has been developing new techniques for imaging exoplanets (planets around other stars) from telescopes on Earth and also future telescopes in space. With these new techniques, astronomers will soon be able to observe planets like ours and start to find out if there is life elsewhere in the Universe. In 2007, Olivier received a Presidential Early Career for Scientists and Engineers award from President Bush at the White House. Olivier received in 2012 the MacArthur fellowship (nicknamed the "Genius grant") for his innovative work in astronomical optics. In his spare time, he builds telescopes which he then uses to observe from the clear skies of Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa.



Geoff Haines-Stiles

Passport to Knowledge

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Geoff Haines-Stiles is a longtime producer, director and writer of science documentaries and broadcast specials for PBS and other networks. He was a Senior Producer and Series Director on Carl Sagan's classic Emmy-winning COSMOS series, now seen by close to a billion people worldwide, and produced and wrote NOVA's "Is Anybody Out There?" with comedian Lily Tomlin. He worked at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio with then-Senator Al Gore on what was to be the "Earth in the Balance" mini-series (EP: Lorne Michaels, SNL), until presidential politics intervened. As the Internet developed, with partner Erna Akuginow, he created the Passport To Knowledge series of "electronic field trips to scientific frontiers," which included the first real-time broadcast interaction with the South Pole, and LIVE FROM THE RAINFOREST, airing simultaneously in both North America and Brazil. In 2012 he wrote, produced and directed the three-part PBS special series, "Earth: The Operators' Manual," on climate change science and clean energy solutions, also broadcast internationally. His latest public television series is THE CROWD & THE CLOUD on "Citizen Science in the Digital Age", funded by NSF (EHR/AISL), which premiered on the WORLD Channel in April 2017, and which will continue to air on PBS stations through 2020. All programs are accessible online at CrowdAndCloud.org. Since 2004, Haines-Stiles has been documenting NASA's *New Horizons* mission to Pluto and the Kuiper Belt, in a series of podcasts and two documentary specials, PASSPORT TO PLUTO (2006-2007) and THE YEAR OF PLUTO, 2015.



John Hamilton

UHH Physics & Astronomy, PISCES

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John Hamilton is currently serving as Education/Public Outreach and Logistics Manager of the Pacific International Space Center for Exploration Systems (PISCES) based at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. An astronomer by trade, he has been associated with space exploration since 1972 with the Skylab missions, spent most of his career supporting astronomical observations at multiple observatories in Hawai'i on Haleakala and Mauna Kea and also in Chile. He has most recently managed the first two International ISRU analog field tests in Hawai'i in 2008 and 2010 and is currently working on the 2012 deployment. John currently teaches undergraduates in Physics and Astronomy courses at UH Hilo. He also serves as co-founder and chief scientist for a local high-tech R&D company Akeakamai Enterprises LLC.



Janice Harvey
Gemini Observatory

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Janice Harvey is the Community Outreach and Education Programs Leader at Gemini Observatory and serves as the director of the nationally recognized Journey through the Universe Program on the Big Island. Janice is also the National Team Site Leader for the Family Astro/Project Astro program in Hawaii and serves as the StarLab Portable Planetarium instructor and trainer. In 2010 she was awarded the *Outstanding Individual in Business* award by the Rotary Club of Hilo. She is a member of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific, the International Planetarium Society, and the National Science Teachers Association. Janice has a BS in mathematics and went back for her associate degree in astronomy in 2000 at UHH. She has lived on the Big Island for 46 years and has worked as the Mayor's Executive Assistant, owned and operated Sylvan Learning Centers and three travel agencies in Hawaii. Janice's passion is bringing science and astronomy into the local classrooms.



Saeko Hayashi
NAOJ, Mitaka

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Saeko S. Hayashi grew up in Tohoku, a northeastern rural part of Japan, where she spent part of her childhood in Fukushima. After graduating from a local high school, she boldly went on to attend the University of Tokyo as one of the few women undergraduates in STEM majors; she continued there and became the first woman to pursue Ph.D. in astronomy. She conducted her graduate research at the 45-m radio telescope in Nobeyama, Japan. After receiving her doctorate, she worked at the 15-m James Clerk Maxwell Telescope in Hawai`i and then joined the 7.5-m Japan National Large Telescope (JNLT) project, which began at the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan in 1990, and later became known as the Subaru Telescope with 8.2-m diameter. She has performed a variety of roles at Subaru from taking care of telescope optics, managing day crews to currently managing the Public Information and Outreach Office. She hopes to participate in the publication of research that will lead to major discoveries of Earth-like exoplanets, possibly with water and vegetation. She says, "Subaru Telescope, where people from all over the world come together and work with each other [as ancient Japanese word "Subaru" stands for], is a great place to work. The technical and other challenges at work and the laid back life in this beautiful island is an ideal combination for me". After being in Hilo for almost two decades, Saeko moved temporarily to the headquarters of the NAOJ at Mitaka, Tokyo from where she helps making a big mirror.



Stephanie W. Henry

NASA Marshall Space Flight Center

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Stephanie W. Henry serves as a Communications Strategist with Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, Inc. in Huntsville, AL. Stephanie's duties include external communications for the Planetary Missions Program at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center. Stephanie assists in developing communication products and materials for the programs. She visits schools, museums, and community organizations to excite students and teachers about NASA's mission and encourages the students to study science, technology, engineering, and math. Stephanie is a graduate of the University of North Alabama where she received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish/Political Science and a Master of Arts in Community Counseling. Stephanie also attended Belmont University in Nashville, TN where she earned her teacher certification for kindergarten through eighth grade. Before joining ASRC, Stephanie's experience includes work in a variety of educational arenas. Stephanie spent seven years working in Student Affairs at different universities and seven years teaching in the classroom, formal and informal instruction. Stephanie is a native of Tupelo, MS and has lived in the Huntsville, AL area for the past 11 years. She is married and has a 18-year-old stepson. Stephanie enjoys traveling, shopping, tennis, and spending time with her family in her spare time.

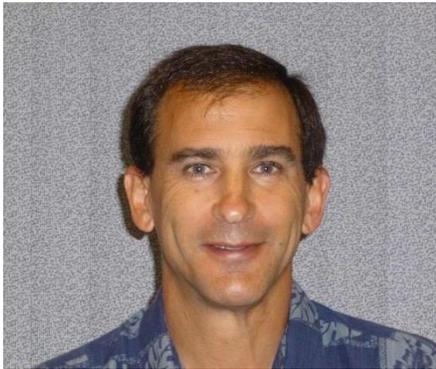


Michael Hoenig

Gemini Observatory

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Michael Hoenig is a Science Operations Specialist at Gemini Observatory. He did his undergraduate degree in Astrophysics at the University of Sussex (England) in the last millennium, and then went on to do a Ph.D. at the University of Cambridge, which he completed in 2004. His thesis centered on the construction of a wide field infrared camera called CIRS, which meant he ended up going on a number of observing trips to Mauna Kea and the Canary Islands. Once all the data from the instrument was properly reduced and calibrated, it was used to search for distant clusters of galaxies - and he is happy to report he actually found some, too. After his Ph.D. he worked in translation and publishing for a few years. But the call of the cosmos was impossible to ignore! Which is why in 2008 he packed his bags and moved to Hilo, and the rest, as they say, is history... When he's not up at the telescope observing the night sky, or reviewing the images back down in Hilo, he likes to paddle canoes, dance Argentine tango or read a good book.



Stewart Hunter
Mauna Kea Support Services
Contact: shunter@ifa.hawaii.edu

Stewart Hunter has been the General Manager at Mauna Kea Observatories Services (MKSS) since 2010. MKSS operates and maintains the mid-level astronomy facilities at Hale Pohaku on Mauna Kea. This includes the astronomy dormitories, the dining facility and the Visitor Information Station as well as maintaining the summit roads. Prior to working at MKSS, Stewart spent 24 years in the Navy, serving on submarines as an electronics technician, then after receiving a commission, a logistics officer until retiring in 2004 as a Lieutenant Commander. He received a BS in Earth Science from Oregon State University in 1991 and a MS in Systems Management from the Naval Postgraduate School in 1999. Stewart and his wife Lory have been Hilo residents since 2000, where they also own and operate a local Bed and Breakfast.



Russell Kackley
Subaru Telescope
Contact: rkackley@naoj.org

Russell Kackley holds a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from Wayne State University and a Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering from Stanford University. He worked for 16 years on spacecraft design and analysis at Lockheed-Martin before moving to Hawai'i. Here in Hilo, he worked for 11 years at the Joint Astronomy Centre and was responsible for the Telescope Control System software. Since April 2011, he has been working at the Subaru Telescope in the Observation Control Software group. He has mentored several school robotics teams and serves as a judge at robotics competitions.



Carolyn Kaichi
UH Institute for Astronomy
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Carolyn Kaichi is the Education/Outreach Specialist for IfA-Hilo. She has always been fascinated by astronomy, and with a background in news media, it was a perfect fit for her to pursue a career in communicating her love of astronomy and space science. Carolyn was born and educated in Hawai'i and enjoys working with students and the public. "It is incredibly exciting to see peoples' eyes light up with wonder when you share the excitement of the Universe with them", she says. Prior positions include: Imaginarium Manager for the Center for Aerospace Studies at Windward Community College, Hawaii State Science Fair Director and Planetarium Manager for Bishop Museum. Carolyn enjoys astronomical observing, travel and has practiced yoga for many years.



Yuko Kakazu
Subaru Telescope
Contact: kakazu@naoj.org

Yuko Kakazu joined the Subaru Telescope as an outreach specialist in 2013. A native Okinawan, she began her journey into astronomy when she attended the NASA U.S. Space Camp program at age 13. Yuko graduated from Tohoku University in Japan and then obtained her Ph.D. at the Institute for Astronomy, University of Hawai'i at Manoa. Since then she has worked as a researcher in Paris, France (Institut d'Astrophysique de Paris), California (California Institute of Technology), and Chicago (University of Chicago). Her research focuses on metal poor galaxies and distant galaxies with the aim of improving our understanding of galaxy formation and chemical enrichment history of the Universe. At Subaru, Yuko arranges and conducts public outreach events and lectures for the local and the international communities, including Japanese audiences. She is hoping to help fill the gap between scientists and the public and wants to encourage young people, especially women and minorities, to engage in science and technology. When Yuko is not talking about astronomy or playing with her baby galaxies, she enjoys dancing Argentine tango, cooking (as well as eating), listening to piano jazz and classical music, and taking yoga or Zumba class at the gym. She is a certified Zumba fitness instructor.



Ji Hoon Kim
Subaru Telescope
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Ji Hoon Kim is a support astronomer at Subaru Telescope. Born and raised in Seoul, Korea, he became interested in space and time while watching Galaxy Express 999, a Japanese TV series. After finishing his undergraduate and military duty in Korea, he decided to pursue his professional career outside of Korea. He received his PhD in Astronomy from University of Maryland, College Park, then was a postdoctoral fellow at Johns Hopkins University and Seoul National University. He originally studied very faint galaxies dubbed low surface brightness galaxies using optical and near-infrared imaging and declined to be considered as 'AGN guy.' Then he worked on studying how AGN host galaxies make stars using mid-infrared spectroscopy confessing it is impossible to run away from AGNs. Outside of stars and galaxies, he enjoys reading Vonnegut, looking at Escher's works, listening Bach, U2, and Clifford Brown, and watching Niners, and Lakers.



Scot Kleinman
Gemini Observatory
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Scot (there was a shortage of "t"s when he was born) **Kleinman** is the Associate Director of Development at Gemini North. He helps developing and bringing to fruition the next generation of Gemini instruments. He joined Gemini from the Subaru Telescope where he served as the Instrument Division Chief. Prior, he served as the Site Science Manager/Deputy Head of Survey Operations for the Sloan Digital Sky Survey. He has been the Associate Director of the Whole Earth Telescope and still sits on its board. Scot received his Ph.D. from the University of Texas in 1995. He studies various aspects of white dwarf stars, the longest lived (and final) stage of most stars in the Universe. Scot also works with data from large astronomical surveys which are ushering in a new era of observational astronomy. When not working (when is that?), Scot likes surfing, live music, and maintaining/modifying his car.



Shintaro Koshida
Subaru Telescope
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Shintaro Koshida is a support astronomer at Subaru telescope since September 2014 and working on supports for observations using a wide field-of-view camera for taking images in visible light, "Hyper Suprime Cam (HSC)". He is originally from Japan and have been interested in looking up night skies and watching the celestial objects since his childhood, which led to his Master's degree and PhD in astronomy at the University of Tokyo. Meanwhile studying about structures around super massive black holes at centers of galaxies, he has been interested in actual operations of telescopes and instruments for astronomy. He has worked for the telescopes at Maui (MAGNUM telescope), Chile (miniTAO telescope at Atacama Desert, Santa Martina observatory of Pontificia Universidad de Catolica de Chile), and the Big Island (Subaru). He is enjoying very much not only a great quality of HSC data, but also great people, natures and cultures in the islands of Hawaii.



Sylvia Kowalski

Sylvia Kowalski was a Public Information and Outreach Intern for Gemini Observatory. She graduated from the University of Washington with degrees in Physics, Astronomy and Drama and spent her college career working at science museums, observatories and presenting planetariums shows and public lectures with a dramatic twist! When she is not stargazing, Sylvia can be found eating, singing, playing her trumpet or doing Zumba. Happy Journey!



Mary Beth Laychak

Canada-France-Hawaii Telescope

Contact: [name@cfht.hawaii.edu](mailto:marybeth@cfht.hawaii.edu)

Mary Beth Laychak is the outreach program manager at the Canada-France-Hawaii Telescope, her second time working at CFHT. Previously, Mary Beth was one of CFHT's service observers and outreach coordinator before moving to Oahu. On Oahu, she worked as the manager at the Imaginarium planetarium and astronomy lecturer at Windward Community College. Mary Beth has a BA in astronomy and astrophysics from Penn State University as well as a MA in Education from San Diego State.



Chien-Hsiu Lee

Subaru Telescope

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Chien-Hsiu Lee is a Support Astronomer at Subaru Telescope. He obtained a BS in Physics from National Taiwan University, a MSc in Astronomy from National Central University, and a PhD in Astronomy from Ludwig Maximilians University of Munich in 2011. Before joining Subaru Telescope, he was a postdoc research fellow at National Central University in Taiwan (2011-2013) and at University Observatory of Munich in Germany (2013-2015). His research focuses on variable stars and transients in the Milky Way and in our neighboring galaxy M31.



Julien Lozi

Subaru Telescope

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Julien Lozi is senior optical scientist at Subaru Telescope, National Astronomical Observatory of Japan. Born in France in 1985, he was introduced to astronomy at the age of 10 and has been avidly pursuing this subject ever since. A 6-month internship at Subaru Telescope in 2008 first introduced him to Hawai'i, before he went back to France to study for his PhD in instrumentation for Astronomy. After earning his doctorate from Université Paris-Sud XI in 2012, Lozi worked in Silicon Valley for two years at the NASA Ames Research Center, to work on space telescopes that can look at extrasolar environments. In 2014, he returned to Hilo to accept his "dream job" at Subaru Telescope, where he is currently working on a first generation high contrast imaging instrument dedicated to the direct observation and characterization of exoplanets.



Nadine Manset

Canada-France-Hawaii Telescope

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Nadine Manset has been a resident astronomer at CFHT since 1999, right after finishing her PhD thesis at Universite de Montreal. Over the years, she has helped astronomers observe in classical mode at CFHT, with spectrographs and imagers. Now in charge of the Queued Service Observing mode, she prepares observations for CFHT's spectropolarimeter and oversees the nightly observations taken with the various instruments. In addition to chairing the Maunakea Astronomy Outreach Committee, Nadine participates to public outreach events a few times every year.



Callie Matulonis

James Clerk Maxwell Telescope

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Callie Matulonis is currently a Telescope System Specialist at the James Clerk Maxwell Telescope. Callie graduated from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa in the Spring of 2012 with a Master's degree in Educational Technology. Callie has worked for several Mauna Kea observatories over the past ten years fulfilling a variety of positions including public outreach, laser operations, and telescope operations.



Tony Matulonis

NASA Infrared Telescope Facility

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Tony Matulonis works at NASA Infrared Telescope Facility (IRTF). He earned his Bachelor of Science in Astronomy from the University of Hawai'i at Hilo in 2002. After working as an Interpretive Guide at the Ellison Onizuka Center for International Astronomy Visitor Information Station, Telescope Operator at the UH 2.2-meter telescope, Science Operations Specialist at Gemini Observatory, he joined IRTF in 2013.



Peter Michaud

Gemini Observatory

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Peter D. Michaud, Gemini's Public Information and Outreach Manager, has pursued a career that has provided a broad set of experiences in education, media relations and photography. These have ranged from the initiation and management of many informal science education programs to the authoring of a monthly newspaper column on astronomy. Prior to moving to Honolulu in 1989 to manage the Bishop Museum Planetarium, Peter obtained his Bachelor's Degree in Atmospheric Physics and certification in Physical Science Education in 1985. This led to his selection for the highly competitive annual planetarium education internship at the Strasenburg Planetarium in Rochester N.Y. in 1985 - 86. During almost a decade at the Bishop Museum Planetarium, Peter worked closely with local educators as well as the Mauna Kea astronomical community and initiated many new projects that included a NASA-funded project to produce a nationally distributed planetarium program about Mauna Kea. In June 1998, Peter accepted his current position at the Gemini Observatory in Hilo. Since arriving here, Peter has been involved in a variety of projects that have included the management of multiple outreach, education and media relations initiatives. An example of the innovative products produced by his office is the Gemini Observatory Virtual Tour CD-ROM/Kiosk which is currently being translated into multiple languages and has been installed in a variety of public facilities around the world.



Joseph Minafra

NASA Ames Research Center

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At the NASA Ames Research Center, **Joseph Minafra** serves as Lead of Technical Systems and Collaborative Technology Specialist for the NASA Solar System Exploration Research Virtual Institute (SSERVI). Joe has an extremely diverse background that ranges from Meteoritic studies, biology, project management, software development including web design, collaborative technology development to Scientific Illustration and graphic design, even a few years as a professional Chef. With his varied background, Joe has been responsible for a broad set of technical tasks for the NASA Ames Center Director as well as the Space and BioSciences Divisions, Astro and Synthetic Biology workshops just to name a few. Currently, his work is to oversee technology innovation and Robotics education initiatives in order to enable collaboration and communication between competitively selected science and research teams across not only the United States but internationally as well. Joe has a long history of integrating government work with commercial enterprises and bringing that message to the public through the education and public outreach sectors. He is excited to share his NASA experiences with the Journey through the Universe communities! Ad Astra!



Brian Mitchell

NASA

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Brian Mitchell is the Education and Public Outreach manager for NASA's Discovery/New Frontiers/Lunar Quest Program Office. He has more than 25 years at the Marshall Space Flight Center located in Huntsville, Alabama and has worked on various Space Shuttle payload missions including ASTRO, ATLAS, and Spacelab, as well as several experiments for the International Space Station. He has been the Program Office Education and Outreach lead during the LRO, LCROSS, LADEE, JUNO, GRAIL, and IML missions to our Moon, Jupiter and Mars. Future missions in his Office include the asteroid sample return mission OSIRIS-REx, INSIGHT seismic mission to Mars, and the New Horizon spacecraft nearing Pluto now. Brian is tasked with communicating Planetary Missions Program Office (Discovery, New Frontiers, and Solar System Exploration programs) science goals and objectives to the public in order to promote STEM participation and inspire the general public by using new and existing opportunities. He spends much of his time speaking in classrooms and public venues, as well as designing innovative interactive exhibits that travel the country. When not talking about space, Brian keeps his 1965 Ford tractor alive, competes in shooting events, and occasionally gets to swing a golf club with his two teenagers.



Randy Monroe

Foothill Middle School, Walnut Creek, CA

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James R. (Randy) Monroe, middle school science teacher and son of Charlene (after whom Pluto's giant moon Charon is named), has spent his science teaching career embedding and integrating cutting-edge science technologies and techniques into processes and topics covered through a standardized Earth, Life and Physical Science curriculum. Monroe has a BA from California State University East Bay (CSUEB), a Multiple Subject Teaching Credential from CSUEB, and a Master's of Science in Technology Leadership. He served on the Contra Costa Math & Science Teachers Association Board, and recently on the committee for the California Subject Examination for Teachers (CSET) developing the new test for prospective teachers in Earth & Planetary Science. Employed by the Mt. Diablo Unified School District since 2001, he teaches middle school Earth, Life & Physical Science at Foothill Middle School in Walnut Creek, California. He is a longtime member of the *New Horizon* Education Team. Monroe's step-father, James Christy, discovered Pluto's largest moon Charon in 1978, named after Monroe's mother Charlene. Through his fascination with hydrothermal vent ecology, Monroe became adjunct faculty at the Department of Energy's Joint Genome Institute in the Microbial Ecology Program, and has also worked through Industrial Initiatives for Science and Math Educators (IISME) at Lockheed Martin as a Systems Engineer in missile defense studying infrared technologies.



Junichi Noumaru

Subaru Telescope

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Junichi Noumaru is the Associate Professor, Subaru Telescope, National Astronomical Observatory of Japan. He was born in Japan, graduated from Kyoto University, Japan and earned Ph.D in Astronomy. Junichi studied optical property of young stellar object such as emission nebulae and Herbig-Haro objects. He also joined instrumentation such as prototyping fiber-fed multi-object spectrograph and control system of the telescope. At National Astronomical Observatory of Japan in Tokyo, he joined the team to design control system and instrument interface of Subaru Telescope. He moved to Hilo in 1996 for Subaru Telescope Project and oversaw progress of construction of Subaru Telescope. After the first light of the telescope, he was in charge of operator's group and Instrument Division. Currently he is the division chief of Computer and Data Management Division and the Safety Officer of Subaru Telescope.



Emily Peavy

'Imiloa Astronomy Center

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Emily Peavy is a recent graduate of UH Hilo's Astronomy program and a full time Planetarium Support Facilitator and Technician at 'Imiloa Astronomy center; where she worked as a student employee since January 2012. Emily also enjoys volunteering at the Maunakea Visitor Information center whenever she gets some free time. Emily plans on going into the outreach and education side of astronomy but is still intrigued and excited by much of the research that is occurring in the field.



Yvonne Pendleton

**Solar System Exploration Research
Virtual Institute NASA Ames
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Dr. Yvonne Pendleton is the Director of the Solar System Exploration Research Virtual Institute. Pendleton joined NASA Ames in July 1979 having earned her Bachelor of Aerospace Engineering degree from the Georgia Institute of Technology. Under NASA sponsored programs, she obtained a Master's Degree in Aeronautics and Astronautics from Stanford University (1981) and a Ph.D. in Astrophysics from the University of California at Santa Cruz (1987). As a research astrophysicist in the Space Science and Astrobiology Division from 1979-2005, Yvonne published 80 scientific papers and contributed significantly to our understanding of the origin and evolution of organic material in the universe. The goal of her ongoing research program is to understand the composition of the organic material found in the interstellar medium and to investigate the incorporation of the organic material from space into the early Earth environment. She is an elected fellow of the California Academy of Science and Asteroid 7165 Pendleton was named in honor of her research contributions. Appointed Chief of the Space Science and Astrobiology Division at NASA Ames Research Center in 2005, she led a scientific and technical staff of 160 people. When asked to serve as the senior advisor for research and analysis programs for the Science Mission Directorate at NASA Headquarters, she moved to Washington, DC from 2007-8. There she provided independent assessments and guidance to the Associate Administrator of the Science Mission Directorate concerning NASA's science research programs and increased scientific productivity across the nation as the time required to evaluate and award research grants was significantly reduced. During that time she was also responsible for the Education and Public Outreach of NASA's Science Mission Directorate and led a team that managed the nearly 50 million dollar investment made in EPO activities, including those from NASA's science missions. Returning to NASA Ames in July of 2008, Yvonne became the deputy associate director where she provided guidance and direction to several collaborative scientific and technical efforts and served as an academic Dean of Students for the several hundred students on the Ames campus each summer. Yvonne has been very active in education and public outreach throughout her career. She served as the Director for Research for the NASA Ames Astrobiology Academy in 2004, developed the Voyages Through Time education curricula with the SETI Institute, served as an astronomer to local classrooms for over a decade with the Astronomical Society of the Pacific, and taught astronomy at the college level as an adjunct lecturer at Santa Clara University. To read more about Yvonne, please read "A Lifetime Spent Studying the Stars, Searching for Answers", a biography of Dr. Yvonne Pendleton on the official NASA-Ames Research Center website.



Andreea Petric

Canada-France-Hawaii Telescope

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Andreea Petric is the Institute for Astronomy's, UH resident astronomer at CFHT. She has received her PhD from Columbia University with a thesis on X-ray scattering halos and was a postdoctoral fellow at Caltech working on IR and millimeter observations of interacting galaxies and galaxies hosting growing super-massive black holes. Her current research focuses on optical and near-IR observations of the impact growing black holes have on the interstellar medium of their host galaxies and the fate of molecular gas in merging galaxies. She has been a mentor for the Maunakea scholars program since its inception. A. Petric taught Galaxies and Cosmology, Quantum Mechanics at UH Hilo, and is currently teaching a seminar on the Co-evolution of Supermassive Black Holes and Host Galaxies at UH Manoa. She also makes regular class room visits both on the Big Island and Oahu.



Tae-Soo Pyo

Subaru Telescope

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Tae-Soo Pyo is an Assistant Professor at the Subaru Telescope. His research focuses on star and planet formation, especially outflows and jets from young stellar objects. He has been working at Subaru Telescope since 2000 December. He was a Support Astronomer engaging in management and night support of InfraRed Camera and Spectrograph (IRCS) and Adaptive optics system (AO188) and other instruments. He got Bachelor and Master degrees in Astronomy from Seoul National University at Seoul in South Korea in 1992 and a PhD in Astronomy from the University of Tokyo at Tokyo in Japan in 2003. Tae-Soo loves Ukulele and various music including heavy metal and reading books.



Bo Reipurth

UH Institute for Astronomy

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Bo Reipurth graduated from the University of Copenhagen in Denmark. After spending some years as a postdoc there, he took up a position as staff astronomer with the European Southern Observatory in Chile for 11 years. Subsequently, he worked at CASA in Colorado as a Research Professor, and later joined the Institute for Astronomy at the University of Hawaii in Manoa in order to pursue studies of star and planet formation. "One of my first astronomical experiences as a small kid was to see the craters of the Moon and the rings of Saturn through the telescope at the public observatory on top of the Round Tower in Copenhagen. After that I was never in doubt that I had to become an astronomer. Conditions in Copenhagen were already in those days not ideal for looking at the night sky, but instead I spent innumerable hours with my small telescope drawing sunspots as they crossed the Sun. I took out a subscription to Sky and Telescope, which I then painstakingly read through with the help of a dictionary. One day I read an article about small mysterious blobs called Herbig-Haro objects which might be signposts of stars in the making. I was completely captivated by the possibility that we might actually be able to see stars in the process of being born, and I have spent most of my professional career trying to learn about how stars are formed."



Marc Roberts

University of Hawaii at Hilo

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Marc Roberts is the Physics Lab Coordinator and Lecturer at the University of Hawaii, Hilo(UHH). He has a B.Sc. from Trent University, Canada and a M.Ed. from The College of New Jersey. Marc has taught in the USA, Canada, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. He has taught at many levels from Kindergarten through to College. He loves to tinker with computers and electronics and is currently the faculty lead for the UHH NASA RMC Robotics team. He is an avid cyclist and has traveled extensively by bicycle in the above mentioned countries, as well as a one month tour of France. He can speak multiple languages as he put effort in learning the language of each of the foreign countries he has lived in.



Rodrigo Romo
**Pacific International Space Center
for Exploration Systems (PISCES)**
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Rodrigo Romo is the Program Manager for the Pacific International Space Center for Exploration Systems (PISCES) and is responsible for overseeing all operations and finances of the Agency. He joined PISCES in 2014 as Project Manager and was responsible to oversee the development of all the navigation & control systems, imaging systems, communications & networking systems, sensors and data telemetry systems for the PISCES planetary rover Helelani. Romo was also the Project Manager for the robotic construction of a landing pad using only Hawaiian basalt as the materials of construction. This was a collaborative project between PISCES, NASA, Honeybee Robotics, ODG and Hawai'i County R&D and demonstrated the feasibility of constructing infrastructure on the Moon or Mars through robotic teleoperations. Romo began his career near Tucson, Arizona at Biosphere II - the largest fully enclosed facility dedicated to researching climate change, ecosystem interactions, and space colonization during its time. From 1992 through 1997, he held several key positions overseeing instrumentation and air monitoring systems, as well as working in research and engineering departments. Romo held his last position at Biosphere as the Plant Manager for a 6 megawatt cogeneration power plant on site. From 1997 through 2014, Romo served as the Vice President of Engineering for the Zeta Corporation, researching and developing new applications for the company's technologies. He is originally from Guadalajara, Mexico and earned his undergraduate degree in Chemical Engineering from ITESO University in 1992. He later obtained his Master's degree in Business Administration from the University of Arizona.



Jessica Schonhut
UH Institute for Astronomy
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Jessica Schonhut is currently working as an intern at the Institute for Astronomy. She will be working in Hilo for a year, before moving back to the UK to finish her Degree in Astrophysics. This year she is looking at asteroseismic data and working on various projects. In England, she studies at the University of Hertfordshire just north of London and works at the university observatory, Bayfordbury giving planetarium shows to curious members of the public as well as working with the telescopes. Her hobbies include music, which she studied before moving to astrophysics, and photography.



Doug Simons

Canada-France-Hawaii Telescope

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Doug Simons received his B.S. in astronomy at the California Institute of Technology in 1985, and a Ph.D. in astronomy at the University of Hawai'i in 1990, before working as a staff astronomer at the Canada-France-Hawaii Telescope (CFHT) for 4 years. Doug joined Gemini in May of 1994 as the Systems Scientist, then managed Gemini's instrument development program for 5 years before becoming Gemini's Director from 2006-2011. Doug returned to CFHT in 2012 where he now serves as Executive Director. Principal areas of interest include infrared instrumentation and studies of the Galactic center, low mass stars, and star formation regions.



Breann Sitarski

UCLA

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Breann Sitarski is a graduate student researcher in the Galactic Center Group at UCLA. She got her Bachelor's degree in Astrophysics from UCLA, and continued there for graduate school, where she is currently working on her Ph.D. in Astronomy. Breann studies dusty objects near the supermassive black hole at the center of our Galaxy to try to understand where they come from, what they are, and how they survive in such a hostile environment. She also studies the adaptive optics system on the Keck II telescope to try to correct for aberrations that the NIRC2 instrument itself is making on astronomical data. She was the lead coordinator for Astronomy Live!--the award-winning astronomy outreach group at UCLA--for four years. Breann also likes studying history, traveling, playing various sports, and reading!



Robert Sparks

NOAO

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Rob Sparks earned his B.A. in Physics from Grinnell College and M.S. from Michigan State University. He taught high school physics, math and astronomy for 11 years at schools on St. Croix, Florida and Wisconsin. He spent the 2001-2002 academic year at Fermilab working on the Sloan Digital Sky Survey as part of the Fermilab Teacher Fellowship Program. He spent 13 years as a NASA Astrophysics Educator Ambassador for the Swift Satellite and spent the summer of 2003 at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory in Green Bank as part of the Research Experience for Teachers program. He joined the Education and Public Outreach Group at the National Optical Astronomy Observatory in 2005 where he has worked on a variety of educational programs and is currently the Tucson Project Astro Site Director. He is also part of the resident improv troupe at Unscrewed Theater where he also teaches improv classes and is a member of the creative team. Rob performs with Musical Mayhem Cabaret and is an avid distance runner.



Gordon Squires
Thirty Meter Telescope Project
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Gordon K. Squires is an astronomer at the California Institute of Technology, working with the Thirty Meter Telescopes as well as NASA's Spitzer Space Telescope, the Herschel Space Observatory, the Galaxy Evolution Explorer and other space telescopes with Caltech involvement. His research explores the old, cold and distant universe, understanding how galaxies formed billions of years ago, and the nature of the dark matter and dark energy that fills space.



Marianne Takamiya
UH Hilo Dept. of Physics and
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Marianne Takamiya is associate professor of Astronomy at UH Hilo where she teaches General Physics, General Astronomy, and Stellar Astronomy. Dr. Takamiya obtained her B.Sc. in Physics and M.Sc. in Astronomy from the Universidad de Chile and her M.Sc. and Ph.D. in Astronomy and Astrophysics from the University of Chicago.



Matt Taylor
Gemini Observatory
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Matt Taylor is a Gemini Science Fellow at Gemini Observatory since June 2017. He did his undergraduate degree at University of Victoria on the west coast of Canada before completing his PhD at Universidad Católica de Chile in Santiago, Chile and as a student fellow at the European Southern Observatory's Chilean headquarters. His research interests revolve around studying low mass star systems like globular clusters, ultra-compact dwarfs, and dwarf galaxies orbiting giant galaxies beyond the Milky Way. When not researching or supporting Gemini operations he enjoys hiking, swimming, and playing board games. Now in Hawai'i he hopes to be a positive contributor to the astronomy community through outreach and educational endeavors like Journey Through the Universe.



Tomonori Usuda
National Astronomical
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Tomo Usuda earned his PhD in Astronomy at the University of Tokyo in 1997. He is an Optical-Infrared astronomer at NAOJ (National Astronomical Observatory of Japan) currently leading TMT (Thirty Meter Telescope) project as the director of TMT-Japan project. Previously, he was the associate director of Subaru Telescope from 2006 to 2013. His research interests are telescope & science instruments and spectroscopic studies of interstellar medium and star/planet formations.



John Vierra
Gemini Observatory
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John Vierra was born and raised in Hilo and graduated from Hilo High School. He joined the United States Airforce after graduation and spent the next 10 years in the US Airforce as a firefighter, earning a degree in Fire Science. He left the Airforce in 1992 to move back home and be close to his family. Upon returning to Hilo he was hired as a firefighter at Pohakuloa Federal Fire Department. He spent 22 years with the Federal Fire Department retiring as an Assistant Fire Chief. During his time at the Fire Department he also worked as a Flight Medic/Rescue Specialist with Priority 1 Air Rescue simultaneously teaching Emergency Medical Responder classes around the island. He has been a CPR instructor since 1989. Since 2008 he has worked with Gemini as a Safety Trainer. In November 2014 he starting working full-time as Gemini's Safety Manager and ensures the Safety of all Gemini employees at the telescope and base facilities in Hawaii and Chile.



Tom Winegar
Subaru Observatory
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Tom Winegar works as the archive administrator for the pictures of the Subaru Telescope in Hilo, Hawaii. After graduating from UC Berkeley in 1982, Tom has worked as a database programmer and administrator for 30 years - the last 17 at the Subaru developing web-based query and archive software used by astronomers to retrieve observation data from an international-mirrored 100TB archive. In his spare time, he submerges himself in the ocean and mows.



Siyi Xu

Gemini Observatory

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Siyi Xu joined Gemini Observatory in 2017 as an assistant astronomer. She is mostly interested in the end stage of planetary systems. Siyi grew up in Kunshan, a beautiful town of one million people in the east coast of China. She received a bachelor's degree in Astronomy from Nanjing University before moving across the pond to pursue a PhD in astronomy at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). After that, she worked for the European Southern Observatory (ESO) in Germany for three years, before joining the Gemini family. Siyi enjoys all kinds of outdoor activities when she is not looking at the stars.



Sherry Yeh

Keck Observatory

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Sherry Yeh currently works at W. M. Keck Observatory as a Support Astronomer. She knew she wanted to become a scientist at a young age, and she made up her mind to become an astronomer after attending summer schools at the Ken-Ting Observatory and Academia Sinica Institute of Astronomy and Astrophysics in Taiwan. Sherry received her PhD at the University of Toronto in Canada, and her research focuses on the interplay between massive star clusters and their interstellar medium in nearby galaxies. Sherry has used near- and mid-infrared instruments on telescopes around the world and in the stratosphere. When Sherry is not exploring the Universe, she enjoys knitting and wandering in the volcano park.



Michitoshi Yoshida

Subaru Observatory

Michitoshi Yoshida, Director of the Subaru Telescope, received his PhD from Kyoto University. His career as a professional astronomer started at Okayama Astrophysical Observatory (OAO), which is a branch of National Astronomical Observatory of Japan (NAOJ). In 1995, Dr. Yoshida stayed in Hilo to support initial construction of Subaru Telescope. He also joined the development team of one of the spectrographs of Subaru, FOCAS, at the headquarters of NAOJ from 1998 to 2000. After completion of Subaru construction, he moved back to OAO and became its director. Dr. Yoshida worked for Hiroshima Astrophysical Science Center, Hiroshima University as the director from 2010 to 2017. He was then appointed as the director of Subaru from this April. Dr. Yoshida's main research field is optical-infrared observational astronomy of galaxies and high energy transient objects. Recently, he is interested in gravitational wave and its related astronomical/physical phenomena.
