

Astronomy Educator Profiles



Alexis Ann Acohido
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Alexis Ann Acohido is an Extended Operator at the James Clerk Maxwell Telescope/East Asian Observatory and Media Relations and Local Outreach Assistant at Gemini Observatory. She graduated from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa in 2015, where she obtained a Bachelor's of Science in Mathematics. She was born and raised on O'ahu and moved to Honoka'a on the Big Island shortly after her college graduation. In 2013 she was part of the Akamai Workforce Initiative program and interned at the Institute for Astronomy on Maui where she worked on parallax ranging methods for point source objects. Her back catalog of video games to play and novels to read are extensive and ever growing.



Christian Andersen
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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
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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.



J. D. Armstrong
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J. D. Armstrong is the project scientist for the Faulkes Telescope North -- the largest telescope built for education and outreach. He is also the Maui Technology Education and Outreach Specialist for the University of Hawai'i Institute for Astronomy. J. D. Received his Bachelor's degree in physics from Westminster College of Salt Lake City, a master's degree in physics from Michigan State University, and his PhD from the University of Hawai'i. His research interests include solar physics, minor planets, and exoplanets, but he spends most of his time helping middle and high school students participate in real science. He claims that he is creating the scientists of the future.



Ellis Avallone
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Ellis Avallone is a graduate student at the Institute for Astronomy at UH Manoa, and received her B.S. in Astronomy and Physics from the University of Washington in 2018. She is interested/obsessed with the Sun, specifically the dynamics of its magnetic field and how it affects us here on earth. If you find her not staring at a computer screen, she is probably looking for a hike to go on, drawing, or showing you pictures of her dog.



Christoph Baranec
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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.



Kerri Beisser
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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.



Tishanna Ben
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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.



Vanshree Bhalotia
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Vanshree Bhalotia is a graduate student in the Dept. of Physics and Astronomy at University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. She is an APS Bridge fellow and an AAS Astronomy Ambassador. She recently moved to Honolulu after obtaining her M.S. in Physics in August 2018 from DePaul University in snowy Chicago. She studied Astrophysics as an undergraduate at UCLA, obtaining her B.S. in 2016. Vanshree is passionate about communicating astronomy to the public and helping everyone feel connected to the sky that we share. As an undergraduate at UCLA, Vanshree volunteered frequently in Astronomy Live! events, and as a graduate student at DePaul she was involved with astronomy outreach throughout Chicagoland. Vanshree has worked at the Adler planetarium as an After-Hours Education host, at the University of Chicago KICPas an outreach assistant, and as a coordinator with the Northwestern chapter of Astronomy on Tap. For fun, Vanshree dances, does theatre, makes art, writes poetry and cooks spicy food.



Jerry Brower
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Jerry Brower is the self proclaimed "Information Systems guy to the stars!" (literally the stars) He has over 30 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.



André-Nicholas Chené
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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 postdoctoral 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
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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.



Christophe Clergeon
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Kathy Cooksey
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Kathy Cooksey is an associate professor in astronomy at the University of Hawaii at Hilo. She is passionate about teaching and incorporates the best practices from science-education research in her classroom. She cares deeply about diversity and inclusion in the sciences and does what she can to increase both. 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 running and hiking (and crocheting and watching anime, on the sedentary side).



Iain Coulson
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Until retiring in 2017, **Iain Coulson** had worked for 30 years as a support astronomer at the James Clerk Maxwell Telescope on Mauna Kea. He obtained a PhD from the University of Edinburgh in 1980 working on the cosmic distance scale, and spent 8 years at the South African Astronomical Observatory observing Cepheid variable stars, amongst other things, before relocating to Hawaii. For the past 10 years or so, he has been part of an international collaboration using JCMT and other telescopes studying the chemistry of comets.



Callie Crowder
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Callie Crowder is a Remote Observer at the Canada-France-Hawaii Telescope where she controls the observatory on the summit of Maunakea while taking data from Waimea. She moved to Hawaii from Ohio in 2013 to study at the University of Hawaii at Hilo. She graduated in 2017 with her Bachelor's of Science in Astronomy, Bachelor's of Arts in Physics, and a Mathematics minor. While taking classes at UH Hilo she worked on the commissioning of the new UH Hilo 0.7m telescope, Hoku Kea, to be used by the undergraduate students. Her future goal is to become an astronaut.



Christy Cunningham
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Christy Cunningham is currently a Science Operations Specialist for Gemini Observatory and has previously worked as a telescope operator for Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory's Submillimeter Array. Born and raised in Anchorage, Alaska, she moved to Flagstaff, AZ to complete her B.S. in Physics and Astronomy and later received her M.S. in Applied Physics from University of Oregon with emphasis on Lasers and Optics. Her current projects at Gemini include working with the Laser and Adaptive Optics team to install the new Laser Guiding system and also acting as the systems engineer for upgrades to the Mirror Coating Chamber. Outside of work she is almost always found fishing or hiking island wide!



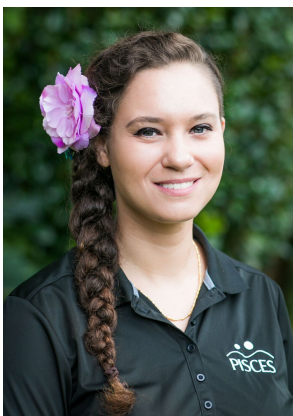
Sandra Dawson
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Sandra Dawson is Manager, Hawai'i Community Relations, for the Thirty Meter Telescope Project. Dawson has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and a Master's Degree in International Studies from Claremont Graduate University. 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
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Brian Day is the Lead for Citizen Science and Community Development at the Solar System Exploration Research Virtual Institute (SSSERVI). 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 SSSSERVI's project manager for NASA's Lunar Mapping and Modeling Portal (<http://lmmmp.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.



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Kyla Defore is a 2016 graduate of the University of Hawaii at Hilo Bachelors in Geology program. After graduation and many internships Kyla became the Geology and Material Science Technician for the Pacific International Space Center for Exploration Systems (PISCES), a state funded aerospace company located in Hilo HI. Kyla's current research investigates how to manufacture basaltic rock into construction materials that have Earth bound applications as well as In-Situ Resource Utilization (ISRU) applications that may one day support future colonies on the Moon and Mars.



Daniel Devost
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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.



Jerry Dobek
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Jerry Dobek is Professor of Astronomy and Head of the Sciences Department at Northwestern Michigan College. He has been involved in E/PO for more than 30 years and is the Site Co-ordinator for Project ASTRO and Project Family ASTRO in Michigan. Jerry's research interests are in small amplitude red variable stars and dark nebulous material in the Milky Way. In 2011 he republished Edward Emerson Barnard's treatise "A Photographic Atlas of Selected Regions of the Milky Way". Jerry has been a Solar System Ambassador with NASA/JPL since 2002 and is a founding member of the International Dark-Sky Association.



Jeff Donahue
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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.



Xinnan Du
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Xinnan Du is a postdoctoral researcher and the manager of the NASA MIRO FIELDS (Fellowships and Internships in Extremely Large Data Sets) program at UC Riverside. She got her PhD in astronomy in 2018 from UCLA, and her research focuses on the physical properties of the interstellar and circumgalactic gas in distant star-forming galaxies. Xinnan is very enthusiastic about K-12 STEM outreach and inquiry-based teaching, and she has a long-term career goal in informal science education. Having led multiple departmental and campus-wide outreach programs and events, Xinnan hopes to inspire the younger generation in STEM through hands-on experience.



Trent Dupuy
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Trent Dupuy is an assistant astronomer at Gemini Observatory in Hilo. He received his PhD in 2010 from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Before moving back to Hawai'i in 2017, he was a research fellow at the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory in Boston and at the University of Texas in Austin. Among his main research interests are understanding the formation and evolution of the lowest mass, coldest objects, from brown dwarfs to gas-giant planets. Most of his observations are done from Maunakea, using infrared cameras and laser guide star adaptive optics to study objects that emit almost no visible light. When he's not working on his own projects or helping other astronomers around the world use the Gemini Telescope, he's often enjoying the spectacular array of fresh fish, produce, and beer that can be found on Big Island.



Angelic Ebbers
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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
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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.



Scott Fisher
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Scott Fisher is a faculty member in the University of Oregon Department of Physics where he teaches introductory-level astronomy courses, runs an astronomical observatory, and serves as the Director for Undergraduate Studies. 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 was based in Hilo, Hawaii where he worked as a staff scientist of the Gemini Observatory. At Gemini, he worked as an instrument scientist and as a member of the Gemini Outreach team. Scott's main areas of research are searching for and studying planet-forming disks around young stars and more recently, the evolution of galaxy clusters at high redshift. In addition to his love of astronomy, Scott is an amateur photographer and a Geocacher. When he is not observing, he can often be found in Las Vegas, Atlantic City, or anywhere with a nightlife full of bright neon lights, poker cards, and casino chips.



Miriam Fuchs

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Miriam (Mimi) Fuchs is a Telescope Systems Specialist for East Asian Observatory's James Clerk Maxwell Telescope on the Big Island of Hawai'i. She received her B.S. in Astrophysics from Haverford College in 2013. Mimi has worked in both telescope operations and public outreach for the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory's Submillimeter Array, as well as in informal science education at The Franklin Institute in Philadelphia and the North Carolina Museum of Science. When she's not on the summit of Mauna Kea, she likes to spend her time singing karaoke with friends and weaving palm frond.



Lucas Fuhrman

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Lucas Fuhrman was swept up in Astronomy in 1995 while a student at SFSU, a time when the first exoplanets were discovered by faculty at the university. Since then Lucas has received a Masters degree in Astronomy, and first began spending nights on Maunakea in 2004. Initially he joined the United Kingdom InfraRed Telescope as a Telescope Support Specialist, followed by time as a Science Support Associate at Gemini South Observatory in Chile. Currently he is a Science Operations Specialist at Gemini North Observatory. After many years in Astronomy, the night sky continues to fill him with a sense of awe and wonder.



Tom Geballe

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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
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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>.



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Alyssa Grace is an Outreach Assistant at Gemini Observatory, Planetarium Operator at 'Imiloa Astronomy Center, and University of Hawai'i at Hilo alum. Her roles primarily consist of organizing outreach events (ie. Journey Through the Universe), and educating the community on local astronomy through press releases, social media, classroom visits, Starlabs, planetarium shows, and public events. When she isn't learning more Astronomy, Hawaiian culture or various languages, she's working on her 200 hour yoga teacher certification, writing novels, or playing with her cats.



Olivier Guyon
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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.



John Hamilton
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John Hamilton is currently 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 the 2012 deployment. John 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
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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
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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 by making a big mirror.



Stephanie W. Henry
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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 13 years. She is married and has a 20-year-old stepson. Stephanie enjoys traveling, shopping, and spending time with her family in her spare time.



Michael Hoenig
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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 CIRSI, 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
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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
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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
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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.



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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
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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
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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
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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 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!

Sylvia Kowalski

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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.

Mary Beth Laychak

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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.

Chien-Hsiu Lee

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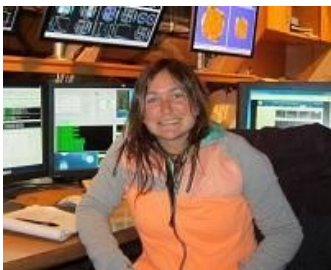
Julien Lozi
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Julien Lozi is a senior optical scientist at Subaru Telescope, National Astronomical Observatory of Japan. Born in France in 1985, he was introduced to astronomy at the age of 10 and has been avidly pursuing this subject ever since. A 6-month 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 SCExAO, a first generation high contrast imaging instrument dedicated to the direct observation and characterization of exoplanets.



Nadine Manset
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Nadine Manset has been a resident astronomer at CFHT since 1999, right after finishing her PhD thesis at Université de Montréal. 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
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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
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Tony Matulonis worked at the 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
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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
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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
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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.



Junichi Noumaru
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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
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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.



Andreea Petric
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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 supermassive 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 classroom visits both on the Big Island and Oahu.



Tae-Soo Pyo
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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
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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."



Rodrigo Romo
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Rodrigo Romo is the Director at the Pacific International Space Center for Exploration Systems (PISCES). Besides overseeing PISCES' operations, he has been directly involved with the development of PISCES' planetary exploration rover. Other areas in which he has been involved includes robotic construction and utilization of Hawaiian Basalt as a source for ISRU manufacturing. 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 including being a crewmember of the second manned mission overseeing instrumentation and air monitoring systems, as well as working in research and engineering departments. 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.



Laurie Rousseau-Nepton
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Laurie Rousseau-Nepton obtained her PhD in Astronomy in 2017. She received the FRQNT fellowship the same year to conduct research at the University of Hawaii in Hilo. Originally from Quebec, she is the first woman from the First Nation of Canada to get a PhD in Astronomy. She is currently working as a support astronomer at the Canada-France-Hawaii Telescope. Her research focus is on resolved star-formation in nearby galaxies, massive stars and ionized gas properties. Aside from work, she likes hunting, paddling, hiking, and running!



Jessica Stasik
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Jessica Stasik 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

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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- Hawai'i 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.



Gordon Squires

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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

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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.



Ichi Tanaka
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Ichi Tanaka is a Japanese astronomer working at Subaru Telescope. He was born and raised in Niigata Prefecture, Japan. The beautiful night sky in his hometown has made him a big fan of stars and constellations since his elementary school days. But the TV series "COSMOS" by Carl Sagan, as well as the astronomy books by Akira Fujii, has fixed Ichi's strong interest in Science and Astronomy. After getting his Bachelor's degree from the Niigata University, Ichi enjoyed teaching at a public high school as a full-time Science teacher. Then his passion for astronomy led him to move to the graduate school of science, Tohoku University, where he got his PhD in Astronomy in 2000. He moved to Hawaii in 2005 as a support astronomer. Ichi's scientific interest is in the beauty of galaxies in the universe. His current field of study is in how galaxies grow in their surrounding environments, such as groups and clusters of galaxies, in the young universe. In Hawaii, Ichi lives in Hilo with his wife and 3 kids. In his off-time he enjoys classical music as well as the great nature of Hawaii.



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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.



Alex Tetarenko
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Alex Tetarenko is currently an EAO postdoctoral fellow at the East Asian Observatory. She completed her MSc and PhD at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Her research focuses on studying relativistic jets launched from black hole systems in our Galaxy. When she is not doing science, Alex is an avid runner and like all good Canadians loves hockey.



Tomonori Usuda
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Tomonori 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
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John Vierra was born and raised in Hilo and graduated from Hilo High School. He joined the United States Air Force after graduation and spent the next 10 years in the US Air Force 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
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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.



Christian Wong
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Christian Wong is the director of the Hawaii Science and Technology Museum, a STEM education nonprofit based in East Hawaii. Through Christian's guidance the Hawaii Science and Technology Museum delivers a wide array of STEM education outreach programs to the community including science camps, after school STEM programs, student research support, math tutoring, science exhibits, science nights at the local schools, and special events like the Hawaii Explorations Expo (HE'E) to promote innovation in the community. Christian's day job is with the Hawaii Fire Department as a Fire Captain at the Honokaa Fire Station and the Operations Section Chief for the Hawaii Island Incident Management Team. He graduated from the University of Hawaii at Hilo with a B.A. in Natural Science and a minor in Earth and Space Sciences in 2001. Christian has had a lifelong love of science and science education, loves to spend his free time with his family and enjoys reading, hiking, playing tenor sax with the Hawaii County Band, and coaching youth robotics teams.



Siyi Xu
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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
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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 Telescope

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.