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Currents

NOAO at the January AAS Meeting

NOAO invites you to attend three important Town Hall meetings at the 225rd AAS meeting at the Washington State Convention Center In Seattle, WA (4-8 January 2015):

- **Transforming NOAO – A Status Report** (*Tuesday, 6 January, 12:45 pm - 1:45 pm, Room 6A*)
- **Thirty Meter Telescope Open House** (*Monday, 5 January, 5:30 pm, Room 6B*)
 - TMT International Science Development Team membership applications due 16 January 2015
- **NOAO data reduction mini-workshop: IR data** (*Wednesday, 7 January, 2:30 - 4:00 pm, Rm 401*)

We also encourage you to stop by the NOAO booth in the display area and chat informally with any of the NOAO staff present at the meeting. Also of interest at the Seattle AAS meeting:

- **NSF Town Hall**, *Monday 5 January, 12:45 pm, Room 6A*
- **Gemini Open House**, *Tuesday 6 January, 6:30 pm, Room 6A*

In this Issue

[AAS Town Halls](#)

[Contact Us](#)

In this Issue...

Transforming NOAO – A Status report (Tuesday, 6 January, 12:45 pm - 1:45 pm, Room 6A)

Join David Silva, NOAO Director, for his annual status report about NOAO developments. Ample time will be left to answer questions from the floor.

Key NOAO initiatives developed in concert with NASA, NSF, DOE, and the community are delivering major new research tools and datasets to the US community-at-large. The ultra-wide-field Dark Energy Camera at the CTIO Blanco 4-m is a major success. New twin, high-throughput, multi-object, optical spectrometers are operational at the Blanco and the KPNO Mayall 4-m. A new, cross-dispersed, near-infrared spectrometer is arriving at the Blanco in early 2015. Prospects have greatly improved for deployment of the Dark Energy Spectroscopic Instrument on the Mayall in 2018. The NASA-NSF Exoplanet Observational Research (NN-EXPLORER) partnership will provide the community with telescope access and tools at the WIYN 3.5-m to conduct ground based observations that advance exoplanet science, including a new extreme precision doppler spectrometer. Several new Big Data

science initiatives have been launched to support community use of public data products including Dark Energy Survey. In parallel, NOAO remains a gateway to the Gemini 8-m telescopes with their steadily improving instrumentation suite and is leading an effort to develop a plan for possible federal involvement in TMT in the 2020s.

The Thirty Meter Telescope Open House (Monday, 5 January, 5:30 pm, Room 6B)

The Thirty Meter Telescope Open House will showcase recent developments for TMT, which has now entered its construction phase on Mauna Kea. Michael Bolte (UCSC) will present the latest news about the observatory, its instruments, and the TMT partnership. Mark Dickinson (NOAO) will discuss [US community liaison activities](#) underway as part of an NSF-TMT cooperative agreement to develop a model for possible US national partnership in the observatory. He will present results from a community survey carried out by the [US TMT Science Working Group](#), and opportunities for astronomers to become involved in TMT. There will be time for audience discussion. (Good) food and drink will be served – stay after the presentation to enjoy the refreshments and to have discussions with members of the US TMT Science Working Group and the TMT staff.

The [TMT International Science Development Teams](#) (ISDTs) are one way for astronomers to become involved in TMT science and planning. Applications for ISDT membership are due on 16 January 2015. For more information, see the [article in the November 2014 issue of Currents](#).

NOAO data reduction mini-workshop: IR data (Wednesday, 7 January, 2:30 - 4:00 pm, Rm 401)

NOAO will hold a data reduction mini-workshop on Wednesday January 7 from 2:30 - 4:00 PM during the Seattle AAS meeting. The mini-workshop will focus on near-IR data reduction. There will be two speakers. Dick Joyce (NOAO) will review the basics of IR data. Rachel Mason (Gemini) will discuss reducing cross-dispersed spectrograms from GNIRS. Specific examples will be shown.

This workshop is intended as a target of opportunity for AAS attendees interested in expanding their knowledge of best data reduction techniques. The topic has been narrowed so the single afternoon session will allow participants immediately to start working with similar data from Gemini and other observatories. No special registration is required.

We plan to hold other data reduction mini-workshops at future AAS meetings. We would appreciate hearing about topics of interest to you and/or suggestions for potential speakers. Feel free to advocate for your own data reduction software if you would like to present it to the community. We are of course especially interested in data reduction software that is applicable to data from NOAO or Gemini instruments.

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Contact Us

Your input is welcome on any of these issues. Please send your thoughts to:
currents@noao.edu.

Currents is a sparkplug for communication between NOAO and our community. It provides updates—and solicits community input—on NOAO observing opportunities and NOAO programs and policies on a more rapid timescale than is possible with the *NOAO Newsletter*.

NOAO is the national center for ground-based nighttime astronomy in the United States and is operated by the Association of Universities for Research in Astronomy (AURA), Inc. under cooperative agreement with the National Science Foundation.

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