

Good Morning. My name is Buell Jannuzi and I'm very pleased to welcome you to this joint gathering of our two 50th anniversary Science Symposia. I'm going to take a few minutes to outline what we are going to be doing today and how today's program fits into our 50th anniversary celebrations. I'm also going to take a moment to thank some of the people that have enabled these meetings to take place.

So, Which 50th anniversary are we celebrating? In 2007, as we approached the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the creation of AURA, a group of us at NOAO realized that it was going to be very difficult to come up with a single anniversary event that would include all the communities that deserved a chance to celebrate the creation of the National Observatory. So we settled on the idea of having a series of events that would begin close to the anniversary of the selection of Kitt Peak for solar and night time national facilities, include the International year of Astronomy, and end near the 50th anniversary of the dedication of the Kitt Peak facilities, March 15, 2010.

The original dedication of KPNO was the culmination of years of work by Aden Meinel and his colleagues, working for AURA and the NSF, and with the support of the Tohono O'odham Nation, to create a national facility for optical astronomy -- a facility that would be distinctive in being available to researchers with the best ideas as reviewed by their peers. From land that has been sacred to the Tohono O'odham People for centuries, we study how the Universe has evolved for billions of years. For this opportunity, provided by the Tohono O'odham Nation, we are grateful.

Subsequent to the founding of Kitt Peak, AURA and the NSF worked with collaborators in the south, the University of Chile and the then Director of the Chilean National Observatory, Federico Rutland, to develop Cerro Tololo Interamerican Observatory -- a facility that has also grown and flourished over the years and set our community on a path that has seen the continuing development of international observatories based in Chile.

KPNO, CTIO, and the solar facilities of SAC peak in New Mexico were the initial stages of what has become NOAO and NSO. Today, we continue to find collaborators to develop the system of facilities that all astronomers will use to continue their research programs in the years ahead. We are

celebrating not only the dedication of KPNO as a facility, but also the concept and future of a National Observatory, open to all based on their merits.

The meetings this week and the public lectures by Alan Dressler tonight, Aden Meinel and Benard Siquieros on Monday, are the culmination of a series of events we have held over the past two years and I would like to briefly highlight a few of them.

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In 2008 we held the most recent of a series of Open Houses for the people of the Tohono O'odham Nation. These events are a chance to share what is done at the observatory with the people of the Nation and to share the culture of the Tohono O'odham with the staff of the Observatory.

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In October of last year, we hosted a group of artists from the International Association of Astronomy Artists. They spent a week in residence, developing and sharing their art, not only with us and our visitors, but also with our local communities. I pleased that some of the art work that was generated during the IAAA stay on Kitt Peak is here for you to enjoy during the meeting.

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Last November we held a reunion for former and current staff -- this was a chance for those that founded and developed the observatories to get together, remember, and inspire those of us still working for NOAO and NSO. In preparation for our 50th anniversary celebrations and for the Reunion event in particular, John Glaspey led a group effort to find and collect pictures and documents from the history of KPNO and CTIO. You can see many of these pictures up in the rooms for the symposia. I call your attention, in particular, to the movie of the first trip by Aden Meinel, Harold Thompson, and their O'odham guides up Iolkam Du'ag, Kitt Peak, to scout it as a possible site for the observatory -- this movie is available for you to watch in the exhibit room.

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This week we are pleased to be hosting over 150 astronomers, coming together to share their research. These meetings, appropriately, are focusing on questions of science, not on celebrating an anniversary. But today, both symposia come together to celebrate, with the assistance of our distinguished invited speakers, who we will start hearing from shortly. They will help us remember happy times from the past and to look forward with hope and excitement for the work to come.

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But, Before we start today's program, please note on this slide the names of some of the many people that enabled these meetings to take place. There are too many for me to thank everyone individually this morning, but I do want to thank a few. First, Knut Olsen, chair of the LOC, who has successfully helped get us through the first of the two symposia. Lori Allen who did a fantastic job as chair of the SOC for First Light to New Born stars, and Tod Lauer, chair of the SOC for "The Eventful Universe", which is beginning today. Finally, two people that have been critical in the success of the logistics for this meeting, and who need to come up to get small tokens of our thanks, Nanette Bird and Jane Price.

Thank you Nanette and Jane.

It is now my honor to introduce NOAO Director David Silva to begin today's program with the introduction of our first invited speaker.