



Steward Observatory Newsletter

November News

From our astronomy family to yours,

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

*In this season of gratitude, we asked our graduating students:
“What are you most grateful for from your time at Steward Observatory?”*



Paulina Soto Robles, BS in Astronomy 2024

Being able to operate the Raymond E. White 21” Telescope for over two years and teach our community about the mysteries and wonders our universe holds. Through this experience, I got to meet amazing people and find my place in this field!



Nazende Ipek Kerkeser, BS in Astronomy 2024

I co-built the calibration system for FIREBall-2 (the faint intergalactic-medium red-shifted emission balloon), so something I touched went up to space (technically)! Remember, the sky is not the limit—it’s just the beginning of an infinite journey among the stars, and every step is worth it.



Ansh Gupta, BS in Astronomy & Physics 2024

The variety of outreach opportunities I’ve had the opportunity to take part in and lead during my time here at Steward. It can be easy to forget why we’re studying astronomy as we get buried in equations and code. Take the time to remind yourself why you love astronomy: all the breathtaking images and cutting-edge discoveries that are far beyond human comprehension.

Charity Woodrum PhD in Astronomy & Astrophysics 2024

It has been such an honor to work alongside and be mentored by some of the most amazing astronomers in the field. I chose Steward because of how collaborative the department is and it was the best decision I could have made for my career and my personal life.





Math tutoring program prepares Native American students for STEM careers

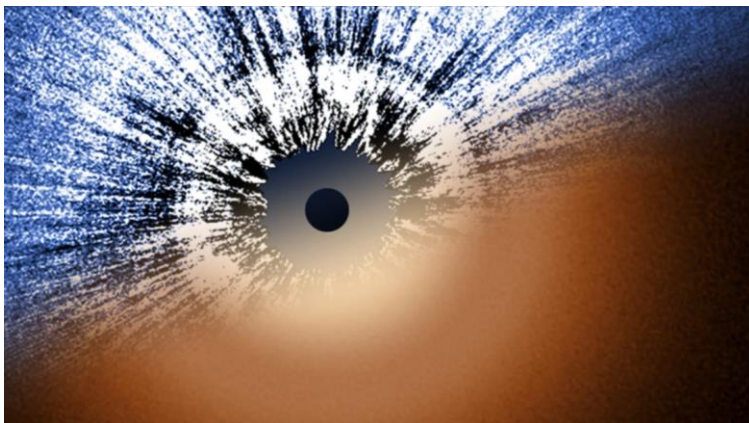
A University of Arizona math tutoring program is helping prepare local Native American K-12 students for careers in engineering and science disciplines.

Since 2017, the Mentorship and Education in Science for Tucson program has served students from middle and high schools across Southern Arizona. Known as [MESKIT](#) – pronounced "mesquite" – the program's name refers to the tree native to the Southwestern U.S. and Mexico. [Learn more](#)



Steward Observatory's Sai Krishanth is lead author on a new paper using Hubble data to define the deepest limits on scattered light emission from the Epsilon Eridani inner debris disk.

This month, [a paper in the *Astronomical Journal* authored by Sai Krishanth](#)—along with Steward Observatory astronomers **Ewan Douglas**, **Ramya Anche** and **Justin Hom**—set out to directly image the elusive Epsilon Eridani inner debris disk. [Learn more](#)



Astronomers see debris disk around young star Vega in unprecedented detail

"Between the Hubble and Webb telescopes, you get this very clear view of Vega," said **Andras Gáspár**, associate research professor at the U of A [Steward Observatory](#) and a co-author of two papers to be published in [The Astrophysical Journal](#). "It's a mysterious system because it's unlike other circumstellar disks we've looked at; the Vega

disk is smooth – ridiculously smooth." [Learn more](#)

In the Spotlight



Graduating Student: Paulina Soto Robles

As Paulina Soto Robles prepares to graduate with her Astronomy degree, she reflects on highlights from her time at Steward Observatory. **What brought you to astronomy, and to Steward Observatory?**

I wanted to better understand our place in the universe, through the study of what the cosmos has to offer. Exoplanets have always captivated me. How many planets like ours are there, if any? How can we observe them and analyze them? [Learn more](#)

Astronomy Public Outreach Programs

Public Evening Lecture Series

Fall Semester 2024

We look forward to you joining us this semester to learn more about the exciting science taking place in Astronomy!

Monday, December 2

Born in the Spotlight: the Mysterious Proplyds

Dr. Dominika Itrich, Steward Observatory

Location: Steward Observatory Lecture Hall N210

Doors open at 7:00 pm and Lectures begin at 7:30 pm MST

Nearest parking 2nd Street or Cherry Ave Garage

Telescope viewing follows at 8:30 PM - Weather Permitting

Watch via **ZOOM** link <https://arizona.zoom.us/j/4470189357>

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### **Podcasts of Previous Public Evening Lectures**

Monday, November 25

*¿Cuántos Soles Hay?*

(This lecture will be given in Spanish.)

Dr. Rafael Bertolotto, Steward Observatory

Monday, November 18

[\*Jupiter's Insanely Volcanically Active Moon Io\*](#)

*Dr. Alfred McEwen, Regents Professor, Lunar & Planetary Lab*

Monday, November 4

[\*Discovering the Most Distant Supernovae Thus Far with JWST\*](#)

*Christa DeCoursey, Steward Observatory*

Monday, October 21

[\*Paradoxes & Conundrums of Relativity\*](#)

*Dr. Vasileios Paschalidis, Steward Observatory*

Monday, October 7

[\*An Introduction to Space Law\*](#)

*Prof. Andrew Woods*

September 23

[\*JWST: The First Two Years of discoveries from the Dawn of Time\*](#)

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Dr. Kevin Hainline, steward Observatory

September 13

[Striking Gold in the Universe](#)

Dr. Wen-Fai Fong, Northwestern University

2024 Aaronson Prize Awardee

If you miss a lecture -- [view the video here](#)

[Astronomy Colloquia](#)

### **Space Drafts: Astronomy Lectures**

The events listed above are off campus astronomy activities we want you to be aware of and enjoy, if interested. These events are not part of the Department of Astronomy or Steward Observatory public outreach. [Learn more](#)

### **Public Mirror Lab Tours**

### **Tickets are now available through June 2025**

This 90-minute tour provides a unique opportunity to learn how we produce the largest (8.4 meters / 27ft) and most advanced telescope mirrors in the world. We hope to see you soon! [More information](#)

### **Mt Lemmon SkyNights StarGazing Program.**

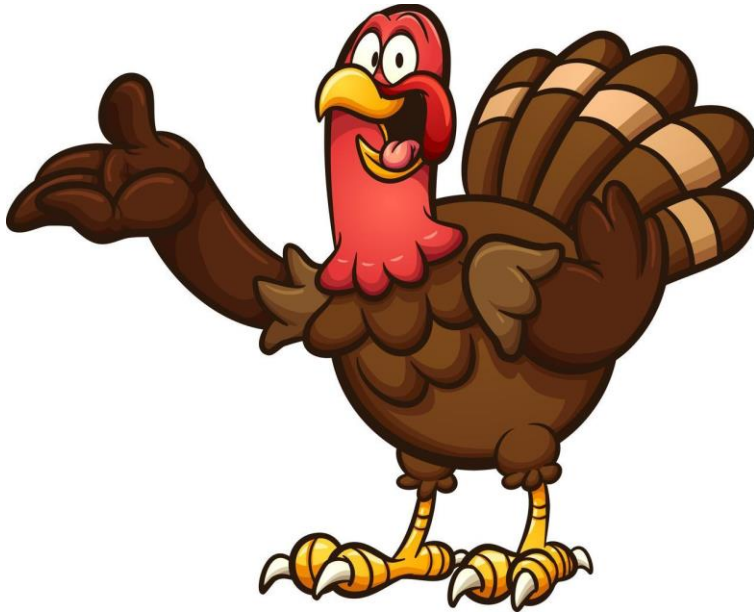
[The NYT Spends 36 Hours in Tucson - Including the Mt. Lemmon SkyCenter](#)

SkyNights is a 5 hour astronomy program on the summit of Mt. Lemmon. Your experience begins with a scenic drive up this Sky Island mountain which is a unique trip by its self. This will be followed by spectacular sunset phenomenon and then on to stargazing using the Shulman 32" and Phillips 24" telescopes which are the largest public viewing telescopes in southern Arizona. No prior astronomical knowledge is required—just bring your enthusiasm and prepare to be amazed! This is a fun program for curious minds aged 7 and up. Come discover the wonders of the Universe with us!.

[More information](#)

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## Friends of Steward Observatory



### Let's talk turkey!

Turkeys, the stars of Thanksgiving dinner tables across the US, will be gobbled up by millions of humans, not black holes, giving thanks tomorrow.

Among other things, YOU can be thankful for our outstanding, dedicated, stellar Astronomy students who are “stuffing themselves” with knowledge and expertise to solve the challenges of the Universe.

Here at Steward Observatory, we are very grateful for your support of our program and students.

### Happy Thanksgiving!

## [Your donation](#)

provides astronomy students the chance to grow their skills, experience discovery and build the confidence necessary to take on the challenging problems of the future. These opportunities are priceless, but providing them requires funding.

Our students are extremely grateful for your investment in Astronomy.

To a student, every dollar is important. Your donation goes directly to help support our innovative students in the form of scholarships and summer research project needs. Students are working on cutting-edge research to enhance our knowledge and understanding of the universe.

These students are the next-generation of scientists who will be making the great discoveries in the future. Student success builds our world-class astronomy program that continues to stand out from our peers and expands Arizona's research horizons.

**Your donation is tax deductible!**

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Supporting the next-generation of science and discovery is the best reward.

[Learn more](#)



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA  
COLLEGE OF SCIENCE

Astronomy  
& Steward Observatory



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[Have a Friend Sign up For Our Monthly Astronomy Newsletter](#)

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For more information or questions contact:

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