



National Aeronautics and  
Space Administration

# Solar System Ambassadors Program

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Who We Are



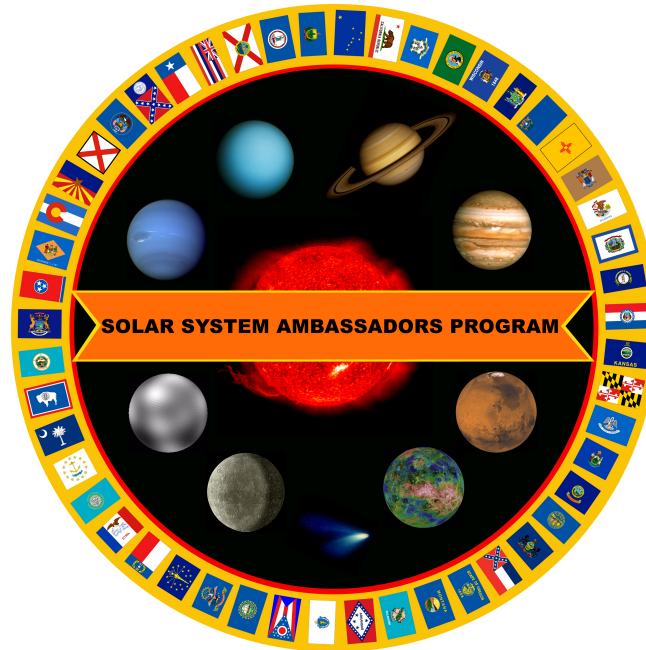
## Solar System Ambassadors

[www.solarsystem.nasa.gov/ssa/home.cfm](http://www.solarsystem.nasa.gov/ssa/home.cfm)

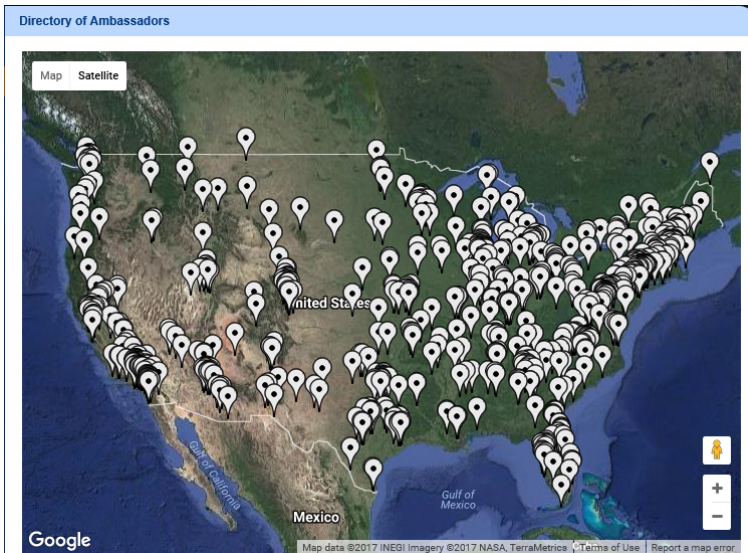


**Jet Propulsion Laboratory**  
California Institute of Technology

# Solar System Ambassadors



# Who We Are



NASA National Aeronautics and Space Administration

## Solar System Ambassadors Program

Directory of Ambassadors: Pankaj Karna

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**Pankaj Karna**  
Member Since 2016  
Lakewood, Washington

[Click here to contact this Ambassador.](#)

**Biographical Information:**

Pankaj Karna is a physics researcher, mentor and a member of the United States Army. He graduated with an Engineering Physics degree from the University of Central Oklahoma in 2013. He has involved in various independent research since then besides working as a lab manager. His work is mostly focused on inexpensive space launch systems.

He has been a science enthusiast throughout his life and spent time teaching and mentoring students. He has also been active with various organizations including Society of Physics Students and IEEE. His passion for science and teaching is driven by the belief that Learning and teaching about space exploration inspires us to dream big and aim higher.

**Past Events Hosted By This Ambassador:**  
None So Far

**Past Events Collaborated On By This Ambassador:**  
None So Far

[Click here to view all upcoming events](#)

Ambassador Directory: K  
Ambassador Directory: Washington

- **Solar System Ambassadors is celebrating 20 years in 2017!**
- **750 space enthusiast volunteers in 2017**
- **50 states, DC, Puerto Rico, Guam, US Virgin Islands and US citizens living abroad: Netherlands, Nigeria, Germany, Japan, Republic of Korea, United Kingdom**

# What We Do




- Public engagement in a variety of venues
- CY2016 Direct: 2,295 events reaching 539,805 people
- CY2016 Media Estimates: 28,168,186 readers/viewers/listeners
- Museum Events since 2001: 5,831 events reaching 2,669,169 people
- Some of us specialize...



# Solar System Ambassador Master Teachers

Directory of Ambassadors: Dee McLellan



**Dee McLellan**  
Member Since 1999  
Andover, Minnesota

[Click here to contact this Ambassador.](#)

**Biographical Information:**

Minnesota is a northern state where it is possible to view the Aurora Borealis and Dee McLellan is a native. She was born and grew up in Minneapolis and is a graduate of the University of Minnesota in education. This makes Dee a golden gopher. She was a classroom teacher at a small Minneapolis school and then Meadow Creek Christian School in Andover until her oldest son was born. She then took the time to teach her four children at home for several years.

During that time she also was involved with a variety of teaching opportunities at the University of Minnesota's Bell Museum of Natural History and other smaller colleges around the Twin Cities. She taught science and math enrichment courses for middle school students. After that, Dee returned to the classroom and taught 7th and 8th grade science and math at Meadow Creek. She even taught some of the children of her former students. She became involved with NASA, first as a STARDUST educator in 1999, and then a Solar System Educator. She has been part of a remote sensing pilot program with NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center and attended training there.

Dee has also attended workshops at JPL, Marshall Space Flight Center, Johnson Space Center, Kennedy Space Center, and Ames. Currently she is writing curriculum for a mission to a comet and is part of the JASON Project as a Lead Trainer. Dee trains teachers in the US and internationally to use the JASON project curriculum. She is pleased to have a part in NASA's vision to inspire the next generation of explorers as only NASA can. She is currently working as Observatory Coordinator for Jackson Middle School.

SOLAR SYSTEM AMBASSADOR MASTER TEACHER

**Past Events Hosted By This Ambassador:**

LCROSS Event  
Jackson Middle School Observatory

Jackson Arts and Academic Expo  
Jackson Middle School Observatory

NASA Resources that can be used to teach nonfiction text  
MDE Conference Room

University's Universe  
Jackson Middle School Observatory

Immersive learning  
University of Minnesota



- Formerly Solar System Educators
- 93 SSAMTs in 50 states and Puerto Rico
- Consolidated with Solar System Ambassadors in 2014
- Professional development workshops for teachers, including facilitated Lunar and Meteorite Certification

# How We Train

NASA Nationwide  
Solar System Exploration Presents:  
A Consortium of Formal and Informal Education Networks

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Future Telecon Information: New Horizons Update

**New Horizons Update**  
Telecon Date: Monday, May 11, 2015  
Category: Pluto & Dwarf Planets  
Dr. Fran Bagenal will give a New Horizons update.

**Call-In Information**  
Date: May 11, 2015, Monday  
Time: 3:00 - 4:30 pm PT (6:00 pm - 7:30 pm ET)  
(Phone lines open at 2:45 am PT - 5:45 pm ET)  
Call-In: 888-262-0432  
Passcode: Ambassador  
Leader: Kay Ferrari

**Presentation Resources**  
Resources will be uploaded when available.

**Speaker Information and Biographies**  
Dr. Fran Bagenal | Kerri Beisser

**Dr. Fran Bagenal**  
Fran Bagenal is professor of astrophysical and planetary sciences at the University of Colorado, Boulder and is a co-investigator on the New Horizons mission. Her main area of expertise is the study of charged particles trapped in planetary magnetic fields. She is interested in finding out if the solar wind interaction with Pluto's escaping atmosphere acts like a comet. Bagenal received her doctorate degree from MIT in 1991 and spent five years as a postdoctoral researcher at Imperial College, London, before returning to the US for research and faculty positions in Boulder, Colorado.  
More about Dr. Fran Bagenal >

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Archived Telecon Information: New Horizons Update

**New Horizons Update**  
Original Telecon Date: Friday, February 6, 2015  
Category: Pluto & Dwarf Planets

NASA's New Horizons spacecraft has begun its long-awaited, historic encounter with Pluto, entering the first of several approach phases that will culminate with the first close-up flyby of the Pluto system six months from now. This first approach phase, which lasts until spring, also includes a significant degree of other science. New Horizons will take essentially continuous data on the interplanetary environment where the Pluto system orbits, with its two charged-particle sensors measuring the high-energy particles streaming from the Sun, and its dust counter tallying dust-particle concentrations in the inner reaches of the Kuiper Belt - the unexplored outer region of the solar system that includes Pluto and potentially thousands of similar icy, rocky small planets. More intensive Pluto studies begin in the spring, when the cameras and spectrometers aboard New Horizons can provide resolutions better than the most powerful telescopes on Earth. Eventually, New Horizons will obtain images good enough to map Pluto and its moons better than has ever been achieved by any previous first planetary reconnaissance mission.

New Horizons launched in January 2006 and, after a voyage of more than 3 billion miles, will soar close to Pluto, inside the orbits of its five known moons, this July 14. The fastest spacecraft ever launched, New Horizons awoke from its final hibernation period in early December. Since then, the mission's science, engineering and spacecraft operations teams have configured the piano-sized probe for distant observations of the Pluto system, starting with a long-range photo shoot that began Jan. 25.

APL manages the New Horizons mission for NASA's Science Mission Directorate in Washington. Alan Stern, of the Southwest Research Institute (SwRI), headquartered in San Antonio, is the principal investigator and leads the mission. SwRI leads the science team, payload operations, and encounter science planning. New Horizons is part of the New Frontiers Program managed by NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama. APL designed, built and operates the spacecraft.

**Transcripts**  
Audio File (MP3, 19.5 MB)  
Transcript (PDF, 246 KB)

**Presentation Resources**  
New Horizons PPTX (Power Point, 19.19 MB)  
New Horizons PPT (Power Point, 19.4 MB)  
New Horizons PDF (PDF, 3.85 MB)  
New Horizons Education Materials PDF (PDF, 136 KB)  
New Horizons AGU Workshop Presentation PDF (PDF, 136 KB)  
NASA New Horizons Website  
JHU-APL New Horizons Website  
Where is New Horizons Now?  
Pluto 101  
News Center  
Far Teachers/Students/Museum/Science Centers  
Movie Trailers/Mission Videos/Podcasts  
Movie Trailers/Mission Videos/Podcasts Index  
Animations  
3D Model  
Sign Up for New Horizons E-News  
Mission Twitter Feed  
PI Alan Stern's New Horizons Twitter Feed  
Pluto Picture of the Day  
Countdown to the Pluto Encounter!  
Musical tribute to Clyde Tombaugh and the New Horizons mission  
NASA Wavelength - Pluto

**Speaker Information and Biographies**  
Dr. Alan Stern | Keri Hallau | Kerri Beisser

**Dr. Alan Stern**  
Dr. Alan Stern of the Southwest Research Institute (SwRI), headquartered in San Antonio, is a planetary scientist and the principal investigator of the New Horizons mission. He is former head of NASA's space and Earth science program and is slated to fly to space in 2016 as a researcher on both Virgin Galactic and XCOR suborbital spacecraft.

- **NASA Nationwide - formerly SSA professional development**
- **More than 400 archived telecons since 1999**
- **Collaborate with NASA Museum Alliance**
- **NNW available to other NASA volunteers and networks**

# How We Can Serve Your Organization



- **Nationwide events: Pluto Flyby, 2017 Total Solar Eclipse**
- **Speakers: Evening programs, NASA Mission Milestones**
- **Hands-on Activities: Science Days, Summer Camps**
- **Science Festivals: Astronomy Day, Earth Day**
- **Your suggestions...**



# Why We're Ambassadors



*If what I do makes a difference in the life of just one child, then it was worth doing. --Sr. Clarice Lolich,  
Solar System Ambassador*



# Update...



*This is Danielle today. She is a senior in high school, with plans to go to college and major in engineering.*



**Jet Propulsion Laboratory**  
California Institute of Technology

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[jpl.nasa.gov](http://jpl.nasa.gov)