



The International Year of Astronomy (IYA2009) will be a global celebration of astronomy and its contributions to society and culture, highlighted by the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first use of an astronomical telescope by Galileo Galilei. Endorsed by the International Astronomical Union (IAU) and UNESCO, IYA 2009 aims to stimulate worldwide interest in astronomy and science— especially among young people—under the central theme “*The Universe, Yours to Discover.*” IYA2009 events and activities will promote a greater appreciation of the inspirational aspects of astronomy that embody an invaluable shared resource for all nations.

### **International Objectives of IYA 2009**

1. Increase scientific awareness.
2. Promote widespread access to new knowledge and observing experiences.
3. Empower astronomical communities in developing countries.
4. Support and improve formal and informal science education.
5. Provide a modern image of science and scientists.
6. Facilitate new networks and strengthen existing ones.
7. Improve the gender-balanced representation of scientists at all levels and promote greater involvement of underrepresented groups in scientific and engineering careers.
8. Facilitate the preservation and protection of the world’s natural heritage of dark skies and cultural heritage of historical astronomical sites.

### **U.S. GOAL for IYA 2009**

*“To offer an engaging astronomy experience to every person in the country, nurture existing partnerships and build new connections to sustain public interest.”*

### **U.S. WORKING GROUPS**

***Looking Through a Telescope*** – Star parties, sidewalk astronomy, observations of the Moon-Jupiter-Saturn in the spirit of Galileo, remote robotic telescopes, eclipse events...

***Classrooms and Families*** – Activities for schools, after-school programs, families, camps, clubs, civic organizations..

***Dark Skies Are a Universal Resource*** – Worldwide measurements of local dark skies by citizen-scientists using their unaided eyes and digital sky-quality meters, activities at national parks, multimedia products...

***New Media*** – Blogs, podcasts, social networking sites, online 24-hour tour of the world’s observatories, YouTube, RSS feeds, Second Life...

***Telescope Kit and Optics Challenges*** – Inexpensive new telescope kit(s), “telescope amnesty” to repair and distribute unused optics, informal science education with Hands-On Optics...

***Arts & Entertainment*** –Rose Parade float, 2009 Oscars, engaging key spokespeople...

***Storytelling and Cultural Astronomy***– Star Parties combining telescope viewing and Native American stories, appropriate written/recorded sky narratives and stories on the Web... Native cultures, storytelling traditions and events, public lectures...

***Research Experiences for Students, Teachers and Citizen-Scientists*** – Observing at telescopes on Earth, in space and via the Internet, Epsilon Aurigae variable star campaign, data mining, science fairs, professional-amateur collaborations...

***Science Centers, Observatory Visitor Centers and Planetaria*** – “400 Years of the Telescope” documentary and planetarium show, image exhibitions, speaker series, news/image feeds...



### **U.S. IYA 2009 Program Committee (American Astronomical Society) Co-Chairs**

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### **Program Committee Members**

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### **U.S. IYA 2009 US Working Group Chairs**

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– Looking Through a Telescope

Andrew Fraknoi (Foothill College/ASP, *fraknoiandrew@fhda.edu*)

– Classrooms and Families

Pamela Gay (SIUE/AstronomyCast, *pgay@siue.edu*) – New Media

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Dennis Lamenti (Indiana University, *dlamenti@astro.indiana.edu*) - Storytelling and Cultural Astronomy

Peter Michaud (Gemini Observatory, *pmichaud@gemini.edu*) – Science Centers, Observatory Visitor Centers and Planetaria

Stephen Pompea (NOAO, *spompea@noao.edu*) – Telescope Kit and Optics Challenges

Aaron Price (AAVSO, *aaronp@aavso.org*) – Research Experiences for Students, Teachers and Citizen-Scientists

Connie Walker (NOAO, *cwalker@noao.edu*) – Dark Skies Are a Universal Resource

### **U.S. IYA 2009 Development Committee**

Chair – Peter Stockman (Space Telescope Science Institute) *stockman@stsci.edu*

### **Key Upcoming Meetings and Events**

- **Communicating Astronomy to the Public 2007 – Athens, Greece • October 8-11, 2007**
- **AAS 211<sup>th</sup> Meeting – Austin, TX • January 8-12, 2008**
- **IYA 2009 Conference and Workshops – sponsored by the American Astronomical Society and the Astronomical Society of the Pacific– St. Louis, MO • June 1-5, 2008**

[www.astronomy2009.us](http://www.astronomy2009.us)

[www.myspace.com/2009yearofastronomy](http://www.myspace.com/2009yearofastronomy)

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