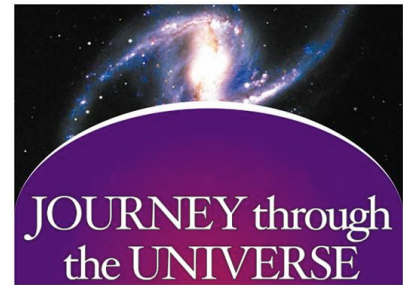


6. Testimonials from Community Leaders and Visiting Researchers

The quotes below are from letters written by the leadership in participating *Journey through the Universe* communities, and the scientists and engineers—the Visiting Researchers—that travel to these communities. The full package of letters is available on request.



<http://journeythroughtheuniverse.org>

The focus on science, math, and technology has inspired our students. Many...are now considering classes and possible careers in these fields. This program has helped open up the minds of our children to options that were not readily available to them in the past.

—Robert Canchola, School Superintendent, Santa Cruz County, Arizona

... we are thrilled that science, math, and technology content areas came alive. Our local team was also able to easily integrate Hawai'i Content and Performance Standards with the Journey curriculum. This comprehensive model has really broadened ... how we do the business of education and how we relate and connect with educators, students, community and businesses. What an enriching experience Journey has been for the educators within the Department of Education and for the Hilo community and business organizations!

—Valerie Takata, Superintendent, Hilo/Laupahoehoe/WaiakeaComplex, Hawai'i District

The staff development workshop was excellent. It is one of the few workshops that advertised a K-12 range and truly had activities for each teacher's grade level. The curriculum guides were outstanding. Many [teachers] are planning to use the activities with their classrooms almost immediately.

The classroom visits were a huge success. I think that many students may have set their sights on careers involving scientific research, engineering, and space exploration. What an important thing to occur in a community plagued with high unemployment and a high minority population.

In summary, I give the Journey through the Universe Program an A+.

—Ira R. Trollinger, Ph.D., Superintendent, Martinsville City Public Schools, Virginia

Journey through the Universe has provided a systemic impact on the sixth grade. Each year, every 6th grade classroom is visited by researchers and engineers from over a dozen local research organizations; 100 6th grade educators are trained on Earth and space science educational materials created expressly for the program in D.C. and adopted as part of the 6th grade Earth and space science curriculum; and parents and caregivers are provided a look into their child's education during family science events.

—Dr. Tom Custer, Director of Science, K-12, District of Columbia Public Schools

Before becoming a Journey community our four districts didn't collaborate much and now we have a permanent structure/model for teacher collaboration across districts. Because of the success of our county-wide team of master science educators, other content areas are talking about forming similar teams.

I truly believe this is an exemplary model for intergenerational education that can realistically meet the current federal challenge of leaving no child behind, at least in science education. A scientifically literate populace is critical to our world-class status as a nation and it is also critical to our democratic freedom.

—Dennis W. Wilson, Ed.D., Superintendent, Labette County Unified School District, Kansas

Our children learned from the scientists that their own lives could be as meaningful and as satisfying as they choose and one of those choices could be as a scientific explorer. Thank you to those who endeavor to bring these incredible opportunities to American children.

—Dr. Connie Van Leuvan, Co-Chair, Kansas City Team, Kearny R-1 School District, Missouri
Sharon Spence, Co-Chair, Kansas City, Shawnee Mission School District, Kansas

This “Journey” has far exceeded our expectations during the past ten years. The full-scale sustainability of this program is clearly evidenced by the fact that our district has continued to use the “Journey” model while collaborating with local universities and scientists to present a week of focus on science.

—Jim Sisney, Ed.D., Superintendent, Broken Arrow Public Schools, Oklahoma

The evaluations from the teachers’ workshops and classroom visits were outstanding. We have high school students who now dream of careers far beyond the norm for our area. Our high school Rockets for Schools program has now limited the program to Juniors and Seniors because of record interest.

Some day, due to this program, we will have outstanding scientists and engineers from this [region of the country] working at NASA. As with throwing a stone in a pond and watching the ripple effects, the influence of this project has been tremendous in our community. ...NASA developed a whole set of believers in space science and backers for education and exploration.

—Dee Benjamin, Director, Dickinson-Iron-Menominee Mathematics Science and Technology Center, Michigan

After the program, the children were able to approach the scientist for autographs and to ask questions. The first thing we had to do when we got home was to hang up their NASA autographed posters in their bedrooms! I had a very difficult time getting my oldest to sleep that night as he was so excited!

I personally know what an impression it has made on my own children. Both of my boys felt encouraged that they can do anything they put their minds to. They feel that the future is theirs.

—Louise M. Thomas, Mom, Wallace, Michigan

This program succeeds in bringing science to the people and making it accessible to students. In so doing, it builds bridges between NASA and the public, and helps tear down the perceived walls between academic research and everyday experience.

—Dr. Joshua Colwell, *Visiting Researcher*, Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics, University of Colorado at Boulder

I am particularly impressed by the reach of the program and the contribution it makes to diverse communities and underserved populations. The true strength of this program is that it utilizes “real” scientists and experts not only as purveyors of facts and information, but as role models and in many cases...heroes.

—Dr. Robert Davis, *Visiting Researcher*, Vice President of Education, Lincoln Park Zoo

I have spent one week for each of the past five years as a visiting researcher with the Journey program. Not only has this been greatly appreciated by the communities involved, but I have started looking forward to it as my most rewarding week of the year.

—Dr. Bradley Files, *Visiting Researcher*, Engineer, Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center, NASA

... how can one measure the reward, and the promise, in a little girl’s face when she comes up and says after a presentation; “Dr. Gibson, thank you -- Science is so cool -- I want to learn more...”

This is a fantastic program, and should be supported on an ongoing basis.

—Dr. Ursula Gibson, *Visiting Researcher*, Associate Professor of Engineering, Dartmouth College

Thank you for providing the vehicle that truly reaches into the hearts and minds of people all across America. It is staggering to realize the cumulative effect Journey is having on communities.

—Tom Nolan, *Visiting Researcher*, Engineer, Jet Propulsion Laboratory