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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INTERNATIONAL ASTRONOMY GROUP HOSTS GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN HAWAII

*– 2,500+ astronomers from 75 countries to gather for triennial conference,
Aug. 3-14, at the Hawai'i Convention Center –*

HONOLULU – The [International Astronomical Union](#) (IAU) will hold its [2015 General Assembly](#) from Aug. 3-14 at the Hawai'i Convention Center on O'ahu. The triennial conference will welcome more than 2,500 astronomers from 75 countries around the globe, marking the first time the event will be held in the state of Hawai'i.

The IAU General Assembly is expected to generate an economic impact for the state of Hawai'i of more than \$20 million in tax revenue. In addition, it is anticipated that many conference attendees will extend their time in the Hawaiian Islands for vacation, further enhancing the General Assembly's economic impact on the state's visitor industry.

The 2015 IAU XXIX General Assembly is being hosted by the [American Astronomical Society](#), North America's major organization of professional astronomers, which the state of Hawai'i successfully partnered with in 2009 to win Hawai'i the bid to be host site. This will be the first time the General Assembly is held in the United States since 1988. The 11-day event is also expected to be one of the largest professional astronomy conferences in IAU's history.

"The IAU is delighted to bring our triennial General Assembly to the state of Hawai'i, a place that is truly special in the astronomical community as one of the foremost sites for astronomical research in the world," said Thierry Montmerle, general secretary of the International Astronomical Union. "We look forward to introducing thousands of astronomers to these beautiful islands and their cultural traditions while showcasing Hawai'i as a key location for world-class science."

Having the IAU General Assembly conduct its business in Hawai'i reinforces the state of Hawai'i's standing as a premier host destination for meetings drawing attendees from around the world. The business generated by meetings, conventions and incentive groups is key to the state's tourism mix, supplementing an already robust leisure market in support of a healthy visitor industry, Hawai'i's No. 1 economic driver.

General Assembly participants will address key topics in contemporary astronomy and assess recent scientific progress in a number of specialized areas. As a result of the event, the IAU expects an exciting exchange of scientific knowledge and international collaboration, as well as important advancements for the astronomical community and communities beyond.

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The conference will also offer several Hawai'i community events, which will be free and open to the public. Highlights include:

Stargazing Parties

Mon., Aug. 3, and Thurs., Aug. 13, at sundown

Ala Moana Beach Park

Families and friends are invited to come together and enjoy an evening beneath the stars. For the ultimate stargazing experience, telescopes and astronomy experts will serve as guides to the night sky.

Public Astronomy Talks at Hawai'i Convention Center (tickets are free and required)

Tues., Aug. 4, 7:30-8:30 p.m.

He Lani Ko Luna, A Sky Above: "In Losing the Sight of Land, You Discover the Stars"

Kālepa Baybayan, Pwo master navigator, Imiloa Astronomy Center, Polynesian Voyaging Society

Note: Registration is required for this event as capacity is limited. Free tickets can be booked at <https://uhifa.ticketbud.com/askyabove>.

Tues., Aug. 11, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

ExoWorld Ceremony and Public Talk

This public event will start with an announcement by the IAU of the beginning of the public voting for the NameExoWorlds contest. In August 2013, the IAU established a contest to involve the public in the selection of names for some newly discovered exoplanets; planets around other stars. The voting will be initiated at this special ceremony that will precede the public talk, which feature two guest speakers:

- *The Development of Modern Astronomy in Hawai'i*
Dr. Günther Hasinger, Director, University of Hawai'i Institute for Astronomy
- *The Black Hole in the Galactic Center*
Dr. Andrea Ghez, University of California Los Angeles

Note: Registration is required for this event as capacity is limited. Free tickets can be booked at <https://uhifa.ticketbud.com/blackhole>.

Planetarium Shows

Thurs., Aug. 6, 7:30 and 8:00 p.m.

Hokulani Imaginarium at Windward Community College

Cosmic Rays and Travelers of Light

Enjoy free planetarium shows presented by the Malargüe Planetarium and hosted by the [Hokulani Imaginarium at Windward Community College](#).

Interactive Science Events for Local Students

Wed., Aug. 5 and Wed., Aug. 12, 10:30 a.m.-noon and 1-2:30 p.m.

Hawai'i Convention Center Exhibit Hall

500 local students will enjoy hands-on activities with world-class astronomers from around the globe.

Astronomer Classroom Visits

Daily, during school hours

Various classrooms across the state

IAU members will visit local classrooms to speak with Hawai'i students. Educators may request a classroom astronomer online at www.astronomy2015.org/events#public.

Media Access:

For media access, press registration is required prior to the conference via http://www.iau.org/public/press_room/ga_xxix_registration/.

Images (Credit – IAU):

- Hawai'i Night Sky (Artist's impression)
<http://www.iau.org/public/images/detail/iau1507a/>
- Ala Moana Beach Park Map
<http://www.iau.org/public/images/detail/iau1507b/>

About Meet Hawai'i

Meet Hawai'i is a collaboration of the Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau (HVCB) and Hawai'i Convention Center (HCC) to reinforce the brand of the Hawaiian Islands as a world-class destination for business meetings, conventions, and incentive programs. The marketing efforts of the Meet Hawai'i team are overseen by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA), the state of Hawai'i's tourism agency. HTA was established in 1998 to ensure a successful visitor industry well into the future. Its mission is to strategically manage Hawai'i tourism in a sustainable manner consistent with the state of Hawai'i's economic goals, cultural values, preservation of natural resources, community desires, and visitor industry needs. For information about Meet Hawai'i and the hosting of meetings, conventions and incentives, please visit MeetHawaii.com.

About the International Astronomical Union

The IAU is an international astronomical organization bringing together more than 10,000 professional astronomers from almost 100 countries. Its mission is to promote and safeguard the science of astronomy, in all its aspects, through international cooperation. The IAU also serves as the internationally recognized authority for assigning designations to celestial bodies and the surface features on them. Founded in 1919, the IAU is the world's largest professional body for astronomers.

Links

- The 2015 IAU XXIX General Assembly - www.astronomy2015.org
- International Astronomical Union - www.iau.org
- American Astronomical Society - www.aas.org

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