



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Constance Walker, Scientist at NSF NOIRLab receives the 2025 Andrew Fraknoi Supporters Award from the Astronomical Society of the Pacific (ASP) for decades of support and dedication to the ASP's mission

San Francisco, California – September 17, 2025 – The recipient of the ASP's **2025 Andrew Fraknoi Supporters Award** is longtime friend, advisor, and supporter of the ASP **Dr. Constance Walker**. She is a 25-year veteran Scientist at NSF NOIRLab, the US national center for optical-infrared astronomy research and co-director of the International Astronomical Union (IAU) Centre on the Protection of the Dark and Quiet. Walker's dedication to the ASP includes not only astronomy education and outreach support, but service on the ASP Board of Directors and as Board President between 2010 – 2017.

Walker will be honored for over three decades of support and dedication to the Society's mission. Her initial partnership with the ASP started as member and leader in the Project ASTRO National Network. As a team leader and astronomer for Tucson Project ASTRO her work was instrumental in building relationships of around 300 local classroom teachers with astronomers to bring the wonders of the Universe into the classroom. ASP's former Project ASTRO National Coordinator fondly remembers how he "always took notice of Connie's extraordinary dedication and love for public education."

In addition, Walker was also co-initiator for Family ASTRO, an offshoot of Project ASTRO, engaging many families in astronomy related games and activities. She was also instrumental in bringing the Family ASTRO program to Chile and workshops to Argentina – both firsts for this program outside of the United States. A former employee reminds us, she was "such a cheerleader for all our work. She is a champion for astronomy engagement!" Her continued involvement with the ASP included advice and contributions to the ASP's My Sky Tonight project activities for very young children, using them to hold outreach events in Arizona.

As an ASP Board Member and as Board President, Walker's work continued to influence the direction of the ASP in its commitment to broaden ASP Awards and recipients and promote change through education via programs. Her support led to the launch of the Arthur B.C. Walker Award to recognize African American space scientists and astrophysicists as well as a new award to honor women making significant contributions to astronomy research and education. The latter became the Nancy Grace Roman Award inaugurated in 2023.

Walker's dedication and support of the ASP's work continued after her Board presidency as she engaged the ASP in her almost 20 years of active involvement with light pollution issues on the ground and in orbit. She engaged the ASP to serve with her on the Dark Skies Education committee with DarkSky International (which she is currently Vice-President of the Board of Directors) in support of a 2020 Virtual Conference. She also offered feedback on a lighting kit for an ASP NASA Night Sky Network (NSN) Toolkit and provided advice on light pollution for select NSN webinars and training workshops.

Walker is most importantly being honored for her inspiration, her generosity in sharing her work and testing activities. Andrew Fraknoi, for whom this award is named, aptly reminds us that "the lifeblood of a nonprofit like the ASP is the dedication and hard work of volunteers, who share the Society's goals for science education and literacy. Over the years, in a wide range of capacities, Connie has been one of the most dedicated volunteers in the 136-year history of our organization."

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Join us in celebration of Connie Walker's achievements at the in-person ASP Awards Gala on Saturday, November 8, 205 at the Hilton San Francisco Airport Bayfront, Burlingame, CA

About the ASP

The Astronomical Society of the Pacific (ASP), established in 1889, is a 501c3 nonprofit organization whose mission is to use astronomy to increase the understanding and appreciation of science and to advance science and science literacy. The ASP connects scientists, educators, amateur astronomers and the public together to learn about astronomical research, improve astronomy education, and share resources that engage learners of all kinds in the excitement and adventure of scientific discovery. Current ASP programs and initiatives support college faculty, K-12 science teachers, amateur astronomy clubs, science museums, libraries, park rangers, and Girl Scouts to name a few.

Through its annual awards, ASP recognizes achievement in research, technology, education, and public outreach. The awards include the ASP's highest honor, the Catherine Wolfe Bruce Gold Medal awarded since 1898 for a lifetime of outstanding research in astronomy. The Bruce Medal has gone to some of the greatest astronomers of the past century, including Arthur Eddington, Edwin P. Hubble, Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar, and Vera Rubin. The ASP also presents the Klumpke-Roberts Award for outstanding contributions to the public understanding and appreciation of astronomy. Awardees include Carl Sagan, Isaac Asimov, and the Hubble Heritage Project.

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