

NASA Academy Alumni Association (NAAA) Electronic Newsletter

Vol. 1 #4 June 1998

David Kalman, editor

Please send all questions or comments to David Kalman,
djkalman@pcisys.net

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1. President's Message

I'm fresh today from a night with the Boston alumni and some alumnus visitors from out of town for the AGU conference here this week. We had a great dinner at Casa Romero's, a Mexican restaurant near the conference. I'd like to encourage more activities like this, similar to ones I see word of on the email list sometimes.

As we head into the summer, Diana Coleman is heading the group planning our annual nationwide event this fall. This year is NASA's 40th anniversary, and we are hoping to dovetail our activities with NASA's celebrations. The main planner at NASA HQ is excited about our involvement, and this offers us a rare opportunity to shine on the national stage. The more we can do with the official celebrations, the better, and the NAAA should take this opportunity to take the lead in planning some of this fall's activities. This will not only be exciting, but will give us quite a bit of exposure on the national stage- imagine planning a banquet at the Air and Space Museum where Dan Goldin and Al Gore might speak! We can really shine here. I'm looking forward to the summer and fall and all the excitement it will bring.

June also marks the start of the NASA Academies around the country this summer, at Goddard, Ames, and Dryden. We are planning events with regional alumni at the various centers throughout the summer, and we encourage you to get involved with Academies in your areas. Several alums visited my Academy session, and I really appreciated their insights and thoughts. I'm sure many of you have had similar experiences. I encourage you to get the contact information from the list for this summer's Academy staff, and to pay them visits either during the planned events or even better at other times. They will appreciate it, and it will feel good too.

Have a great start to the summer!

David J. Goldstein
David@aeroastro.com

2. Special Section: Recent Graduations

Amy Snyder (GSFC 97)

After graduating from Cornell University with a Bachelor's degree in earth and planetary science and a concentration in science and technology studies, I will be working this summer in DC as a research aide with the National Research Council's space studies board on space policy issues. This fall I will be attending George Washington University's Master's program in science, technology, and public policy, where I will be focusing my studies and work in space policy. Following that I plan to accept my deferred admission at Johns Hopkins, where I wish to pursue my Ph.D. in the history of science and technology. I look forward to a career as an advisor, consultant, and writer for NASA and other space-related organizations and industries on policy and other contemporary/recent history issues in space, science, and technology.

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3. Editor's Ramblings

by David Kalman, NAAA newsletter editor

Well, the number of submissions for this month's newsletter was abysmally small (especially the graduation updates), so this is a short issue. Also, I believe that all but two of the submissions were late. Fortunately, I am traveling next week, and was not out this week, otherwise we would have had a one page newsletter. This may be due to finals or other issues, but this is still a poor turnout for a group with over 150 members.

I could ramble on about how everyone needs to participate and everyone needs to help submit articles, but I have belabored that point in the past. Maybe this issue will show what this electronic newsletter will be like if no participation is forthcoming. And, of course, if the participation stays at this level, I may discontinue editing the newsletter all-together. In reality, that decision is up to you, the members of NAAA.

On a related side-note, I have gone back to calling it a newsletter, and not a magazine. That name will be left for the hardcopy report that will be coming out this summer. We need help on this as well, so if you can volunteer, your help will be appreciated. Contact Mike Moreau for further information. The decision on the naming convention was made by a discussion of the officers of NAAA, since there was no feedback from the members. If you have comments on this, take it up with the officers.

David Kalman
djkalman@pcisys.net

4. Where are they now?

For future issues, I suggest the following format for the submissions:

Name:

email:

Home contact info:

Work company:

Work title:

Work contact info:

Major work project(s):

Discussion (2-3 paragraphs, can be either or both personal and work related)

So here they are, GSFC Academy 3 (1995), in their own words:

Name: Karen Bottom

email: kbottom@mit.edu

Home address: 143 Albany St. #136C

Cambridge, MA 02139

(617) 225-8519

School: MIT, Mechanical Engineering

Title: Graduate Student (M.S.)

Discussion: Hi everyone! I graduated from Louisiana Tech University in May 1997 with my B.S. in Mechanical Engineering. After a summer off, I started my M.S. degree at MIT in Mechanical Engineering. For almost a year, I have been working in the Fluid Mechanics lab developing a computer program that models the fluid mechanics of blood flow through the cardiovascular system during the operation of an external cardiac assist (ECA) device. We are developing an ECA device that applies external pressure to a patient's legs, squeezing blood up into the heart while the heart is at rest. When the heart starts to beat, blood will flow back into the legs, allowing the heart to pump into a lower pressure reservoir. We are hoping to show clinically that the ECA device will provide temporary aid to patients with failing hearts.

On a lighter note, I am loving living in Boston. I must say that I have gotten more visitors in the past year here than I did during all four years in Ruston, Louisiana! (Big surprise!) Recently I have been enjoying the great weather by playing tons of softball, biking around town, and walking along the river.

Charlotte Brown

I'm stationed at Hill AFB, UT as a flight test engineer. I love my job which involves field tests on different components for the F-16 (example: new hydraulic pump). I'm also working on a Master's of Computer Science through Utah State. (In fact, I had a final tonight and a big project due Thursday which is why I haven't time to write).

-- Charlotte Brown
GSFC 1995

Enectali Figueroa-Feliciano

I'm currently counting the days 'till June 20th when I will be returning to Goddard to start working as a Science COOP program fellow. I've finally decided on doing low temperature detectors for X-ray astrophysics as my thesis topic. I'll be working with Andy Szymkowiak and Caroline Stahle in LHEA (code 662) about 3 months every year and the rest with Blas Cabrera and Arthur Walker at Stanford. I have about 3 years to go to finish my degree and move definitely to Goddard. In the meantime, I just bought an orange 1979 VW camper named Agatha, and my wife and I are planning lots of camping trips!!!

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Name: Eric Jackson
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3065 Rome St
Yuma, AZ 85364

Work company (or school): Univ of Arizona (just graduated, no job yet)
Major work project(s): Just finished a talk at AGU presenting the results of my thesis (thesis for physics, topic in geophysics)
Discussion: I just finished up 5 years at U of A, earning a B.S. in physics and a B.A. in linguistics. My future plans include getting married on June 14th (just weeks away!), and then spending a year in Taiwan as an English teacher. The purpose of this is to: (1) make money to remove any traces of debt, (2) improve my/our Chinese, and (3) spend some time doing anything but school. With luck, I can improve my Chinese to the point that I won't have to take extra classes in grad school to satisfy requirements of being able to read journal articles in a foreign language. This fall, both my fiancée and I intend to send off applications to grad schools, in the field of linguistics. I'm probably going to end up in computational linguistics, which ultimately means getting computers to talk like HAL. The schools of choice right now are UCLA and/or Stanford, so I may end up joining the NAAA contingent in Palo Alto. (Tali?)

Name: Jon Sims
email: Jon.A.Sims@jpl.nasa.gov
Home contact info: 25558 Fitzgerald Avenue
Stevenson Ranch, CA 91381-1278
(805) 255-6832
Work company: California Institute of Technology

Jet Propulsion Laboratory

Work title: Member of Engineering Staff

Work contact info: Mail Stop 301-140

4800 Oak Grove Drive

Pasadena, CA 91109-8099

Major work project(s):

Algorithm development for preliminary mission design of low-thrust trajectories

Mission design and analysis for advanced missions including Deep Space-4/Champion and Outer Planets/Solar Probe

Discussion: I was in the middle of my PhD program at Purdue University when I attended NASA Academy at GSFC during the summer of 1995. The following year I had a great time as president of Purdue SEDS (Students for the Exploration and Development of Space). One of our projects was flying some experiments on a Space Shuttle in Space Experiment Modules. I first learned about this program during the Academy - thanks go to the 1994 GSFC Academy for working on this program and telling us about it.

Following graduation, I went to work at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California. It's definitely an exciting place to work. About 6 months after I started, Pathfinder landed on Mars. My principal job function now is trajectory design, particularly for low-thrust interplanetary missions. I'm also working on a Discovery Program proposal.

On a personal note, my wife and I bought a new house in the Santa Clarita Valley, and we're expecting our first child in November.

Name: Jane Thorpe

email: mtjhorpe@ix.netcom.com

Home contact info:

4811 Ruatan St.

College Park, MD 20740

(301)982-4316

Work company: Lockheed Martin

Work title: Advanced Systems Engineer

Discussion: After SAIII, I stayed in Greenbelt to work at GSFC with my PI and Dr. Soffen. I returned to the Academy as an alumni staffer during the summer of '96. I have to say that being part of the staff was a lot different than being a student. It did have its perks though. I finally got to see a Shuttle Launch (the launch SAIII was supposed to see was rained out....along with most of the rest of the summer :)).

Last April I started working for Lockheed Martin as a Systems Engineer in Springfield Virginia. Consequently, I left the cozy confines of our "Academy" townhouse in Greenbelt to live in a Alexandria by myself. I didn't really like living alone so now I'm back in College Park and sharing a house with yet another Academy alum, Holly Offerman. I just can't seem to leave this place :).

It's great to be here in the DC area, especially during the summer. It's almost like being in the Academy again with all of the alumni here. If anyone comes to town, give me a ring, I'd love to see you!

Susan Welsh

In April, I finished my MSME from Georgia Tech (technically my graduation is in June, though.) Right afterwards, I started my new position at Hughes Space and Communications in El Segundo, CA. I work in Thermophysics and I really enjoy the job. So far I like southern California and it would be great to hear from any other alumni in the area. My contact information is:

2929 W. 190th Street, Apt. 234
Redondo Beach, CA 90278
(310) 793-9287
Email: swelsh@juno.com

5. Next Issue

Issue deadline: 24 June 5 PM MDT

Planned articles:

Officers messages

Denver reunion/dinner from June 10th (assuming it occurs)

AGU article (someone?)

Where are they now - MSFC Academy 2 (1995)

Other article submissions (it is your newsletter)

6. Contact Information

The following are way to contact the officers of the NAAA:

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