Reach for the Stars

The Great Basin National Park Foundation (GBNPF) is inspiring children to Reach for the Stars (RFS) while protecting and preserving resources on our one and only Earth! Great Basin area elementary and middle schools will have classroom visit opportunities starting this fall. Educators anywhere can access resources which include interactive lesson plans, activities, lab sheets, videos and slideshows for their classrooms through the GBO web portal.

We will be turning the best of our STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) lessons into traveling night sky teacher box kits and making them available for educators residing in Millard County, Utah and White Pine County, Nevada.

RFS has made excellent progress in 2018 with the hiring of a program coordinator, Aviva O’Neil, and a Southern University of Utah intern, Rowdy Miller. Aviva started testing curricula in classrooms this spring with Katrina Litke, a graduate student in Astronomy at the University of Arizona. The two met through Project Astro, a partnership organized by the National Optical Astronomy Observatory.

If you are a Great Basin area educator, or know an educator, and would like to schedule a classroom visit or participate in a training, please contact RFS program coordinator Aviva O’Neil at oneil.aviva@gmail.com

Thank you to our generous Reach for the Stars donors

Cashman Family Foundation
George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation
Great Basin Heritage Area Partnership
Jack Van Sickle Foundation
Robert S. and Dorothy J. Keyser Foundation
NV Energy Foundation
Concordia University, in conjunction with Global Science Directive, has been working with the Great Basin Observatory in the study of double star systems. It is believed that more than eighty percent of the single points of light observed in the night sky are actually two or more stars orbiting together in double star or triple star systems. Research has already resulted in several publications consisting of new observations, new methods, and foundational work for future projects. Previous data collected suggests to the Concordia research team that new orbital plots need to be created for several double star systems; therefore the group is moving towards learning the required techniques for making these calculations. In the ensuing months, Concordia University will be installing an eShel spectrograph at the GBO, allowing for detailed spectra to be captured from stars, greatly expanding the GBO’s capabilities.

Recent Publications in the Journal of Double Star Observations:
- An Astrometric Observation of Binary Star System WDS 15559-0210 at the Great Basin Observatory
- A Simple Method for Reproducing Orbital Plots for Illustration Using Microsoft Paint and Microsoft Excel