

Astronomy Camps stir enthusiasm for science

An ongoing program administered by the UA Alumni Association is a very successful series of astronomy camps. Faculty and staff from the astronomy department and the Steward Observatory volunteer their time as instructors. Begun in 1988, the popular camps have expanded to five: three for adults during the school year and two for teenagers each June.

The summer camps are open to students age 13 through 18 and are divided into beginning and advanced sessions. In both cases they are open to "serious students of science who have an interest in astronomy" and applicants must submit an essay to be considered for admission. The beginners write 250 words on "Why I want to Attend Astronomy Camp." The advanced students have a choice of five topics, including, "You visit a planet in a hypothetical binary star system of your choice. Describe how life on your planet would be different from that on earth."

The beginners spend three nights on the UA campus where they visit the Flandrau Planetarium and Kitt Peak. Then they move up to Mount Lemmon where they can use the 40-inch and 60-

inch telescopes and the 16-inch Schmidt camera and 61-inch telescope on Mt.

puter simulations.

The advanced campers spend all seven



Students at astronomy camp learn about rocketry as part of their curriculum at the UA's popular Astronomy Camp

Bigelow.

Activities include astronomical photography, spectroscopy, electronic photometry, CCD imaging and participation in various experiments and com-

nights on Mt. Lemmon to spend more time with the telescopes. They split up into teams to work on research projects which they present to the group at the end of the week.

The beginners camp can accommodate 30 students, the advanced camp 24, with tuition for each at \$485, including room and board. Some scholarships are available.

The faculty is world class. In addition to astronomers from Steward Observatory and Pima Community College, the students hear guest lectures by scientists from the National Optical Astronomy Observatories, the Naval Research Laboratory, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and the Planetary Science Institute. Graduate and undergraduate astronomy students serve as "camp counselors."

Needless to say, for most students the experience is an eye-opener. One teen attending the advanced camp wrote, "Only one thing was better than being under the serene skies [of Mt. Lemmon] and that was being under the serene skies with BIG telescopes!"

Parents write to express their feelings: "The camp was excellent...My daughter didn't want to return home when it concluded." "Jeff's interest in science and math has increased markedly."

The adult camps are similar but last only two or three nights. Tuition ranges from \$275 to \$350.

Astronomy Programs

High School-College Research Partnership

A partnership funded by the Research Corporation which hosts local high school teachers as summer research assistants in Astronomy as well as other departments. Dr. Donald McCarthy, 621-4079 or 621-

National Science Foundation allows high school teachers to earn masters degrees, tuition free, without disrupting their teaching careers. They take ten-week summer sessions for three years to qualify for an M.S. in astronomy, math, physics, or chemistry. Dr. John Cocke, 621-6540, or Chris Impey, 621-6522.

Department on research projects designed to further the students' area of interest and career aspirations. Faculty members volunteer their time to coach the students. Dr. Donald W. McCarthy, Jr., 621-2727.

UA Mirror Lab Tours

High school groups may

"Futures" Video Series on PBS

Three segments of this highly-acclaimed television series feature UA scientific research, including faculty from Astronomy/Steward Observatory and Planetary Sciences. The series won a Peabody Award and is being

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three years old, the courses are offered on alternate summers for 12 to 15 Arizona high school teachers. Initial seed money was provided by a grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and ongoing funding has come from an additional Eisenhower grant.

DNA Fingerprinting

"This is state-of-the-art education," says