A Busy Time Domain for LSST at the AAS Meeting

The Large Synoptic Survey Telescope (LSST) project was featured in a press briefing at the American Astronomical Society (AAS) meeting in San Diego on 11 January 2005, based partly on a news release announcing that funding from a private donor has enabled the LSST Corp. to award a contract to the Steward Observatory Mirror Lab to acquire the glass for the telescope’s primary mirror (see www.lsst.org/News/0501/050111.shtml). This news was reported by the Associated Press and the Arizona Daily Star.

Project Director Tony Tyson briefed the media and astronomy public information officers at the AAS meeting on the LSST’s major science goals, and Suzanne Jacoby of LSST Corp. discussed a variety of public outreach programs being developed to maximize the appeal of the huge data stream expected to flow nightly from this “telescope for everyone.” (See photos.)

Phil Pinto of the University of Arizona gave a featured talk on the LSST at the meeting on the following afternoon, in addition to a cohesive set of 28 poster papers that day on the project, and a lively exhibit booth throughout the meeting. PDF files of the talk and all of the posters are available at www.lsst.org/Meetings/AAS/LSST_AAS.shtml.

Take Me to Your (Project ASTRO) Leader!

Eighteen event leaders were trained at four recent “Family ASTRO” workshops conducted by NOAO educational outreach staff. The training workshops included instruction on how to best use several Family ASTRO kits, including Night Sky Adventure, Race to the Planets, and the newest kit, Cosmic Decoders, which uses color filters to teach about how alien messages might be decoded (see photo). The local Family ASTRO participants came from a variety of community-based organizations in and around Tucson, such as the US Park Service at Sabino Canyon, Discovery Park in Safford, the Arizona Virtual Academy, Flandrau Planetarium, Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation, and three elementary schools in Tucson Unified School District.