Media Advisory
September 21, 1999

TUUSD Students Join Authors and Astronomers in Solar Investigation

Students in Susie Townsend’s multi-age classroom at Miles Exploratory Learning Center, 1400 E. Broadway Blvd., will work with local astronomers and noted authors Joni Chancer and Gina Rester-Zodrow this Friday, September 24, at 10:00 am. Students will safely observe the Sun and then interpret their observations through art and writing invitations. Townsend’s class will be studying the Sun and its impact on Earth throughout the school year using a multi-disciplinary, inquiry approach to learning. The Sun is entering the peak of an 11-year cycle of activity, making this a particularly exciting time to investigate solar behavior.

Chancer and Rester-Zodrow, authors of Moon Journals: Art, Writing and Inquiry through Focused Nature Study, are in Tucson to participate in the fourth annual Project ASTRO-Tucson workshop, sponsored by the National Science Foundation’s National Optical Astronomy Observatories (NOAO), headquartered in Tucson.

Project ASTRO is an exciting program that links professional and amateur astronomers with teachers and youth group leaders in grades 4-9 to enhance the teaching of astronomy. Project ASTRO forms partnerships between astronomers and educators, in which both share their expertise to increase the students’ interest in astronomy and science in general.

Project ASTRO was developed in 1993 by the Astronomical Society of the Pacific as a pilot program in California and has now expanded to nine sites around the country. A coalition of organizations interested in local science education direct the development of Project ASTRO in Tucson. Coalition members include representatives from NOAO, Kitt Peak National Observatory, the University of Arizona, Tucson Unified School District, the Tucson Amateur Astronomy Association, Pima Community College, and Pompea & Associates. The coalition seeks funding to continue Project ASTRO-Tucson beyond this year.

Color images and additional information can be found on-line at: http://www.noao.edu/outreach/press

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