

THE YEAR OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM: OPPORTUNITIES FOR SCIENTIST INVOLVEMENT.

E. Halligan¹, S. Shipp¹, C. Shupla¹, H. Dalton¹, S. Buxner², D. Boonstra³, D. Scalice⁴, and Lora Bleacher⁵, ¹Lunar and Planetary Institute, 3600 Bay Area Boulevard, Houston, TX 77058, halligan@lpi.usra.edu, ²Planetary Science Institute, Tucson, AZ ³Sustainability Schools Consulting, LLC, Houston, TX, ⁴Science Mission Directorate, NASA, Washington, D.C., ⁵Godard Space Flight Center, Greenbelt, MD.

Introduction: Spanning a Martian Year – 23 months from October 2010 through August 2012 – the Year of the Solar System (YSS) celebrates the amazing discoveries of numerous NASA missions and offers opportunities for the combined efforts of the planetary science community – including researchers and education and public outreach professionals – to **raise awareness, build excitement, and make connections** with educators, students, and the public about planetary science.

Through the second half of YSS, newly launched missions will further unveil the secrets of Jupiter, the Moon, and Mars. Other robotic explorers will encounter comets and asteroids, journey to dwarf planets, and continue to unlock the mysteries of our Sun, Mercury, Saturn, and our home planet, Earth. These exciting missions continue to build upon the rich heritage of NASA Solar System Exploration that has taken place over the past 50 years.

Overview of Resources: The E/PO community has designed the YSS online resources in the context of monthly thematic topics that are tied to the big questions of planetary science: how did the Sun's family of planets and bodies originate and how have they evolved; and how did life begin and evolve on Earth, has it evolved elsewhere in our solar system, and what are characteristics that lead to the origins of life?

By visiting the YSS website, educators and scientists have access to educational products and activities, resources, and free downloads that present and/or support mission content in relation to the monthly themes. Each month presents these resources, activities, and events in the context of programming ideas through which formal and informal educators can engage the public.

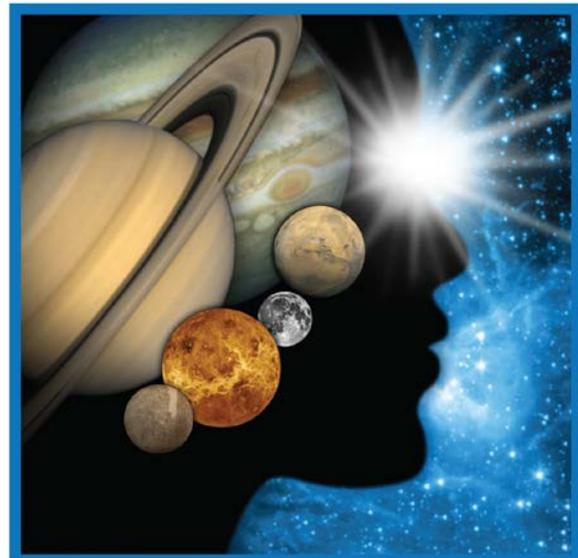
How to Get Involved: Planetary scientists are encouraged to get involved in YSS in meaningful ways by either directly participating or by sharing YSS and its resources with educators. Opportunities for involvement include:

- Taking part in the new monthly YSS Online Scientist Q & A
- Giving a talk at a local museum, planetarium, library, or school to share YSS and how your research connects with the amazing things we are learning about our solar system;

- Partnering with a local educational institution to organize a night sky viewing or mission milestone community event;
- Working with a classroom teacher to explore one of the monthly topics with students;
- Speaking with a local radio station about YSS and some of the exciting upcoming events;
- Connecting with a planetary science E/PO professional to identify ways to participate, such as creating podcasts, vodcasts, or contributing to monthly topics;
- Sharing your ideas for events and activities with the planetary science E/PO community to identify partners and pathways for distribution;
- And more!

Join the celebration!

Visit <http://solarsystem.nasa.gov/yss> to find quality resources and ideas. Connect with educators, students and the public to share the exciting planetary science discoveries as they are uncovered during the Year of the Solar System.



YEAR OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM:
NEW WORLDS,
NEW DISCOVERIES