THE YEAR OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM: OPPORTUNITIES FOR SCIENTIST INVOLVEMENT.
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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 educa-
tion 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 que stions 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:

• 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.