



CELEBRATING 120 YEARS

2009 FALL FUND DRIVE

October 2009

Dear Friend of the ASP:

It's my great pleasure to write to you today, encouraging your support of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific in its 120th anniversary year through the 2009 Fall Campaign.

I'm a planet-hunter by trade, and like most astronomers, my stock-in-trade is light. It's in the light of stars, spread into a spectrum of wavelengths, where I find the tiny, periodic variations in spectral lines that betray the presence of orbiting planets gravitationally tugging on their stellar parents. By studying the light, we astronomers shed light on what the universe is like and how it got there — and we're up to about 400 extrasolar planets and counting!

The Astronomical Society of the Pacific, with which I've been associated both as a former member of its Board of Directors and as an enthusiastic supporter, also specializes in shedding light — but on the entire universe. For 120 years, the Society's work has paralleled some of the most significant advances in our understanding of the cosmos — communicating, teaching, guiding, and inspiring.

The ASP accomplishes its good work through programs such as Project ASTRO, teaming educators and astronomers to improve classroom science teaching, Astronomy from the Ground Up to increase astronomy education capacity at museums and nature centers, and the Night Sky Network to provide materials and training to amateur astronomers in their public outreach programs. The ASP's professional publications provide opportunities for researchers and science communicators to share their work and discoveries with their communities and the public at large. And in this International Year of Astronomy, the ASP has contributed to the celebration through its online educational Discovery Guides, a new teacher professional development model to teach the process of science using Galileo's observations, and other resources.

The ASP does so with a sound operation, a balanced budget, success in grant awards, and a revitalized commitment to advancing science literacy through astronomy. But none of this happens without the essential support of people like you and me.

I recognize that this is a challenging year in which to give. But it makes your contribution more important than ever, to keep the Society moving forward in its worthy mission. I ask for your support with a financial gift during the Society's Fall Fund Drive — an investment in the next 120 years of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific's good work to advance astronomy, science education, science literacy, and to inspire the planet-hunters of the future.

Our stock-in-trade is light. I thank you for your vital contribution to support the ASP's enlightening work to benefit the future of us all, on the one planet in the universe we still call home.

Sincerely,

Geoff Marcy
Professor of Astronomy
University of California, Berkeley

P.S. Please invest in the ASP and our science future by making a gift to the Society today, as it celebrates 120 years of achievement!