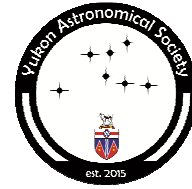


Royal Astronomical Society of Canada: Yukon Centre



367 Valleyview Crsc.
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 3C9
(250) 408-4838

yukonastronomicalsociety@gmail.com



Thursday, October 27, 2016

To Whom It May Concern,

The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada: Yukon Centre (Yukon Astronomical Society) mandate is to bring forward positive change to Whitehorse, and to all of the 18 communities in the Yukon. This new non-profit organization of 39 active and enthusiastic amateur and professional astronomers enjoy interactive and dynamic learning sessions in both French and English. We offer hands-on observation sessions, and public outreach events where casual and serious interests in Astronomy meet.

We like to say, "Instead of just mining down, the Yukon could also be mining up!", as there are many economic, commercial, industrial, technological, and educational opportunities for the Yukon in this yet untapped area. Astronomical methods can be used to find new fossil fuels, as well as to evaluate the possibility of new renewable energy sources (National Research Council, 2010). The aerospace sector shares most of its technology with Astronomy, specifically in telescope and instrument hardware, imaging, and image-processing techniques. Some of the most useful examples of technology transfer between Astronomy and industry include advances in imaging and communications.

The privatization of the space program, along with the proposed mission(s) to Mars, and the expansion of the International Space Station will soon offer Yukon's youth new career options and employment opportunities. Astronomy education can significantly help get them there! One of our members is currently in the process of becoming a Canadian astronaut herself!

The Yukon should also consider the growing world trend of Astronomical Destination Tourism (ADT), a type of tourism which can be labelled as 'special interest', but attracts everyone, regardless of age, sex or religion. It is an industry that runs year-round. For the Yukon, this is a potential gold mine given our long winter nights (planets, stars, galaxies) and long sunny summer days (our #1 star - the Sun), our unique geographical location, our excellent dark-sky quality (now threatened by global Light Pollution), the creation of infrastructure such as our new observatory at the Takhini Hot Springs, IDA certified Dark-Sky parks (in the Yukon: Kluane National Park and the Chadburn Lake Park), and planetariums, such as the one currently in Watson Lake.

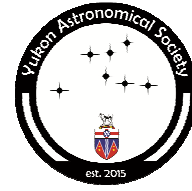
Astronomy education can help shape, innovate, and grow the Yukon. It can create jobs in the areas of tourism, industry, commerce, education, technology, and research. It can keep our youth in the Yukon, and, consequently, help us further grow on the international scene!

Astronomy added to the education curriculum, will encourage students to become active, responsible members of their communities. They will make valuable contributions to Canadian society, in terms of environmental, citizenship, and community activities. Astronomy teaches valuable life and work skills such as teamwork, leadership, innovation, resourcefulness, and citizenship. Astronomy and its related

Royal Astronomical Society of Canada: Yukon Centre



367 Valleyview Crsc.
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 3C9
(250) 408-4838



yukonastronomicalsociety@gmail.com

fields are at the forefront of science and technology; answering fundamental questions and driving innovation. Astronomy is interactive, fun, and dynamic. Most of all, it gives students the chance to discover the Universe, through their own eyes!

“Why is Astronomy important?” Dr. Robert Aitken, director of the Lick Observatory, shows us that even in 1933 there was a need to justify Astronomy, in his paper entitled *The Use of Astronomy* (Aitken, 1933). His last sentence summarizes his sentiment: “*To give humanity ever more knowledge of the universe and to help 'learn humility and to know exaltation', that is the mission of Astronomy.*” More recently, C. Renée James wrote an article outlining the recent technological advances that we can thank Astronomy for, such as GPS, medical imaging, and wireless internet (Renée James, 2012). In defence of Radio Astronomy, Dave Finley in Finley (2013) states, “*In sum, Astronomy has been a cornerstone of technological progress throughout history, has much to contribute in the future, and offers all humans a fundamental sense of our place in an unimaginably vast and exciting universe.*” The fruits of scientific and technological development in Astronomy, especially in areas such as optics and electronics, have become essential to our day-to-day life.

Astronomy has, and continues to revolutionize, our thinking on a worldwide scale. In the past, Astronomy has been used to measure time, mark the seasons, and navigate the vast oceans. As one of the oldest sciences, Astronomy is part of every culture’s history and roots. It inspires us with beautiful images and promises answers to the big questions. It acts as a window into the immense size and complexity of space, putting Earth into perspective while promoting global citizenship and pride in our home planet.

This election, we are asking all the parties, "What would your party do to support, encourage, and assist Astronomy in the North?"

Yours Aye,

Anthony Gucciardo
President
RASC: Yukon Centre (Yukon Astronomical Society)