

NSSEC Rice U Status Report – April 2020

Patricia H. Reiff, Rice University

- **Communication: work on determining next iClip underway**

HMNS is creating a new planetarium show on exoplanets and the possibility for life on other planets. We are working with them to create a clip that would be useful in their show but can stand on its own to distribute free under our iClips project. At present it appears the clip that is highest rated is the helicopter from Mars2020 mission making a flight across the landing area.

- **Education: “Astronomy for Teachers” ASTR503 underway**

The class has completed successfully, and the students only need to finish their final exam. We did have to adjust the homework to reflect no group observing. Six teachers will earn three hours of graduate credit and two will earn Continuing Education hours.

- **Education: International Astronomy Olympiad**

Graduate student Franklyn Pacheco submitted a paper outlining our experiences in the IAO 2019 as partial fulfillment of his requirement for the Master of Science Teaching. This is being reviewed by his committee (grades due May 15). (Writeup available on request). We decided NOT to participate in the IAO in 2020 because of Coronavirus concerns. The schools are not in session so the preliminary testing would be difficult, and the competition being in Italy in September does not seem to be a safe trip. We will reconsider for 2021.

- **Education: Stellarium and other online training for planetarians and teachers**

Dr. Reiff is hosting free online Zoom training for Stellarium, Space Update, and Space Weather for teachers and also for planetarium educators. So far 76 planetarians and 15 teachers have signed up for one or more trainings, and 46 have participated so far. The website for information and archiving is here: <http://space.rice.edu/nssec/training/>

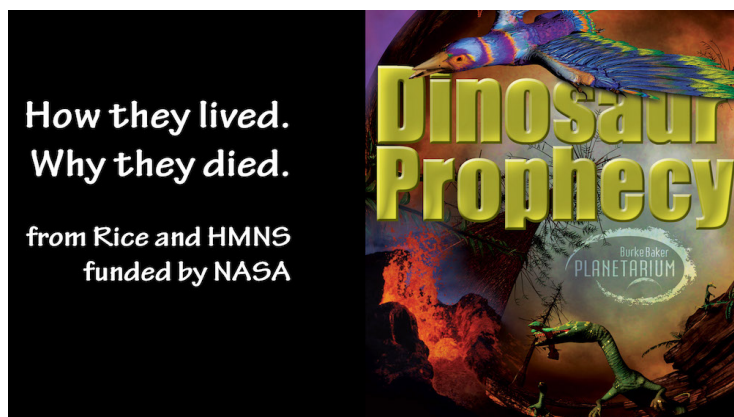
- **Cancellations due to Covid-19:**

NSTA National conference, Boston (April 2-4)

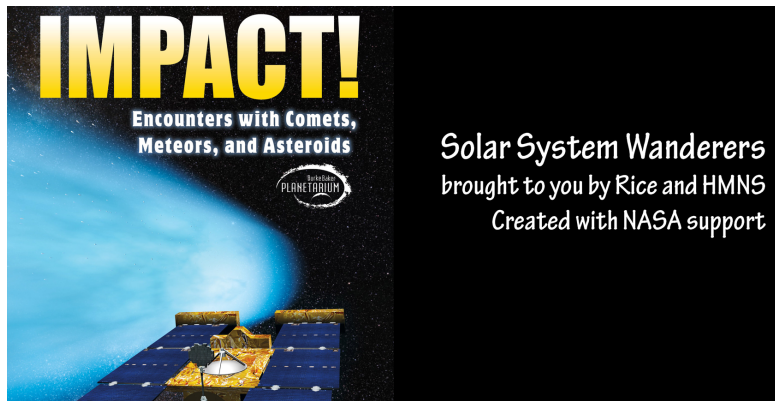
USA Science and Engineering Festival, Washington DC (April

- **Communication: Stellarium and other online training for planetarians and teachers**

Dr. Reiff is hosting free online Zoom showings of planetarium shows. In recognition of Earth Day, she started with her Earth Science shows, previously funded by the NASA Earth Science Co-operative agreements “Museums Teaching Planet Earth” and “Immersive Earth”, to use as a test to get optimal procedures and data rates. The first show was “Force 5”



on April 22 (26 signed up, 18 participated). The procedures were updated for the second show “Earth’s Wild Ride”, which had 156 signups (and maxed 96 people at a time). We have now scheduled “Dinosaur Prophecy” for May 6 and “Impact!” for May 13. More info here: <http://space.rice.edu/nssec/shows.html> . Signups are through Eventbrite: Dinosaur Prophecy (a cold case using fossil sites to learn about major earth events): <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/dinosaur-prophecy-planetarium-show-with-commentary-tickets-103983958820>



and “Impact!” (a show about comets, meteors, and meteorites): <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/impact-planetarium-show-with-commentary-tickets-103989106216> .

A writeup of the best Zoom streaming procedures will be attached to the May 2020 report to NSSEC.