

NITARP 2012 AAS Worksheet

Instructions: take notes as you go along through the meeting. Either before you leave, or within a week of getting home, send us an email (nitarp@ipac.caltech.edu) with BRIEF answers for each category, including any pictures you took that you want to share (but please don't drown us in piles of full-resolution photos!). You can include additional thoughts, or questions, for us too. This can be free-form and open-ended, but THIS REALLY IS IMPORTANT TO US... we need to show we did not pay for you to come here just to party!

Networking. A huge part of the AAS experience is meeting new people and making new connections. Of course, you have just met a whole bunch of new people as part of NITARP, but let's go further. At some point during the week, find a person to talk to that you do not already know (who is not in NITARP), but who might have some useful professional connections for you. EDUCATORS: find someone who works in astronomy education/public outreach (EPO). *Hint, hint:* there is an educator reception on Sunday night! STUDENTS: find someone who is offering summer opportunities for high school or early college students, or recruiting students to attend their school. *Hint, hint:* look at the array of exhibitor booths. EVERYONE: Who did you meet? Where do they work? (PEOPLE WHO'VE BEEN TO AN AAS BEFORE: did you run into anyone you met last time?)

Your science. Astronomers learn about new science results from their own field at AAS meetings. You need to do the same! (NEW FOLKS: By the time the meeting starts in earnest on Monday, you should have an idea of what kinds of science your team will be doing. FOLKS FINISHING PROJECTS: You should already be well-versed in your project.) Attend a science oral session relevant to your science. Who did you hear give a talk? List at least one thing you learned.

Find a science poster session organized around a theme relevant to your science. Invest some time looking at the posters in the session. Find a poster from which you learned a lot. Whose was it? Were they standing by it when you visited? List at least one thing you learned. *These next questions are directly relevant to what you will be doing with your poster.* What makes a good poster or presentation? What makes a bad poster or presentation? Was it easier to understand a poster if you had the author standing near it to talk to you about it? If you have a digital camera, you may want to take a picture of the good or bad posters, or the really interesting ones. NEW FOLKS: You may wish to discuss this within your team – you could all visit the same session and then discuss the good/bad posters and what you learned in terms of science and presentation skills – you will need this a year from now! FOLKS FINISHING UP: You have lots of time before our posters are up on Wednesday. Plan for everyone to visit the same posters on Monday or Tuesday, either as a big group or separately, and then reconvene to discuss the good/bad posters and what you learned in terms of science and presentation skills, because you will need to apply what you learned on Wednesday!

New science. Astronomers also learn about new topics at AAS meetings. Sometimes that comes in the form of attending plenary session talks – those speakers are specifically selected because they are doing innovative things and/or they know how to give a good talk. They also know to “start at the beginning” for people who are not in their specific sub-field. Attend a plenary talk NOT on your science topic! Who did you see? List at least one thing you learned.

Policy. One big part of AAS meetings is the policy sessions. Sometimes these are “town halls,” & sometimes these are explicitly “public policy” sessions. Find one of these and attend it. What were they talking about? What did you learn about the policy? Or about astronomer sociology?

Observatories. Many booths at AAS meetings come from observatories, or astronomical organizations that support facilities or resources, such as IRSA (the Infrared Science Archive) which maintains archives for NASA. Many PhD astronomers end up working at one of these organizations – not all PhDs end up as professors! They also hire people who don’t have PhDs. Find one of these booths and talk to one of the people staffing the booth – and no fair picking Spitzer, Kepler, or IRSA, since you should already be talking to those folks! What observatory or data set are they advertising? Pick up some freebies, if they have any. Could you use this telescope or data set in your NITARP project? Take a picture of the booth (and/or the person you talked to) if you have a digital camera.

Industry. Many booths at AAS meetings come from corporations who are in essence soliciting future business in the form of missions. Many PhD astronomers end up working at one of these companies – not all PhDs end up as professors! They also hire a LOT of people who don’t have PhDs. Find a corporate booth, and talk to one of the people staffing the booth. What educational background do they have – do they have a PhD? Are they an engineer? What missions do they work on? Pick up some freebies – the industry booths usually have the best stuff! Take a picture of the booth (and/or the person you talked to) if you have a digital camera.

Publishers. The last major category of booth is publishers. There are lots of books for sale! Sometimes they have special sales associated with the meeting. Don’t miss looking at those booths!

Education. Increasingly, there is a large educational presence at the AAS. Find an education oral or poster session and learn what kinds of educational programs are being described. Pick one you found especially interesting – what are they doing that you thought was particularly cool? Is this something you can use as part of the education component of your NITARP project?

Posters. You’ve already explored some posters above. Here are some specific posters we’d like you to look up. The numbers reflect the poster session such that higher numbers are later in the week. Some may be up after you need to go home, and that’s fine – see as many as you can. We’ll post them all on the web after we get home.

154.14 - Gorjian et al.

147.07 - Wiggs et al., “bonus” poster! ☺

425.05 - Rebull et al. (Thurs!)

337.05 - Johnson et al.

338.07 - Mehta et al.

348.01 - DeVeau et al.

348.06 - Burns et al.

350.03 - Linahan et al.

350.04 - Keeton et al.

Finally... What was the most interesting thing you did/saw/learned? Was there anything that happened that you did not anticipate? Did this experience change the way you thought about astronomy or astronomers or NITARP? Is there any advice you’d give the folks who are coming next time (new educators to the newer educators, or educators finishing up to the educators who will be finishing up and bringing students next time)? Or, advice you’d give us as the people running NITARP?