



DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL SPACE CENTER FOR EXPLORATION SYSTEMS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Public Invited to Virtual Talk Series Highlighting Women in Space Exploration

HILO – The Pacific International Space Center for Exploration Systems (PISCES), in partnership with Microsoft and the Hawaii Science and Technology Museum, will present a free public talk series highlighting leading women working in space exploration during the Hawaii Department of Education's fall break, Oct. 5 to 10, 2020.

Called *WiSE (Women in Space Exploration) Talks*, the series will feature daily presentations and Q&A sessions with leading scientists, engineers and explorers who are working on the cutting-edge of human and robotic space missions. The program is intended to highlight the work of women in space exploration, share the latest developments in space exploration missions to places like Mars, and inspire youth and the public through outreach and engagement.

The scheduled speakers include:

- Heather Bottom, systems engineer at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory who currently lives in Hilo and is part of the Mars 2020 Perseverance rover mission team;
- Nagin Cox, spacecraft operations engineer at NASA JPL who is the tactical mission lead for the Mars Curiosity Rover and the deputy team chief for engineering operations for the Mars 2020 rover;
- Emily Calendrelli, an MIT engineer turned Emmy-nominated science TV show host who is the co-executive producer of Netflix's *Emily's Wonder Lab*, and author of the science book series for children, *Ada Lace Adventures*;
- Sara Langberg, aeromechanical engineer at AeroVironment, who helped design the Ingenuity Mars helicopter (the first aerial flight craft to be tested on another planet)

which is now en route to the Red Planet together with the Mars 2020 Perseverance rover;

- Monserrate Roman, program director for NASA's Centennial Challenges and the lead microbiologist responsible for designing the life support systems currently aboard the International Space Station;
- Amanda Hendrix, senior planetary scientist at the Planetary Science Institute who served as deputy project scientist for the Cassini-Huygens mission that explored Saturn and Titan;
- Barbara Belvisi, founder and CEO of Interstellar Lab, a company focused on developing closed-loop villages and habitation systems for life support technologies that can be used on Earth and for space settlement.

Open to the public, the WiSE Talks series will feature daily presentations between 9 and 11 a.m. HST, including a 30-minute Q&A session. Young women, ages 25 and under, will be given priority during Q&A sessions. All are welcome to join and participate in as many talks as they wish.

For the schedule of events and to register, please visit pacificspacecenter.com/wisetalks.

About PISCES

PISCES is a state-funded Hawaii aerospace center under the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT). Based in Hilo, the agency is working to position the state as a leader in space exploration while developing sustainable products and technologies that benefit the Islands. Through initiatives in Economic Development, Workforce Development and Applied Research, PISCES provides hands-on work experience to Hawaii's future scientists and engineers, preparing them to meet the demands of a highly competitive industry while improving the local economy through job diversification, innovative products and new industries.

ABOUT DBEDT (Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism)

DBEDT is Hawaii's resource center for economic and statistical data, business development opportunities, energy and conservation information, and foreign trade advantages. DBEDT's mission is to achieve a Hawaii economy that embraces innovation and is globally competitive, dynamic and productive, providing opportunities for all Hawaii's citizens. Through its attached agencies, the department fosters planned community development, creates affordable workforce housing units in high-quality living environments, and promotes innovation sector job growth.

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