

Sabrina Stierwalt

Candidate for At-Large Trustee

Affiliation: Occidental College

Position/Title: Professor in the Physics Department

PhD institution: Cornell University, 2010

Areas of scientific interest:

Multiwavelength observations of nearby galaxies including star formation, gas kinematics, galaxy mergers; dwarf galaxies; luminous infrared galaxies

AAS and/or Division leadership positions and dates:

- Member, Demographics Committee, American Astronomical Society, 2023 – present
- Plenary Speaker, 241st AAS meeting, Seattle, Washington, 2023

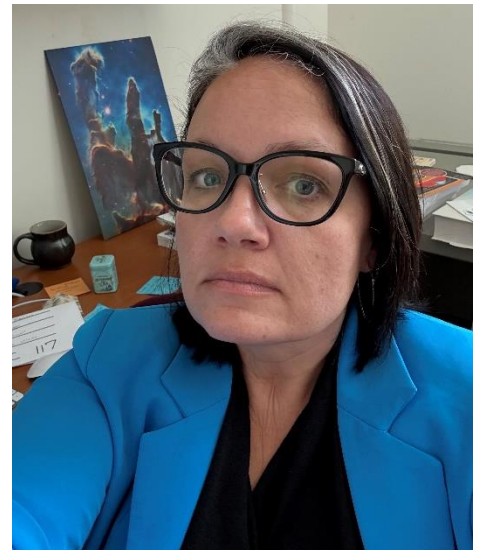
Other relevant positions, experience, and dates:

- Vice Chair, NASA Cosmic Origins Program Analysis Group, 2020 – 2026
- Co-Chair, Roman Users Committee, 2025 – present
- Member and then Chair, NED Users Committee, 2019 – present
- Board Member, Astronomical Society of the Pacific, 2022 – present
- Funding & TAC Panel Chair or Member for NSF, NRAO, and NASA
- PI for cross-institutional research programs funded/supported by NSF, HST, XMM-Newton, NuSTAR, JWST, Spitzer, VLA, ALMA, GBT, Gemini, Magellan, L'Oreal, and RCSA

Statement:

It is an honor to be nominated for the position of At-Large Trustee. Our present moment, with funding uncertainties and shifts in policy, calls for strong advocacy and intentional community building. As your trustee I will focus on promoting the accessibility of astronomy to a broader range of astronomers, preparing the community to successfully advocate for our decadal goals, and moving toward more sustainable practices in our field.

Astronomy thrives when voices from the community are involved in shaping priorities. As Vice-Chair of the NASA Cosmic Origins Program Analysis Group, I serve as a liaison between the community and NASA headquarters. In this role, I led several efforts that are directly applicable to the role of trustee. I planned town halls to make the effects of policy changes and funding cuts more transparent, developed a travel grant program for scientists of all career stages, and gathered community input to guide strategic planning for Astro 2030 goals. In these discussions



I am often the only one in the room from a primarily undergraduate institution. I co-authored the group's strategic plan and gained experience translating broad, community-inspired goals to specific actions. I organized a workshop that connected early career scientists to experts with proposal advice, information on how to get involved in the decadal, and pathways to careers in science communication. I would like to see such workshops become more regular events.

As our field continues to grow with new technologies and new ways to be a professional astronomer, all under funding constraints, the clearest paths forward will come from leaning into our mission. I have attended AAS meetings as a first-generation student, a researcher, an exhibitor, and a mentor. I have experienced how the AAS community welcomes, supports, and celebrates its members at all of those career stages. As a member of the AAS Demographics Committee, I saw firsthand how our efforts to design the biennial survey of community experiences were improved through communication with the CSMA and CSWA. In the role of At-Large Trustee, I will look for ways to lean into the things AAS already does well and to empower the groups already doing this important work.

It is important that AAS lead by example as a society dedicated to pursuing research in a sustainable way. I have been awarded grants to connect the sustainability research students do in my renewable energy course at Occidental to the needs of the surrounding Los Angeles community. I have worked with student groups that push for more sustainable practices on campus, practices that may be scalable to professional meetings.

My experience has prepared me to be a strong advocate in the role of At-Large Trustee. During this time of uncertainty, the AAS needs board members with strong voices that can hear the hopes and concerns of the community and look for creative, sustainable solutions, all while continuing to motivate the curiosity that inspires all of us to do what we do. I am ready and excited to serve in that role.