

Department of Physics and Materials Science

SEMINAR



Making Space Exploration Accessible to All

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Abstract: We have asked the question, “Is space exploration relegated to a limited number of people, or is it possible to make space exploration accessible to all?” The MILO Space Science Institute, led Arizona State University with support from Lockheed Martin, was created to test the hypothesis that we can create innovative ways to organize, fund, and conduct space exploration missions. These missions must be accessible to organizations with mature space flight heritage as well as those with relatively new, and perhaps growing, space ecosystems. MILO’s structured programs support capacity building and offer a collaborative model for countries around the world that want to increase their knowledge, infrastructure, human capital, and participate more deeply in the growing global space economy. We will walk through our own startup process and describe refinements that produced the current model. The lessons learned encourage us to continue building global space capacity and increase the number of people solving local challenges.

Bio: David Thomas is the executive director of the MILO Institute, a nonprofit research collaborative led by Arizona State University with support from Lockheed Martin. He attended the University of Memphis from 1991-1996, where he earned his MS degree in Physics. Following his time at the University of Memphis, he participated in a wide range of projects involving a variety of areas of physics. For the last decade, he has been involved in the “business of science,” building sustainable teams and institutes, with a goal to open doors to as many people as possible to address the leading challenges of our time. Thomas has built and led teams focused on directed energy, nanotechnology and materials science, executing research and development programs for the U.S. Department of Defense and NASA. At the MILO Institute, he is dedicated to making deep space missions affordable and accessible to universities and space agencies around the world.

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