



‘**IMILOA**
Astronomy Center of Hawai‘i



W. M. KECK OBSERVATORY
On the summit of Mauna Kea, Island of Hawai‘i

MEDIA INFORMATION

December 4, 2009

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“From Galileo to the TMT” Topic for Dr. Michael Bolte

Hawai‘i Island, HI –Dr. Michael Bolte will discuss the history of telescopes and astronomy discovery leading to plans for the Thirty Meter Telescope project on Thursday, December 17 at the Keck Observatory’s Hualalai Learning Theater in Waimea, and on Saturday, December 19 at ‘Imiloa Astronomy Center’s planetarium in Hilo. Both programs begins at 7 p.m. Space is limited to first-come, first served.

Bolte is the director of the University of California Observatories, or UCO, and a professor of astronomy and astrophysics at the University of California, Santa Cruz. His talk is titled “400 Years of the Telescope: from Galileo to the Thirty Meter Telescope.”

The Thirty Meter Telescope, or TMT, is designed to be the most powerful telescope ever built, Bolte said. Using an advanced Adaptive Optics System to correct for the blurring of the atmosphere, it will provide images that are sharper than those obtained from telescopes in space, including the Hubble Space Telescope. The large, 30-meter, diameter of the primary mirror will also allow observations of extraordinarily faint objects, such Kuiper belt objects and extremely distant galaxies.

TMT will be used to study objects with unprecedented clarity from the Solar System to the edge of the observable Universe. Bolte said that astronomers are particularly interested in the epoch of “first light,” when the first stars formed after the Big Bang and the discovery, and imaging and characterizing planets orbiting stars other than the Sun.

Bolte received his undergraduate degree in physics from the University of Central Florida, his masters degree in physics from Florida State University and his Ph. D in

astronomy and astrophysics from the University of Washington. After a postdoctoral position at the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory in Victoria, British Columbia, he was awarded one of the first of the prestigious NASA Hubble Fellowships.

In 1993, Bolte joined the faculty of the University of California, Santa Cruz with a joint appointment in the Astronomy and Physics Department and UCO faculty. He is currently a member of the W. M. Keck Observatory Board of Directors and the Thirty-Meter Telescope Board of Directors. Bolte's research interests include the formation of the chemical elements since the Big Bang, the early times in the formation of the Galaxy and astronomical instrumentation.

The presentations are part of the monthly Maunakea Directors' Lecture Series to commemorate the International Year of Astronomy (IYA 2009), a global celebration of astronomy and its contributions to society and culture, with events happening worldwide in 140 countries. Hosted by 'Imiloa Astronomy Center and W. M. Keck Observatory, the free Lecture Series introduces Hawai'i astronomy and the latest research being done by the observatories located on Mauna Kea.

The Hilo programs take place in 'Imiloa Astronomy Center's 120-seat planetarium on the third Saturday of each month during 2009. This special year-long program replaces the Center's monthly "Maunakea Skies" planetarium talks, which will resume in 2010. In addition to hearing the lecture, guests may also choose to dine before hand at 'Imiloa's Sky Garden Restaurant which will be open for dinner service from 5 pm to 8 pm. For dinner reservations, call the restaurant directly at (808) 935-8888.

Opened in 2006, 'Imiloa Astronomy Center celebrates both Hawaiian culture and Maunakea astronomy. Through its exhibits and program, 'Imiloa strives to share inspiring examples of science and culture together advancing knowledge, understanding and opportunity. The Center is located at 600 'Imiloa Place in Hilo, off Komohana and Nowelo Streets at the UH-Hilo Science and Technology Park. For more information, go to www.imiloahawaii.org or call (808) 969-9700 for recorded information, or (808) 969-9703.

The programs in Waimea take place at the W. M. Keck Observatory headquarters in the Hualalai Learning Theater at 65-1120 Mamalahoa Highway. Keck Observatory operates two 10-meter optical/infrared telescopes located on the summit of Maunakea. The vision of the Keck Observatory is a world in which all humankind is inspired and united by the pursuit of knowledge of the infinite variety and richness of the Universe. The Observatory

operates a small visitor gallery at the telescopes and an information center at headquarters open to the public from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information, visit www.keckobservatory.org or call (808) 881-3827.

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