

# Graduate Student Committee report to the CASCA Board December 2007

## I. Current Membership of the Graduate Student Committee

The current members of the graduate student committee and their university affiliations are:

Kelsey Hoffman, Chair (University of British Columbia)  
Pamela Klaassen, Secretary (McMaster University)  
Mohaddesse Azimlu, Education Committee Rep. (University of Waterloo)  
Alyssa Moldowan (University of Western Ontario)  
Sukhpreet Guram (University of Calgary)  
Helen Kirk (University of Victoria)  
Ali Reza Rafiee (York University)  
Louise Edwards (L'Université Laval)  
Pascal Elahi (Queen's University)  
Laura Fissel (University of Toronto)  
Daniel O'Donnell (McGill University)  
Catherine Lovekin (Saint Mary's University)  
Mike Hillier (University of Waterloo)  
Pier-Emmanuel Tremblay (Université de Montréal)  
Theresa Wiegert (University of Manitoba)  
Colin Folsom (RMC/Queen's)  
Locke Spencer (University of Lethbridge)

We would like to welcome Pier-Emmanuel Tremblay, Mike Hillier, Locke Spencer, Laura Fissel, and Ali Raza Rafiee to the committee and thank our outgoing members.

## II. The 2007 Graduate Student Workshop and General Meeting, Kingston

The CASCA Graduate Student Workshop was held prior to the start of the annual CASCA meeting on Tuesday, June 5. The theme for this year's workshop was *Astronomy Through the Ages: A Grad Student's Perspective*. The graduate students at Queens and the Royal Military Collage, including GSC member Colin Folsom, did a fantastic job organizing the workshop. The morning talks focused on the history of astronomy as well as current hot topics, while in the afternoon there were sessions on public outreach, alternate careers in astronomy, astrophotography and the SDSS interface. Workshop turnout was high, with many of the students who attended CASCA also attending some or all of the day's events.

After the workshop the Annual General Meeting was held. Several issues were addressed, which will be discussed in more detail below.

### **III. Planning for the 2008 Graduate Student Workshop in Victoria, British Columbia**

Preparations for next year's Graduate Student workshop are underway. The workshop will take place in the conference center the day before CASCA begins. The theme has yet to be finalized but topics to be covered in the workshop include: statistics, proposal writing, and Year of Astronomy involvement.

### **IV. Student Awards**

The Graduate Student Committee first awarded student-voted awards to top student poster and talk contributions at the 2005 CASCA meeting held in Montreal. We again awarded prizes this year, and congratulate Kristen Woodley (McMaster) for winning the award for best talk for her contribution titled 'Kinematics and Dynamics of the Globular Clusters and Planetary Nebulae in the Nearby Elliptical, NGC 5128'. We also congratulate Mohaddesseh Azimlu (U. Waterloo) for winning the best poster prized for the her contribution, 'Star Formation in Hot Regions'. It was determined at the AGM that we would once again use a ballot system to select the winners.

### **V. Suggestions for Summer School Topics**

At the AGM in Kingston we asked the graduate students for suggestions of topics which would hold interest for future summer schools. The suggestions included: Cosmology, AGN, astroseismology, origins of lie, star clusters, radiative transfer, and stellar evolution and nucleosynthesis.

### **VI. Web Pages**

The GSC currently has a webpage hosted at McMaster. It is, however, extremely out of date. Traditionally a student volunteer has hosted the webpage at their home institution, but this requires the home address to change as students graduate. As a result the GSC will be investigating the possibility of finding a permanent home for the website.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelsey Hoffman  
Graduate Student Committee Chair  
6 December 2007