

David Alan Oesper

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Career Goals

To do astronomy full-time, of course! Interests include observing, data analysis, teaching, curriculum development, writing, and promoting environmentally-friendly outdoor lighting.

Commentary

The greatest frustration of my professional career has been having a much better than average aptitude, knowledge, and interest in the physical sciences and mathematics yet never having an opportunity to use or develop those skills in any permanent position I have ever held. Apparently, we live in a society that in general does not value such skills, as evidenced by the lack of career opportunities, especially in the rural midwest, which still has a reasonably good view of the night sky. 'Tis a bitter irony that almost all astronomy positions are located in light-polluted cities!

Education

Iowa State University - Ames, Iowa: B.S. in Space Science (1980)

Teacher Education (2000-2002); GPA 3.31

Admitted to Graduate School (non-degree), Iowa State University, January 2002

Admitted to MS degree program, Math Education, ISU, December 2002

Admitted to Interdisciplinary Graduate Studies MS degree program in

Astronomy Education (individualized program) at ISU in October 2003

Primary Employment

Lands' End, 5 Lands' End Lane, Dodgeville, Wisconsin (2005-present)

SAS Programmer II, Integrated Marketing—Business Analytics

Extensive SAS data mining and reporting experience, including a great deal of PROC SQL and SAS Macro language, on a zOS mainframe, under Sun Solaris Unix, and Windows.

In late 2007 and early 2008, was instrumental in helping all Lands' End SAS users transition from the mainframe to a Unix Sun Solaris system and have thus developed quite a bit of Unix proficiency. In 2008, worked extensively on web analytics, including the characterization of web behaviors, and assisted with e-mail marketing activities.

Iowa Department of Transportation, 800 Lincoln Way, Ames, Iowa (1984-2005)

Full Time: Programmer/Analyst (1984); Systems Analyst (1988);

Information Technology Specialist 4 (1997); Information Technology Specialist 5 (1997);

Computer programming and systems design, primarily the Pavement Management Information System, an engineering database of pavement condition & history data;

I have been programming in the SAS language continuously since 1985.

3/4 Time: Executive Officer 2 (2000), Office of Materials, Special Investigations

New position created for me to allow my return to school to get a teaching license;

programming and data processing for the Pavement Management Information System

Iowa State University, Physics Department, Ames, Iowa (1980-1981; 1983-1984)

Laboratory Supervisor I - Astrophysics Lab - Prof. Willet Beavers

Computer programming, data reduction and analysis, and astronomical observation; supervised several undergraduates employed for data reduction

Primary Employment (continued) **Technicolor Government Services, EROS Data Center**, Sioux Falls, South Dakota (1981-1983); *Computer programmer working on a number of projects in the field of digital image processing of Landsat imagery*

Secondary Employment **Outdoor Lighting Associates, Inc.**, 1208 Wilson Ave., Ames, Iowa (1994-2005) *Environmentally-friendly outdoor lighting mail order sales and consulting firm*

Celestial Software, P.O. Box 95, Dell Rapids, South Dakota (1982-1983) *Mail-order software business selling astronomical software for the Apple computer*

Teaching Experience **Observational Astronomy**, Taliesin, June - August 2008
Developed and taught this 35-hour course for high school students and adults.

Observational Astronomy, Friendship Center Camp, June - August 2007
Developed and taught this 42-hour course for high school students and adults.

Observational Astronomy, Taliesin, June - July 2007
Developed and taught this 21-hour course for architecture students and the general public.

Observational Astronomy, Blackhawk Lake Recreation Area, June - August 2006
Developed and taught this 42-hour course for high school students and adults.

Introduction to Astronomy, Dodgeville High School, January - March 2006;
January - March 2007
Developed and taught this 18-hour course for high school students and adults.

Topics in Mathematical Astronomy, Dodgeville High School, January - March 2008
Developed and taught this 18-hour course for high school students and adults.

Iowa State University, Department of Physics & Astronomy, Teaching Assistant
Fall 2000: Astro 150, *Stars, Galaxies, and Cosmology* - Dr. Steve Kawaler
Spring 2001: Astro 120, *The Sky and the Solar System* - Dr. Phil Appleton
Spring 2004: Astro 120, *The Sky and the Solar System* -
Drs. Guillermo Gonzalez & Charles Kerton
Fall 2001: Physics 112, *General Physics II* - Dr. David Meltzer
Spring 2002, Fall 2002, Spring 2003, Spring 2005:
Astro 125L, *Observational Astronomy Laboratory* - Dr. Lee Anne Willson
Fall 2003, Spring 2004:
Astro 125L, *Observational Astronomy Laboratory* - Dr. Guillermo Gonzalez
(I revised the course workbook in Summer 2003.)
Fall 2004: Astro 344L, *Observational Astronomy Laboratory* - Dr. Guillermo Gonzalez
(for physical science and engineering majors)

Iowa State University, Office of Precollegiate Programs, Instructor & Course Developer
Summer 2004: Explorations! Short Course, *Introduction to Astronomy*
Summer 2004: Adventures! Short Course, *Stars, Planets, and Space Exploration*

**Teaching
Experience**
(continued)

Story County Conservation Center, McFarland Park Observatory
Developed and taught *Observational Astronomy*, June-August 2002, June-August 2003

Iowa Department of Transportation, Developed & taught *Fundamentals of SAS Programming* class 9/97, 3/98, 4/98, 12/98, 5/99, and 2/01

Ames Public Library, 515 Douglas Ave., Ames, Iowa - **Adult Education**
Developed & taught an astronomy course, *Introduction to Astronomy*, in 1990 & 1991

Accomplishments

Ames Area Amateur Astronomers (AAAA) (1979-2005)
President 1984-1985, 1988-1991, 1993; Vice President 1981, 1983; Educational Outreach Coordinator 1994-2000; Newsletter Editor 1983-1989, interim 1992 and 1997-1998; Publicity Secretary 1992; Dark-Sky Preservation Coordinator 2002-2004

Ames International Orchestra Festival Association (AIOFA)
Board member 1997-2004; President 2000-2001, 2003-2004; Vice President 1999-2000

Educational Astronomy Activities (1979-present)
Provided telescopic viewing and constellation identification activities for the public, school, and community groups; slide shows, Powerpoint presentations; many presentations to elementary and secondary students; television, radio, and newspaper interviews: astronomy, outdoor lighting, and dark-sky issues; featured on *Living in Iowa* on Iowa Public Television (February 1998)

Garst Farm Resorts, Coon Rapids, Iowa (1997-2005)
Provided astronomy programs to bed & breakfast guests, and others, two weekends each month at a dark-sky site near Coon Rapids, Iowa.

International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) (1994-2000)
Board member 1994-2000; Information Sheet Editor 1996-1999; awarded an Executive Director's Award in 2000; see <http://www.darksky.org> for more information

Other Awards Awarded a 1999 Conservation Award by the Iowa Division of the Isaac Walton League for my dark-sky preservation efforts

Outdoor Lighting Code (1994-1999)
I was on the committee that developed Iowa's first outdoor lighting code; approved by the Ames City Council in July 1999.

Planetarium (1978-1980)
Developed and produced multimedia astronomy presentations for VEISHEA and other groups at the ISU Planetarium

Sioux Valley Astronomers (1981-1984)
Founded this astronomy club in Sioux Falls, South Dakota; President 1981-1983; Newsletter Editor 1981-1983; founded subgroup called Dell Rapids Association of Celestial Observers (DRACO)

- Accomplishments** *The Sky This Week* (1998-2005+)
(continued) Weekly astronomy newspaper column published in the *Coon Rapids Enterprise*, Coon Rapids, Iowa; + Now on the web at <http://www.skythisweek.info>
- Recent Observing Experience** Received an "A" in Astro 510, *Observational Astrophysics* at ISU Fall semester 2002. Instructor: Prof. Guillermo Gonzalez
In that course, and afterwards, I had extensive experience using the 24-inch research telescope at ISU's Erwin W. Fick Observatory to do CCD photometry and imaging, using the IRAF software package to process the CCD images.
- Publications** Beavers, W.I., Eitter, J.J., Ketelsen, D.A., & Oesper, D.A. (1979). Radial-Velocity Standard Stars, *PASP*, 91, 698-701.
Beavers, W.I., Oesper, D.A., & Pierce, J.N. (1979). Photometric Observations of Eclipses and Flare-Ups in V471 Tauri, *ApJ*, 230, L187-189.
Birney, Gonzalez, & Oesper (2006). *Observational Astronomy, 2nd ed.* Cambridge University Press.
Oesper, D. (1993). A Roll-Down Roof Observatory. *Sky & Telescope*, 85(5), 90-93.
Oesper, D. (1996). The Vanishing Night Sky. *Iowa Environmental Council Journal*, 2(1).
Oesper, D. (1997). Lost in the Stars. *Lighting Design & Application*, 27(12), 36-39.