

# UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH IN ASTRONOMY

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Smaller observatories, thanks to affordable high-tech computerized telescopes and sensitive electronic cameras, have morphed into powerful scientific research facilities. Every clear night undergraduate and even high school students around the planet conduct astronomical research across a broad spectrum: tumbling asteroids, pulsating stars, eclipsing binaries, planets transiting across remote stars, and sputtering matter as it spirals onto white dwarfs and neutron stars. Their research is published in astronomical journals. They inspire other students, and are welcomed by graduate schools.

Astronomer Russ Genet describes undergraduate research at smaller observatories, and two unique opportunities for local undergraduates, high school students, educators, and amateur astronomers:

- A Cal Poly conference June 22-24, *Time-Series Astronomical Photometry*
- A Cuesta College research class this fall, Physics Research Seminar, PHYS 93A



**Russell Merle Genet, Ph.D.**, is Research Scholar in Residence at California Polytechnic State University, Adjunct Professor of Astronomy at Cuesta College, and the Director of the Orion Observatory. Author of a dozen books and over one hundred scientific papers, he observes eclipsing binary stars and studies cosmic evolution. Russ, who pioneered the world's first fully robotic observatory (featured in the PBS special *The Perfect Stargazer*), was the 51<sup>st</sup> President of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific.