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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NRAO Program Designed to Educate Emerging Generation of Scientists Using Amateur Radio

The National Radio Astronomy Observatory program aims to engage BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ students in amateur radio as a gateway to understanding the electromagnetic spectrum.

August 8, 2022—A new National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO) program aims to educate emerging generations about the electromagnetic spectrum through an interactive, substantive experience with amateur radio. Funded by a grant from Amateur Radio Digital Communications (ARDC), the program Exploring the Electromagnetic Spectrum (and Why Amateur Radio Matters) will focus on broadening the excitement of amateur radio among BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ students.

Bringing together the expertise of the National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO), amateur radio enthusiasts, and subject matter experts (SMEs), the two-year program will:

1. Introduce two cohorts of students to radio technologies,
2. Engage these students in hands-on activities that will deepen their knowledge of astronomy, particularly radio astronomy,
3. Support them in attaining their Technician Class and General Class amateur radio licenses, and
4. Develop a scalable curriculum to be shared nationwide (and internationally) through Superknova, NRAO's online learning platform.

Students will learn about the very real ways in which the electromagnetic spectrum is a natural resource, every bit as limited and precious as the oceans and forests. They will

also learn how amateur radio is an essential part of our national emergency infrastructure, and a critical resource in times of climate change and pandemics. The program is expected to start January 2023, initially serving 10 students. According to Dr. Tony Beasley, Director of the NRAO, "Amateur radio continues to be incredibly important to the nation and global communications, and NRAO is excited to be working with ARDC to bring a new generation and diverse communities to the field."

About the National Radio Astronomy Observatory

The National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO) is a facility of the National Science Foundation (NSF), operated under cooperative agreement by Associated Universities, Inc. Furthering NSF's mission to advance the progress of science, the NRAO enables research into the Universe at radio wavelengths and provides world-class telescopes, instrumentation, and expertise to the scientific community. NRAO's mission includes a commitment to broader, equitable, inclusive participation in science and engineering, training the next generation of scientists and engineers, and promoting astronomy to foster a more scientifically literate society. NRAO operates three research facilities: the Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array (ALMA), the Karl G. Jansky Very Large Array (VLA), and the Very Long Baseline Array (VLBA), which are available for use by scientists from around the globe, regardless of institutional or national affiliation. NRAO welcomes applicants who bring diverse and innovative dimensions to the Observatory and to the field of radio astronomy. For more information about NRAO, go to https://public.nrao.edu.

About ARDC

Amateur Radio Digital Communications (ARDC) is a California-based foundation with roots in amateur radio and the technology of internet communication. The organization got its start by managing the AMPRNet address space, which is reserved for licensed amateur radio operators worldwide. Additionally, ARDC makes grants to projects and organizations that follow amateur radio's practice and tradition of technical experimentation in both amateur radio and digital communication science. Such experimentation has led to advances that benefit the general public, including the mobile phone and wireless internet technology. ARDC envisions a world where all such technology is available through open source hardware and software, and where anyone has the ability to innovate upon it. To learn more about ARDC, please visit https://www.ampr.org.

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