ASGSR NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2026

GATHERING MOMENTUM

Preparing for the 2026 Annual Meeting

Table of Contents

Welcome Message from Leadership: 2
Know Before You Go: 4
Don't Forget: 5
Meeting Program at a Glance: 6
Thank You to Our Sponsors and Exhibitors: 10
Policy and Advocacy Update: 11
Roaming Reporters: 11
Student Events: 12
Save the Date: 12
ASGSR President-Elect and Governing Board Elections: .. 13



2026 ASGSR Annual Meeting

December 2–5, 2026 • Crystal City, Virginia

1. Welcome Message from Leadership

Welcome to our special pre-meeting issue! This month our ASGSR Newsletter is devoted to sharing the preliminary program for our Annual Meeting in Crystal City, which is just around the corner. Preparations are nearly complete: The exhibit hall is full, registrations and room reservations are near an all-time high, and the technical program is packed end-to-end with advocacy on Capitol Hill, pre-meeting workshops, plenary presentations, parallel technical tracks, student networking events, and three poster sessions. In this issue, we're also sharing nominations and personal statements for candidates running for President-Elect and positions on our Governing Board of Directors. We hope you'll use this Newsletter as a resource for planning your week at ASGSR.

Looking back over the past year, it's hard to believe we've come to this point, poised to host one of our biggest and (we think) best Annual Meetings. When the Board convened for our first virtual meeting of 2026, we weren't even sure we'd be able to hold a face-to-face annual meeting at all. Recent cost increases have put our Society at serious financial risk, requiring us to reduce costs, restructure our annual meeting plans, and rebalance our income. We have also faced considerable uncertainty surrounding science across our nation, with changes having a particularly strong impact on NASA and our broad community of science, technology, and space exploration students and professionals. Despite these challenges, we came together with similarly impacted communities to advocate for NASA science and exploration and share stories of success and positive impact. Yes, our community has faced significant challenges this year, but we haven't shrunk from the task; we've risen to meet it. Today, we're bigger, better organized, and more synchronized than ever, ready to support NASA's ambitious goals to return to the Moon and commercialize Low Earth Orbit.

Thanks to you, ASGSR has come through the challenges and uncertainties of 2026 stronger and better prepared to serve our fast-growing community. We're building the foundation of technology, knowledge, and spaceflight capabilities that enables NASA's future mission success, increases demand for commercial space development, and accelerates the pipeline of talent and innovation that will continue our Nation's leadership in space. Thanks to you, our 42nd Annual Meeting is poised to be a great success, our community is strengthening and growing, and ASGSR is ready to meet NASA's call to action. Today, we are well-positioned to support you through whatever challenges and transitions come next. The future is bright when we work together, and there's never been a more productive opportunity to do so than at our 42nd Annual Meeting. We'll see you there!

2026 ASGSR Governing Board of Directors, Staff, and Student Board Leadership


Jeffrey Smith
President


Jennifer Barrila
President Elect


Michael Pecaut
Past President


Ellen Gertsen
Executive Director


Mamta Nagaraja
3rd Year Board

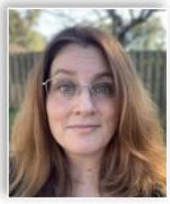

Imara Perera
3rd Year Board


Nicole Wagner
3rd Year Board


Debbie Wells
3rd Year Board


Cassie Juran
2nd Year Board


Amber Paul
2nd Year Board


Kelly Rice
2nd Year Board


Yuhao Xu
2nd Year Board


Sylvain Costes
1st Year Board


Bruce Link
1st Year Board


Rafael Loureiro
1st Year Board


Davide Marotta
1st Year Board


Sarah Velasquez
Ops/Membership
Manager


Mary Harrison
Meeting
Coordinator


Keith Chapes
Treasurer


Anna Wadhwa
Student Board
President


Simone Lilavois
Student Board
President Elect

2. Know Before You Go

We are very excited to welcome many of you to the 42nd Annual Meeting next week. We are expecting a full house, so here are some tips and tricks to get you ready!

Annual Meeting App: Download the meeting app to your phone to have full access to the latest version of the Annual Meeting program. Enter event code **ASGSR26**.

Hotel and Annual Meeting Location:

Crystal Gateway Marriott
1700 Richmond Highway
Arlington, Virginia, USA 22202
Telephone: (703) 920-3230

Registration Desk Hours: Have the QR code from your confirmation e-mail ready to speed up the check-in process.

- Tuesday, December 1: 2pm-5pm
- Wednesday, December 2: 8am-5pm
- Thursday, December 3: 8am-5pm
- Friday, December 4: 8am-5pm
- Saturday, December 5: 8am-3pm

Social Media Links & Policy: Follow ASGSR on LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, and X, where we'll be posting probing questions to get you ready for several of our plenary sessions and see the daily highlights of the annual meeting. ASGSR welcomes professional and respectful social media engagement during the Annual Meeting, including live posting from scientific sessions when permitted by presenters. Our official meeting hashtag is **#ASGSR2026.**

When posting on social media, attendees should:

- Include the official meeting hashtag: **#ASGSR2026**
- Credit presenters by name when discussing or sharing their work
- Respect presenter requests regarding photography and recording restrictions
- Treat all attendees, presenters, exhibitors, staff, and volunteers with professionalism, respect, and consideration
- Foster constructive scientific dialogue by critiquing ideas respectfully rather than attacking individuals
- Avoid sharing confidential, proprietary, unpublished, or sensitive research information without permission
- Do not share images of minors without permission from a parent or guardian

Photography Policy: Photography by attendees for personal use and social media is permitted at social events, in the exhibit hall, and in public spaces throughout the Annual Meeting. Photography during scientific sessions, lectures, poster sessions, plenaries, and workshops is also permitted unless otherwise indicated by the presenter.

Attendees are expected to follow these guidelines:

- Do not photograph individuals under 18 years of age without explicit verbal or written permission from a parent or guardian
- Respect the preferences of presenters who indicate that photography is not permitted
- Presenters may communicate a “no photo/no recording” preference verbally, through signage, or on presentation slides or posters
- When sharing photographs of presentations, slides, posters, or presenters on social media or elsewhere, presenters should be identified and credited by name
- Photography should not disrupt presentations or interfere with attendees’ ability to participate. Please do not use flash photography, block views, or move excessively during presentations
- Photographs of presentations, slides, posters, or other meeting materials are for personal educational use only and may not be reproduced, distributed, published, or used commercially without permission from the presenter or copyright holder
- Do not photograph materials labeled confidential, proprietary, or restricted

3. Don’t forget to…

- Bookmark your QR code for a speedy check-in
- Download the Meeting App
- Follow ASGSR on LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, and/or X
- Attend the open ASGSR Committee Meetings on Wednesday afternoon and complete the call for new volunteers
- Vote for your favorite artist in the Art Contest. Pick up a ballot at the registration desk and cast your vote for the people’s choice award!
- Vote for the next ASGSR President-Elect and Board Members (More info below)
- Check out the local businesses participating in the “Show Your Badge” program

4. Meeting Program at a Glance

Please note that the agenda is subject to change. The most up-to-date agenda is available online or in the app. Check back frequently for changes. ***View Detailed Online Agenda***

Tuesday, December 1, 2026

Time	*Event*	*Location*
7:00 AM – 8:00 AM	Members Assemble for Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill	Grand Desk
9:00 AM – 5:30 PM	Hill Visits (pre-coordinated)	Capitol Hill
2:00 PM – 5:00 PM	Registration Desk Open	Grand Desk
6:45 PM – 8:45 PM	ASGSR Hockey Night: Vancouver Canucks at Washington Capitals (tickets must be purchased in advance here)	Capital One Arena, Washington, DC

Wednesday, December 2, 2026

Time	**Event**	**Location**
7:00 AM – 8:00 AM	Coffee and Networking	Pre-function Space
8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Registration Desk Open	Grand Desk
8:30 AM – 12:45 PM	Pre-Meeting Workshops & Meetings	Salon Rooms
1:00 PM – 3:00 PM	Open to All: ASGSR Committee Meetings, ISS National Lab Advisory Committee Meeting, and Proposal Writing Workshop	Salon Rooms
3:00 PM – 6:00 PM	Opening Plenary Session	Arlington Ballroom
6:00 PM – 6:30 PM	Break	Pre-function Space
6:30 PM – 9:30 PM	Exhibit Hall Grand Opening, Investigator Poster Session, and Welcome Reception	Exhibit Hall

Thursday, December 3, 2026

Time	***Event***	***Location***
7:00 AM – 8:30 AM	Breakfast	Pre-function Space
7:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Registration Desk Open	Grand Desk
8:00 AM – 8:30 AM	Investigator Poster Session Gallery Walk	Exhibit Hall
8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Exhibit Hall Open	Exhibit Hall
8:30 AM – 10:00 AM	Plenary Session and Keynote	Arlington Ballroom
10:00 AM – 10:30 AM	Break	Pre-function Space
10:30 AM – 12:00 PM	Plenary Session and Keynote	Arlington Ballroom
12:00 PM – 1:00 PM	Lunch On Your Own	Local Eateries
1:00 PM – 2:00 PM	Plenary Session and Keynote	Arlington Ballroom
2:00 PM – 2:30 PM	Break	Pre-function Space
2:30 PM – 4:30 PM	Plenary Panel Sessions	Arlington Ballroom
4:30 PM – 5:00 PM	Break	Pre-function Space
	Fireside Chat	Rosslyn
5:00 PM – 6:30 PM	Parallel Technical Sessions	Salon Rooms
7:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Student and Early Career Opportunity Fair (Ticketed Event)	Skyview

Friday, December 4, 2026

Time	**Event**	**Location**
7:00 AM – 8:30 AM	Coffee and Networking	Pre-function Space
8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Registration Desk Open	Grand Desk
8:00 AM – 10:00 AM	Plenary Session and Keynote	Arlington Ballroom
10:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Exhibit Hall Open	Exhibit Hall
10:00 AM – 10:30 AM	Break	Pre-function Space
10:30 AM – 12:00 PM	Plenary Panel and Sponsor Spotlight	Arlington Ballroom
12:00 PM – 1:00 PM	Lunch On Your Own	Local Eateries
12:00 PM – 3:00 PM	Graduate Student Poster Session	Exhibit Hall

3:00 PM – 4:30 PM	Parallel Technical Sessions	Salon Rooms
4:30 PM – 5:00 PM	Break	Pre-function Space
5:00 PM – 6:30 PM	Parallel Technical Sessions	Salon Rooms
7:00 PM – 8:00 PM	25th Anniversary Student Board Reunion (Invitational Event)	Skyview
8:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Student Mixer & Board Elections	Rosslyn

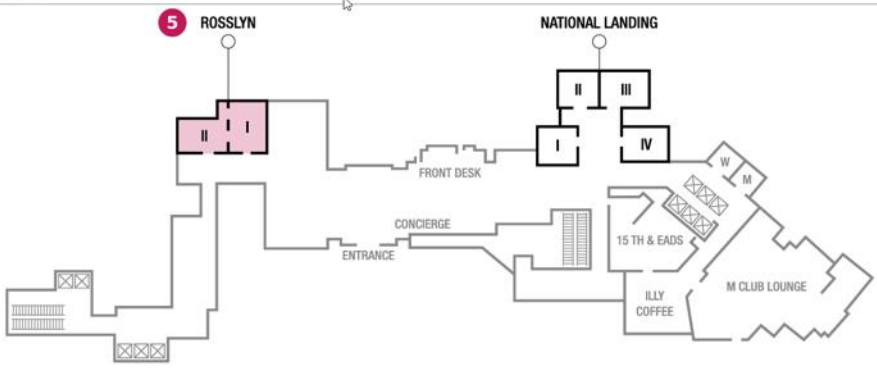
Saturday, December 5, 2026

Time	**Event**	**Location**
7:00 AM – 8:30 AM	Coffee and Networking	Pre-function Space
8:00 AM – 3:00 PM	Registration Desk Open	Grand Desk
8:30 AM – 10:00 AM	Plenary Session and Keynote	Arlington Ballroom
10:00 AM – 3:00 PM	Exhibit Hall Open	Exhibit Hall
10:00 AM – 10:30 AM	Break	Pre-function Space
10:30 AM – 11:00 AM	Sponsor Spotlight	Arlington Ballroom
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	3 Minute Thesis (3MT) Event	Arlington Ballroom
12:00 PM– 1:00 PM	Lunch On Your Own	Local Eateries
	Ask a Scientist (Ticketed Event)	Rosslyn
1:00 PM – 3:00 PM	Undergraduate/HS/MS Student Poster Sessions	Exhibit Hall
3:00 PM – 4:30 PM	Parallel Technical Sessions	Salon Rooms
4:30 PM – 5:00 PM	Break	Pre-function Space
	Fireside Chat	Rosslyn
5:00 PM – 6:30 PM	Parallel Technical Sessions	Salon Rooms
6:30 PM – 7:00 PM	Break	Pre-function Space
7:00 PM – 8:30 PM	Closing Ceremony and Reception	Exhibit Hall
8:30 PM – 9:30 PM	Karaoke & Networking	Exhibit Hall

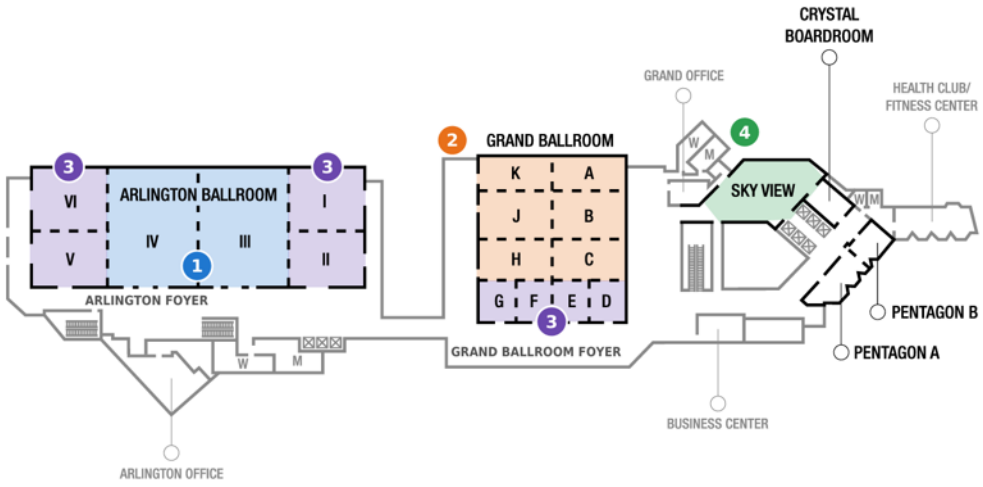
Meeting Space Map

42nd Annual ASGSR Meeting · December 2–5, 2026
Crystal Gateway Marriott · 1700 Richmond Hwy, Arlington, VA

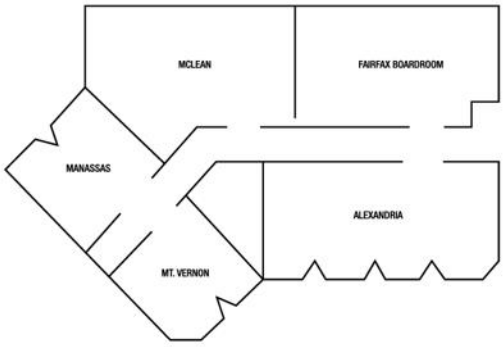
LOBBY LEVEL



FIRST LEVEL



SECOND LEVEL



1. **Arlington Ballroom III & IV** FIRST LEVEL
   Opening remarks, keynotes & panels
2. **Grand Ballroom A–C & H–K** FIRST LEVEL
   Exhibit hall, poster sessions, receptions & closing ceremony
3. **Session Rooms** FIRST LEVEL
   Workshops & technical sessions. Arlington Salons I, II, V & VI and Grand Ballroom D/E & F/G.
4. **Sky View** FIRST LEVEL
   Student & Early Career Opportunity Fair (Thu), Student Board Reunion (Fri)
5. **Rosslyn (Student Lounge)** LOBBY LEVEL
   Fireside chats, Ask a Scientist, Student Mixer & Board Elections

Registration (Grand Desk) is on the First Level. Coffee & breaks are in the Arlington Foyer and the Grand Ballroom Foyer.

Colored rooms = ASGSR event spaces (purple = session rooms). ⊠ elevators · W / M restrooms · dashed lines = air walls between salons. Not to scale.

5. A Thank You to Our Sponsors and Exhibitors

We are grateful to all of our sponsors and exhibitors who are supporting the Annual Meeting this year. **Make sure to visit our exhibit hall** to meet with our exhibitors and to check out all of the poster sessions.



6. Policy and Advocacy Update

We're kicking off the Annual Meeting with the ASGSR Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill on Tuesday, December 1, 2026. This is an opportunity to make sure members of Congress hear directly from the scientists, engineers, and students advancing space research possible. Every meeting matters, and the more members who participate, the stronger our message will be. It's not too late to sign up! If you're interested in participating, we encourage you to join us by signing up here!



Spring 2026 ASGSR Advocacy on The Hill: Simone Lilavois (VP, Student Board) and Mamta Nagaraja (3rd Year Board Member) on May 19th, visiting Congressional offices to advocate for NASA funding for Gravitational and Space Research.

To help you prepare, we'll host a Congressional Ops 101 webinar on Monday, November 23, at 12:00 p.m. ET. We'll cover what to expect and how to make the most of your meetings with congressional offices. Join our Teams Meeting here.

Can't attend the webinar? No problem! We'll post a recording on the ASGSR website after the session.

If you sign up for Advocacy Day, please stop by the registration desk at the Crystal Gateway Marriott between 7:00 and 8:00 a.m. on December 1 to meet your team and pick up materials for your meetings on the Hill.

7. Roaming Reporters

A few ASGSR students with a large "Press Badge" will be roaming around the annual meeting and may ask you to share a few thoughts either via video, photo, or a quote. If you feel comfortable, we encourage you to participate. The content will be shared via ASGSR social media channels—Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and X.

8. Student Events

Key Student Event Highlights:

- Student Fireside Chats—Thursday, Friday, Saturday, 4:30pm-5pm
- Student and Early Career Opportunity Fair—Thursday, 7pm-9pm *(Limited spots, tickets available first-come, first-served at the student booth)*
- Graduate student poster session—Friday, 1pm-3pm
- 25th Anniversary Student Board Reunion—Friday, 7pm-8pm *(Open to prior student board members!)*
- Student Mixer and Elections—Friday, 8pm-9:30pm *(Open to **all** students!)*
- 3-minute Thesis Competition—Saturday, 10:45am-11:45am
- Undergraduate, HS/MS poster session—Saturday, 1pm-3pm

***Student Merchandise**:* T-shirts featuring the ASGSR Student Design Award winner and quarter zips are back! Limited quantities are available—Stop by the student booth to snag one before we run out (we sell out every year)!

9. Save the Date for ASGSR 2027!

Next year ASGSR will be held November 3-6, 2027. Mark your calendar now and watch for the location to be revealed at our Closing Ceremony during this year's meeting.



10. ASGSR President-Elect and Governing Board Elections

Your voice matters, and now is your opportunity to help shape the future leadership of ASGSR. We encourage all members to participate in the 2026 election by reviewing the candidates and casting your votes.

About the Elections: ASGSR is governed by a 12-member Governing Board, whose members are elected to serve three-year terms. The terms of four members will expire in December 2026. In addition, we need to choose a President-Elect for 2026-2027. The candidates for this year's election are all highly qualified and will well serve and represent the Society.

How to Vote:

- All members in good standing can cast their votes in X-CD. Click here to log in
- Vote for 1 candidate for President-Elect and up to 4 candidates for the Governing Board
- Voting closes at 5pm ET on Thursday, December 3rd

Meet the Candidates: Please take a moment to review the candidate bios in the following pages prior to casting your vote.

President-Elect Candidates (2 nominees, vote for 1)

- Mamta Patel Nagaraja
- Luis Zea

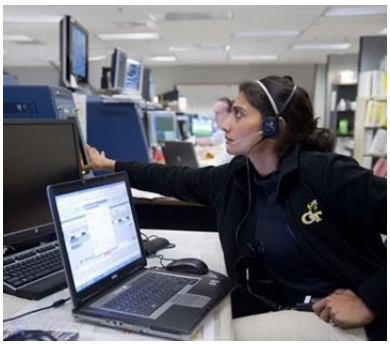
Board of Directors Candidates (9 nominees, vote for up to 4)

- Jordan Callaham
- Yu-Chien (Alice) Chien
- Lynn Harrison
- Sunjae Kim
- Ya-Ting Liao
- Andrew Palmer
- D. Marshall Porterfield
- Ryan Reeves
- Tara Ruttley

President-Elect Candidates

Mamta Patel Nagaraja

Vyoma Science & Engineering



Biography: Throughout my career, I've built bridges—between human and space science, between researchers and decision makers, and between ideas and implementation. That experience has convinced me that the greatest advances in space research happen when we connect disciplines, organizations, and people around a common purpose.

I've had the unusual privilege of spending a decade in NASA's human exploration enterprise and another in its science enterprise. I began my career studying the molecular mechanisms of bone loss during spaceflight, where my work expanded far beyond the laboratory. For almost 25 years, I supported human spaceflight operations, helped develop and operate planetary science instruments—including lunar missions, led NASA Science communications and engagement, and later served in the Office of the Chief Scientist, where my portfolio included Artemis science, Human Research Program, and BPS. I have also had the privilege to have interviewed twice to become an astronaut. Today, I serve as a Senior Science and Engineering Expert at The Aerospace Corporation supporting Moon Base.

What has inspired me most throughout my career has been the opportunity to help others succeed—whether by advancing science, building collaborations, mentoring early careers, or creating opportunities that enable others to thrive. As our community enters a new era of commercial spaceflight, Artemis, and expanding research partnerships, I would be honored to serve ASGSR as President-Elect.

Vision Statement: Space research is entering one of the most exciting and transformative periods in our history. Commercial platforms are expanding access to space, Artemis is opening new opportunities beyond low Earth orbit, and partnerships across government, academia, industry, and nonprofit organizations are reshaping how we conduct research. These changes present both challenges and tremendous opportunities for ASGSR.

Throughout my career, I have learned that the strongest scientific communities are built by connecting people—across disciplines, institutions, sectors, and generations. That belief would guide my service as ASGSR President.

If elected, I will focus on four priorities.

1. Strengthen the Society - Working with the Governing Board and Executive Director, I aim to expand sponsorships, cultivate strategic partnerships, and diversify revenue sources so ASGSR can continue to grow while becoming less dependent on government funding.
2. Invest in Our Members - Great science depends on great scientists. I aim to expand professional development opportunities that help early- and mid-career researchers strengthen grant-writing skills, explore diverse funding pathways, build collaborations, and navigate careers across academia, government, industry, and nonprofit organizations.
3. Expand Strategic Partnerships - I aim to strengthen existing and bring new relationships for ASGSR, creating opportunities for our members beyond the annual meeting.
4. Position ASGSR for the Future - As biological and physical sciences evolve alongside commercial space stations, Artemis, lunar exploration, and future missions to Mars, ASGSR should continue to be the premier interdisciplinary community advancing gravitational space research. Together, we can ensure our Society remains innovative, collaborative, financially sustainable, and welcoming to the next generation of researchers.

ASGSR's greatest strength has always been its people. Throughout my career, I have worked to build bridges between communities that do not always naturally intersect. If elected, I would be honored to help strengthen those connections while ensuring ASGSR remains a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable home for our community.

Luis Zea

Starlab Space



Biography: Every ASGSR member has a story about how they found their way into our field. Mine began on the other side of the laboratory, as an engineer helping scientists conduct research in space during the Space Shuttle era. Watching these researchers pursue questions that had once seemed impossible was incredibly inspiring. I remember thinking, “If they can do that, I can too.” That realization changed the direction of my career. It motivated me to move from mechanical and aerospace engineering into space life sciences, pursue a Ph.D. in Bioastronautics, and dedicate my work to understanding how biological systems respond to the space environment and how we may leverage microgravity to find novel solutions to medical problems on Earth.

Since then, I have had the privilege of contributing to 29 spaceflight research payloads, with experiments flown aboard the Space Shuttle, the ISS, and Artemis I’s Orion spacecraft. I have served as a principal investigator on several NASA-funded projects, co-authored and co-edited several books and 100+ scientific journal and conference publications, and mentored well over a hundred students across the world. Today, I serve as Chief Scientist at Starlab Space where we are building a commercial space station and a global ecosystem of microgravity users. Previously, I was an assistant research professor in bioastronautics at the University of Colorado Boulder and an entrepreneur as the founder of Jaguar Space, which I did to expand access to space for those who have historically had fewer opportunities to participate. I served in the Steering Committee on the preparation of the BPS Decadal Survey and in the ASGSR Board of Governors.

I have been a member of ASGSR for many years, and my own professional growth has benefited enormously from the community, connections, and opportunities that our

Society provides. I know firsthand the difference a strong professional society can make in a researcher's career and in the advancement of an entire field. This is why I am running for ASGSR President: to give back to the community that has helped shape my own journey, to serve our members, and to help our Society thrive through the exciting transition ahead. Most importantly, I want to help create opportunities for the next generation that many of us could only have dreamed of when we first entered this field. I hope that, years from now, another ASGSR member will look back on the opportunities this Society helped create and say, just as I once did, "If they can do that, I can too."
Vision Statement: We are entering the most transformative era in space exploration and research since the 1960's. The commercialization of space is opening new avenues for research and access to orbit, while NASA's Biological and Physical Sciences (BPS) program is expanding its reach beyond low Earth orbit toward the Moon and, eventually, Mars. Our challenge, and our opportunity, is to translate this unprecedented momentum into meaningful growth and new opportunities for ASGSR and its members. As President, I would work to ensure our Society is not simply adapting to this new era, but actively helping shape it.

If elected President, I would focus on five priorities:

1. **Connecting talent with opportunity**. Make ASGSR a stronger career resource for its members by using Society communications and networks to consolidate information and share jobs, internships, fellowships, mentorship, and professional opportunities across academia, government, and industry.
2. **Reinforcing the "A" in ASGSR while expanding our global reach.** Expand international engagement through partnerships with scientific societies, universities, companies, consortia, and space agencies to help members access international collaborations while preserving the ISS' legacy of peaceful, globally collaborative space research.
3. **Building our future membership: a global student community.** Establish ASGSR student chapters at universities worldwide, empowering students and faculty to organize projects, outreach, and professional activities. Embrace interdisciplinary and nontraditional career paths (e.g. business, pharmaceutical sciences, and law) and foster connections that can translate research into opportunities in business, policy, etc.
4. **Ensuring our financial stability with the new space economy.** Diversify ASGSR's income streams beyond traditional government-funded grants by building partnerships with commercial space companies, foundations, and other organizations, positioning ASGSR as a valuable partner to the growing commercial space ecosystem on Earth, LEO, the Moon, and beyond.
5. **Access to space for our members.** Support and expand current President Jennifer Barrila's *Research Pathways to Space* initiative, establishing

partnerships and practical frameworks that expand access to commercial and other spaceflight platforms for our members (for their research and themselves), including early-career researchers.

Board of Directors Candidates

Jordan Callaham

Astraeus Space Institute at the University of Florida



Jordan Callaham serves as Associate Director of the Astraeus Space Institute at the University of Florida, where he helps lead interdisciplinary research development, strategic partnerships, and initiatives that advance space science. Previously, she spent more than a decade coordinating space biology research, including experiments aboard the International Space Station and commercial suborbital platforms such as Blue Origin's New Shepard. Her experience spans research operations, mission development, institutional leadership, and collaboration with academic, government, and commercial partners.

As an active member of the American Society for Gravitational and Space Research (ASGSR), Jordan recognizes the Society's important role in advancing the scientific community and advocating for sustained research investment.

She believes ASGSR will play a pivotal role in achieving the goals outlined in the National Academies' decadal surveys. Beyond traditional advocacy and lobbying, Jordan sees an opportunity for ASGSR to strengthen coordination across universities, government agencies, industry, and scientific disciplines to turn national research priorities into actionable initiatives. She hopes to contribute his experience in research development, strategic planning, and partnership building to expand collaborative opportunities, support early-career researchers, and help position ASGSR as a driving force in the future of space research.

Yu-Chien (Alice) Chien

Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering Dept. at the University of California, Irvine



Biography: Dr. Alice Chien is a Project Scientist and Director of the Lasers, Flames & Aerosols Research Group in the Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering Department at the University of California, Irvine. Engaged in space research since 2010, her work focuses on fundamental combustion, clathrate hydrates, and multiphase phenomena in reduced-gravity and high-pressure environments using optical diagnostics. She has ISS spaceflight research experience and participated in the 2024 NASA Glenn Faculty Fellowship Program through O'STEM.

In 2014, Dr. Chien joined ASGSR as one of its first Physical Sciences researchers following the society's expansion and has remained engaged since. In 2018, she served as the lead and Earth operations scientist for NASA's E-FIELD Flames experiment on the ISS. She currently leads NASA-selected Physical Sciences Informatics (PSI) projects as Principal Investigator and contributes to the broader community through the PSI Combustion Analysis Working Group (AWG). She received the 2021 ASGSR Thora Halstead Young Investigator Award, and she serves on the National Academies' Committee on Biological and Physical Sciences in Space (CBPSS). As a candidate, Alice aims to strengthen ASGSR as a leading organization connecting researchers across disciplines, institutions, government, and industry. Drawing on her leadership as Secretary of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) Orange County Section and UCI Society of Women Engineers (SWE) advisor, she seeks to bridge scientific and engineering communities, expand opportunities for students and early-career researchers, and broaden participation in space research. She is committed to helping ASGSR grow inclusively, advance space science, and inspire the next generation.

Lynn Harrison

Department of Molecular and Cellular Physiology LSU Health



Biography: I am a Full Professor in the Department of Molecular and Cellular Physiology and have been a faculty member at LSU Health Shreveport for 29 years. I was educated in England and have a PhD in Radiation Biology. During my time at LSU Health, I have mentored high school, undergraduate, medical and graduate students. My research has focused on oxidative stress, DNA damage and repair, and mitochondria, and about fourteen years ago, I was bitten by the space bug. My research then extended into the world of NASA and ASGSR, and I have used a variety of model systems to study the biological effects of microgravity and space radiation. I have been funded by NASA, NCI, NIA, and Louisiana Space Grant, and have held leadership roles within LSU Health and external to the institute, including Councilor for Biology for Radiation Research, institute representative for the Louisiana Space Grant, and chair of the Beyond LEO Instrumentation & Science Series Science Working Group. From February 2023 to February 2026, I held positions of Deputy and Program Scientist at NASA's BPS Division at Headquarters in Washington DC during a three-year IPA (Intergovernmental personnel Act agreement). There, I worked with a team managing the Space biology Grant portfolio and developing the strategic direction of BPS. I interacted with space biology scientists, the ASGSR community, HRP and InSPA internal to NASA, and international space agencies and NIH external to NASA, promoting space biology research.

My experience working as an academic research scientist, a student mentor, and in the NASA BPS program office gives me a unique perspective that will allow me to significantly contribute to the governing of ASGSR, advocating for the members of the scientific community and the continuation of funding for research essential for deep space exploration. I have a passion not only for space research but also for student education and professional development of faculty. My goal in joining the Board is to promote space research and education. I have the experience to contribute to ASGSR

strategic direction and the leadership experience to work with the team to maintain a thriving ASGSR society.

Sunjae Kim

Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, University of Florida



Biography: Dr. Sunjae Kim is an Assistant Professor of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering at the University of Florida, where he directs the KIM Space Laboratory (KIMSLAB). He earned his Ph.D. from Purdue University, specializing in cryogenic two-phase flow and heat transfer under terrestrial, Lunar, Martian, and microgravity conditions. His research has involved extensive hands-on experience conducting NASA-supported parabolic flight experiments, totaling approximately 330 parabolas dedicated to advancing cryogenic fluid management. These pioneering experiments have generated fundamental insights into gravity-dependent cryogenic flow boiling and heat transfer, advancing predictive capabilities for propellant storage, transfer, and refueling technologies essential to NASA's sustained Moon-to-Mars exploration. Building on this foundation, KIMSLAB is advancing NASA-supported research in cryogenic propellant transfer, two-phase thermal management, and physics-informed computational modeling to address critical technology gaps for future space exploration.

Dr. Kim has attended every ASGSR Annual Meeting since beginning his doctoral studies, consistently presenting research and contributing to the society as a session chair and abstract reviewer over multiple years. As a candidate for the ASGSR Board of Governors, he seeks to strengthen the society's leadership in advancing gravitational and space research while bridging fundamental scientific discoveries with NASA's evolving exploration priorities. He is committed to providing technical and strategic guidance to align ASGSR initiatives with emerging Moon-to-Mars research needs, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, and expanding opportunities for early-career researchers. Drawing on his extensive reduced-gravity flight research experience, he aims to strengthen ASGSR's engagement with NASA and ensure that the society remains at the forefront of scientific discoveries enabling sustained human exploration beyond Earth.

Ya-Ting T. Liao

Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, CWRU



Biography: Dr. Ya-Ting T. Liao is an Associate Professor of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering and Faculty Director of the UL Fire and Combustion Laboratories at Case Western Reserve University (CWRU). She was a NASA Glenn Visiting Faculty Fellow during her sabbatical from June 2024 to January 2025. Through numerical modeling and experiments on various platforms, including NASA Glenn's Zero Gravity Research Facility and International Space Station payloads, Dr. Liao's research advances material flammability, thermal-fluid transport, and spacecraft fire safety across micro-, partial, and normal gravity environments. Dr. Liao is currently serving as a co-investigator of NASA's lunar fire experiment payload, the FM^2.

As an active ASGSR member since 2016, Dr. Liao has contributed to the society as a combustion session organizer, session chair, abstract reviewer, and conference presenter. If elected to the ASGSR Board of Governors, Dr. Liao aims to advance physical and life sciences research by expanding interdisciplinary studies across micro- and partial-gravity platforms to tackle critical challenges for Artemis and commercial space missions. Drawing from her track record advising SWE CWRU student chapter and mentoring student researchers, she is dedicated to empowering student and early-career members through targeted professional development activities. Additionally, she seeks to strengthen cross-sector collaboration between academia, NASA centers, and commercial space partners to build a vibrant community and sustain momentum for gravitational research.

Drew Palmer

Florida Institute of Technology



Biography: Drew Palmer is an Associate Professor at the Florida Institute of Technology with appointments in the Departments of Biomedical Engineering and Science, Ocean Engineering and Marine Science, and Chemistry and Chemical Engineering. He is broadly interested in interdisciplinary solutions to the challenges of bioregenerative life support at the Lunar and Martian surfaces. Regolith-based agriculture and the incorporation of plant growth promoting microorganisms into space crop production are primary research focuses of his group.

He has served as a member of the Scientific Advisory Board of the Plant the Moon Challenge for multiple years and is an advocate for Experiential and Problem-based learning approaches to address the challenges of space exploration. He has been an active member of ASGSR for approximately four years. If elected to the board, he would be interested in working with the membership, providing additional offerings such as research and career development webinars throughout the year.

Marshall Porterfield

Professor of Biological Engineering and Space Biophysics, Purdue University



Candidate Vision & Strategic Priorities: Having grown within the American Society for Gravitational and Space Biology (ASGSB) and the American Society for Gravitational and Space Research (ASGSR) over the past thirty years—beginning as a graduate student presenting at our annual symposia—I have experienced firsthand how vital this society is as the intellectual home, interdisciplinary forum, and unified national voice for gravitational, biological, and physical space research. As we enter the operational Artemis era, transitioning from Low Earth Orbit utilization on the International Space Station to sustained lunar surface operations and commercial low-Earth orbit destinations, ASGSR's leadership is indispensable. If elected to the Board of Directors, I will dedicate my service to strengthening ASGSR's strategic advocacy across NASA directorates, the National Academies, and congressional committees to ensure sustained funding lines, flight opportunities, and the faithful implementation of decadal survey priorities. Furthermore, I will work to deepen cross-disciplinary integration among biological sciences, physical sciences, bioastronautics, and engineering to address the complex biophysical challenges of long-duration space habitation, while expanding direct mentorship, travel awards, and career transition pathways for our student and early-career members.

Three Decades of Society Leadership & Service (1995–Present): My commitment to our society spans three decades of continuous service, technical organization, and executive governance. As the final President of ASGSB from 2010 to 2011, I had the honor of leading the historic reorganization and expansion of the society into ASGSR, uniting the gravitational biology and space physical sciences communities into a single, cohesive, multi-disciplinary organization while guiding national advocacy during a pivotal transition in federal space life sciences policy. My service and scientific contributions have been recognized by the society with the Thora W. Halstead Young

Investigator Award (2006), the ASGSB President's Award (2011), and election as an ASGSR Fellow in 2024. From 2012 to 2016, I was privileged to serve the broader scientific community as Division Director for Space Life and Physical Sciences Research and Applications (SLPSRA) at NASA Headquarters, launching landmark open-science initiatives including NASA GeneLab, and the Physical Sciences Informatics (PSI) repository, championed the development of the Cold Atom Lab (CAL) for microgravity quantum physics on the ISS, and co-led the execution of the historic One-Year Mission Twins Study.

At Purdue University, I serve as Professor of Biological Engineering and Space Biophysics, directing research at the interface of cellular biophysics, biosensing, and bioregenerative life support systems. I currently serve as the Science Principal Investigator for the NASA Artemis III Lunar Effects on Agricultural Flora (LEAF) investigation to study plant physiology, growth, and space radiation responses directly on the lunar surface. An elected Fellow of the American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering (AIMBE) and ASGSR, I have authored over one hundred peer-reviewed publications and hold numerous patents in spaceflight biotechnology and advanced microgravity platforms. Throughout my academic career, my highest priority has been training the next generation of space scientists and engineers, mentoring dozens of graduate and undergraduate researchers. It would be a privilege to bring this combination of continuous society dedication, federal executive perspective, and active spaceflight research to the ASGSR Board of Directors.

Ryan Reeves

Deputy Chief Scientist, ISS National Laboratory



For the past seven years, I have served as a Program Director and currently as Deputy Chief Scientist for the International Space Station (ISS) National Lab managed by CASIS, the Center for the Advancement of Science in Space. In this role, I have worked with scientists from academia, government, and industry to identify the most promising areas of research that can benefit from access to the ISS and spearheaded funding opportunities and program areas that allow the research community to maximize the scientific return of the ISS.

I have worked closely with NASA directorates and programs, including BPS, InSPA, and the ISS Program Office, to advance research opportunities and access to new research facilities on the ISS. My colleagues and I have also built successful partnerships with other U.S. government agencies such as the NSF and NIH and non-traditional organizations including industry leaders like Target and Estée Lauder and venture capital firms. These partnerships have brought much-needed funding to diverse research communities, including the ASGSR.

Prior to my work at the ISS National Lab, I researched nanotechnology to address energy challenges, including energy harvesting and storage. As a Principal Investigator, I won over $4M in grants from the DoD and DoE resulting in six patents. I hold a Bachelor's degree and a Doctorate in Chemical Engineering from the University of Florida and the University of Massachusetts Amherst, respectively.

We are approaching an inflection point in space research, with the transition from the ISS to commercial space stations and renewed missions to the Moon. I believe the greatest challenges facing the ASGSR community are sustained funding and continued

access to space. If elected, I will focus on two priorities:

1. **Educate stakeholders:** ASGSR should continue to communicate the research successes achieved in low Earth orbit and advocate for continued funding of NASA BPS and other critical space stakeholders so this important research can continue.
2. **Expand partnerships:** ASGSR should continue to pursue partnerships with non-traditional organizations to bring additional research funding to the community.

Tara Ruttley

Chief Scientist for Orbital Reef at Blue Origin



Statement: This is a critical time for the ASGSR community to think more broadly about where our expertise can have impact. Our members bring knowledge of how biological and physical systems respond to altered gravity and the space environment. This is expertise that can create new and broader opportunities for partnership beyond NASA, to include industry, other government agencies, universities, and emerging sectors that have connected with ASGSR through participation on individual ISS research initiatives but haven't engaged directly with our community in ways that advance the entire ASGSR research ecosystem. To meet NASA objectives, I would work to connect ASGSR expertise with NASA's priorities for Commercial LEO Destinations and lunar exploration, helping researchers anticipate emerging capabilities, identify research gaps, and shape science opportunities. Drawing on my experience across NASA and commercial spaceflight, I would help ASGSR build these connections, expand pathways for research funding and collaboration, and position our community not simply to respond to the changing space ecosystem, but to help shape what comes next.

Biography: Dr. Tara Ruttley is Chief Scientist for Orbital Reef at Blue Origin, where she helps shape science strategy and research capabilities for the next generation of commercial low-Earth-orbit platforms. She previously spent 21 years at NASA in engineering, ISS research, and agency science leadership roles, including serving as Associate Chief Scientist for the ISS and Associate Chief Scientist for Microgravity Research at HQ. Her career has focused on connecting researchers, engineers, operators, astronauts, government, and industry to enable meaningful science in space.

ASGSR Service: Dr. Ruttley has been an ASGSR member since 1997. Her service to the Society has included conference planning, participation in ASGSR Hill Day, leading the ASGSR art contest for several years, and current service on the ASGSR Technical

Analysis Group.