Astrofest 2023: Life After Ph.D. Panel
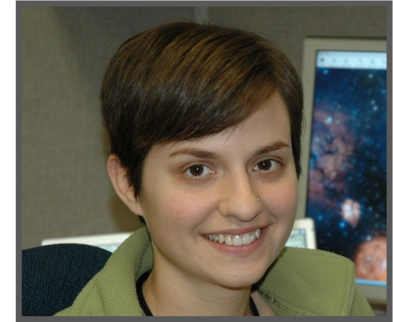

Dr. Alex Gagliano
IAIFI Fellow
Harvard CfA/MIT

Dr. Eric Morganson
Sr. Data Scientist
Caterpillar Analytics

Dr. Kartik Sheth
Program Scientist
NASA HQ

Dr. Ali Vanderveld
Senior Staff Machine Learning Scientist
Wayfair

Moderator: Dr. Cassie Reuter

Astrofest 2023: Life After Ph.D. Panel

Dr. Alex Gagliano
IAIFI Fellow
Harvard CfA/MIT
Cambridge, MA

CV highlights
Grew up in: Northern VA
Undergrad Institution: Virginia Tech
PhD Institution: UIUC
Thesis: Transient-host galaxy correlations
Now: Postdoc Fellow in Physics and AI

Bio: Alex deciphers the physics of explosive transients using machine learning. He is interested in identifying rare phenomena early enough to enable spectroscopic analyses.

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Dr. Eric Morganson
Sr. Data Scientist
Caterpillar Analytics
Champaign

CV highlights
Grew up in SF Bay Area
BS Caltech Physics
PhD Stanford Applied Physics (Astronomy)
Dissertation: *Measurement and Applications of the Faint Source Correlation Function*
Postdocs at MPIA & CfA, Staff Scientist NCSA

Bio: I lead the development of minesite simulation software at Caterpillar. This is in preparation for the electrification of mining industry.

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Dr. Kartik Sheth
Program Scientist
NASA HQ
Washington DC

Born: Mumbai, India
Grinnell College + B.A. Physics
UMinn. + MS. Physics (Thesis: Physics Education)
UMary + MS/PhD Astrophysics
Molecular Gas in Nearby Barred and Unbarred Spiral galaxies.
Postdoc - Caltech
Permanent Science Staff: Caltech
Tenure - NRAO/UvA (resigned tenure to go work at NASA)
NASA - Astrophysics and Earth Science (Applied Science)
White House Office of Science and Technology Policy
CEO/Founder - Empowered Earth Alliance

Bio: Science and technology policy + management of missions / R&D. Interested in transitioning to climate change solutions / advancing equity through empowerment

Astrofest 2023: Life After Ph.D. Panel

Dr. Ali Vanderveld
Senior Staff Machine Learning Scientist
Wayfair
Chicago, IL

CV highlights
Grew up around the Midwest
Undergrad in physics at UIUC (2001)
PhD in astrophysics from Cornell (2007)
Thesis on supernova measures of dark energy
Postdoctoral positions: Caltech/JPL and U Chicago
Tech jobs: Groupon, 2 startups, Amazon, Wayfair

Bio: Ali is currently the technical lead for the Search and Recommendations org, where she leads the development of real-time machine learning systems to determine what to show customers as they shop on a site with millions of products.