



July 8, 2008

Ryan Britton
Managing Partner
EarthSky Communications, Inc.
3500 Jefferson St., Suite 210
Austin, TX 78731

Dear Mr. Britton,

As an astronomer involved in Education and Public Outreach programs at NASA, I am acutely aware of the need for engaging and innovative curriculum and materials, which inspire students to learn more about astronomy and space science. It is this need, coupled with EarthSky's established and effective infrastructure for producing and distributing science education content, which makes me confident that the proposed Interactive NASA Science and Technology Education Pipeline (INSTEP) project will succeed. I have worked with the producers at EarthSky on a number of occasions; both as an interviewee in which I was able to communicate to the public my work as a NASA astronomer, and as a partner collaborating with EarthSky to produce science programs, which educated the public about astronomical events. As veteran science media producers and a longtime partner of NASA, EarthSky continues to offer NASA scientists the unique and valuable opportunity to speak about their work and how it relates to our changing world in their own words, engaging and inspiring the next generation of scientists in the United States. I support the INSTEP project, and see it as an exciting opportunity to collaborate with a quality organization to increase students' and teachers' understanding about the importance of earth and planetary sciences and heliophysics and astrophysics research.

Also, the multi-language and interactive focus of the INSTEP project has the potential to engage wide variety of students in K-12 education in a very new and innovative way; increasing students' science literacy by reinforcing new concepts through new media in both English and Spanish. EarthSky's dedication to identifying the most relevant NASA scientists, visuals and data, shows the organization's commitment to producing quality K-12 curriculum and supplements, which can actually impact students, teachers and the general public's understanding and engagement in NASA's mission and the successes of NASA scientists.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (301) 286-6953 or via email at Sten.F.Odenwald@nasa.gov.

Best regards,

Dr. Sten Odenwald
IACS - Catholic University
NASA