



A native of Hartford, Connecticut, Dr. Dana E. Backman earned a bachelor's degree in physics from MIT and a Ph.D. in astrophysics from the University of Hawai'i. He then worked as a post-doctoral researcher at both Kitt Peak National Observatory (Tucson, AZ) and NASA-Ames Research Center. After teaching physics and astronomy for 12 years at Franklin and Marshall College (Lancaster, PA), he returned to NASA-Ames where he is currently employed by the SETI Institute (<http://www.seti.org>) as the Director of Education and Public Outreach for the Stratospheric Observatory For Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA) mission (<http://www.sofia.usra.edu/>). Dr. Backman has co-authored several college-level textbooks on introductory astronomy with Michael Seeds. In addition to his SOFIA duties, he continues to teach introductory astronomy courses through Stanford University's Continuing Studies Program and conducts research on infrared observations of planet formation, models of debris disks around nearby stars, and evolution of the solar system's Kuiper Belt.