

Dr. Dana Edward Backman
condensed *curriculum vitae*:

Current Appointment (since January 2016):

Principal Investigator, NASA SMD Astronomy Activation Ambassadors project

SETI Institute
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Academic Degrees:

Ph.D. in Astrophysics, University of Hawai'i
M.Sc. in Physics & Astronomy, University of Hawai'i
B.Sc. in Physics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Professional Background:

2003-2015 Director of Outreach Programs, Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy
1999-2014 Adjunct Instructor of Physics & Astronomy, Santa Clara University
2005-2011 Adjunct Instructor of Science, Continuing Studies Program, Stanford University
1991-2003 Assoc. Professor of Physics & Astronomy (with tenure), Franklin & Marshall College
1989-1991 National Research Council Postdoctoral Fellow, NASA Ames Research Center
1985-1989 Postdoctoral Researcher & Support Scientist, Kitt Peak National Observatory

Most recent 1st-author refereed scientific publication:

D. Backman *et al.* 2009, "Epsilon Eridani's Planetary Debris Disk: Structure & Dynamics Based on Spitzer & Caltech Submillimeter Observatory Observations" *Astrophysical Journal*, 690, 1522.

Recent teaching history

OSHER Life-Long Learning Institute (Tour of the Universe I & II; Astrobiology)
Santa Clara University (Astronomy for Physics Majors; Introduction to the Solar System)
Stanford University Continuing Studies Program (Science of Global Climate Change; Cosmology)

College astronomy textbooks

(Cengage Learning, Inc.; with co-authors Michael Seeds and Eric Wegryn)
Foundations of Astronomy (15e) © 2026
Horizons: Exploring the Universe (15e) © 2025
Astro (4e) © 2025