



NEWS! From the **NAVAL OBSERVATORY**

U.S. NAVAL OBSERVATORY 3450 MASSACHUSETTS AVE., NW WASHINGTON, DC 20392-5420

U.S. Naval Observatory

Press Release

For Immediate Release

Information contact:

Geoff Chester

Public Affairs Officer

U.S. Naval Observatory

geoffrey.r.chester.civ@us.navy.mil

USNO Hosts Delegation From International Astronomical Union

On April 27, 2023, Dr. Debra Elmegreen, President of the International Astronomical Union (IAU), led a delegation consisting of the IAU Executive Committee, senior NASA officials, members of the National Academies, the President and Vice President of the Association of Universities for Research in Astronomy (AURA), and many of their family members, to the US Naval Observatory (USNO) for a tour and visit to the historical facilities.

The IAU is the pre-eminent professional astronomical society in the world. Many of the standards that relate to astronomy and geodesy, critical to USNO's work supporting the Navy, the Department of Defense, and the Nation, are set by the IAU. USNO employees are both IAU members and officers, and work regularly with the IAU as part of our operational mission.

The committee visited USNO's library, where they were able to view rare books, including contemporary works by Galileo, Copernicus, and Newton; the Simon Newcomb Time Laboratory, where they viewed USNO's Master Clock; and the 26" "Great Equatorial" telescope, which is currently celebrating its 150th year of continuous operations. They were also able to see our 130 year old 12" refractor, and view the Moon through breaks in the clouds.

The delegation included US Nationals, as well as citizens of Spain, Switzerland, Italy, the Republic of Korea, Japan, Ethiopia, Finland, Canada, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Argentina, Chile and France. Aside from the spotty weather, the visit went off very well, with a total of 12 USNO employees serving as hosts for the visit. It turned out to be a great opportunity to discuss with IAU what we do at USNO, and meet many of our colleagues involved with the governance of this scientific organization.



Members of the IAU delegation visiting the historic 26-inch “Great Equatorial” refractor telescope at the US Naval Observatory.

Left to right: Cristina Propescu, IAU Vice President; Tim Nicholson, spouse of Dr. Propescu; Monica Rubio, IAU Division President; Geoff Chester, USNO; Diana Worrall, Assistant General Secretary, IAU; Hyesung Kang, Vice President, IAU (partly obscured); Bruce Elmegreen, former Division President, IAU; Laura Ferrarese, Vice President, IAU; Heidi Hammel, Vice President, AURA; Debra Elmegreen, President, IAU; Richard de Grijs, Division President, IAU; Junichi Watanabe, Vice President, IAU; Madeline Smith-Spanier, IAU Secretariat; Brian Mason, USNO