



Greetings from the
University of Maryland's
Department of Astronomy!

Andrew Harris, Chair, Department of Astronomy, 18 September 2024



A. Surjalal Sharma, 1948-2024

Prof. A. Surjalal Sharma worked as space physicist for 41 years at the University of Maryland and was internationally recognized, notably for his pioneering work on complexity and self-organized criticality in plasma physics and on space weather prediction. His human qualities were also universally appreciated, particularly as an organizer and leader.

He received numerous awards, including the AGU Lorenz Lecture and fellowships from the Indian Geophysical Union, the American Physical Society, and the Fulbright Program.



Department of Astronomy

- 14 Professorial faculty with research in a broad range of astrophysics and planetary sciences, including individual collaborations with Goddard scientists
- Approximately 110 research faculty and postdocs, mainly engaged in the PHaSER and CRESST II NASA Cooperative Agreements and NASA-related projects
- Strong connections with the Departments of Physics, Geology, and Atmospheric Sciences
- A long history of collaboration with Goddard in space physics and high-energy astrophysics
- 12+ Astronomy grad students currently working with Goddard research advisors or scientists, including two NASA Pathways graduate students, plus others from Physics

Department of Astronomy: JSI

- A vibrant intellectual connection between Goddard Scientists, the Departments of Astronomy and Physics, and the College of Mathematical and Natural Sciences (CMNS) through the Joint Space-Sciences Institute (JSI)
 - Neil Gehrels Prize Postdoctoral Fellows
 - Studies of the transient universe with Goddard access to Lowell Discovery Telescope for followup; RIMAS spectrometer; Zwicky Transient Facility
 - High-energy astrophysics: XRISM, NICER, GRBs and GW followups, particle astrophysics in multi-messenger studies with Physics
 - AXIS (PI) and PRIMA (Science Co-I) Probe mission proposals

Department of Astronomy Research Faculty

- Cooperative Agreements at GSFC:
 - CRESST II, Astrophysics
 - PHaSER, Heliophysics and space environment research
 - Planetary
- Cooperative Agreement with NASA HQ:
 - Small Bodies Node of the Planetary Data System
- Paths to Civil Servant positions

Current Departmental Professional-Track Researcher Appointments

