

Focal Point in Ann Arbor

On Sunday, September 15, 2002, the Sally Ride Science Festival called "Reach For The Stars" was hosted for 4th - 8th grade girls and interested adults in Ann Arbor, Michigan by Dr. Sally Ride, the first American woman astronaut to travel in space, together with the Sally Ride Science Club and Veridian. And the Ann Arbor Local Chapter of OSA was there!



The event was held at the University of Michigan's North Campus and featured a keynote speech by Dr. Ride, discovery workshops, and a street fair with technology booths. Participation in the Michigan Festival was the highest ever - topping 900 registrants. Festival workshops in the past have included topics such as the different ways to get involved in NASA and space exploration, hands-on demonstrations of veterinary examinations of dogs, the mysteries of black holes and how astrophysicists search for them, how reporters write stories about science news and scientific discoveries, and the basics of radio and satellite communications. These activities are designed to engage girls in science adventures by connecting them to people, information, and attitudes that will nurture their relationship with science at a critical time in their lives.

Dr. Larry Peterson of the Ann Arbor chapter was part of the volunteer local organizing team. He is shown in the accompanying photo helping forensic scientist Marie Bard-Curtis of the Lansing Forensic Laboratory and several young participants using binocular microscopes to magnify microscopic forensic evidence. Dr. Peterson is an adjunct professor in the Electrical Engineering and Computer Science Department at the University of Michigan, an employee of Veridian and

an active member of OSA in Ann Arbor. Marie is one of several Forensic Laboratory staff members employed by the Michigan State Police force in Lansing who routinely help provide scientific evidence useful in solving important criminal investigations but who donated their time and effort to make this day-long learning experience a big success. The Ann Arbor OSA local chapter hopes to continue its participation in educational outreach activities of this type in future years.