

Chabot Staff Available for Media Interviews

Adam Tobin – Executive Director & CEO

Ben Burress – Astronomer

Conrad Jung – Astronomer

Eric Havel – Environmental Specialist

Adam Tobin, Executive Director & CEO Tobin joined Chabot in November 2016. Tobin was previously director of global studios at the Exploratorium, responsible for building partnerships and providing creative services to museums and science centers around the world. Prior to joining the Exploratorium, he was an award winning toy inventor and founder of two successful educational toy development and manufacturing companies. He holds a bachelor's degree from Brandeis University.

Ben Burress, Astronomer Burress has been a Chabot staff astronomer since July 1999, 13 months before the opening of CSSC's state-of-the-art facility. After graduating from Sonoma State University with a bachelor's degree in physics (minoring in astronomy), Burress signed on for a two-year stint in the Peace Corps, where he taught physics and mathematics in Cameroon. From 1989-96, he was a crew member of NASA's Kuiper Airborne Observatory at Ames Research Center in Mountain View, CA – the program which is credited with the discovery of the rings of Uranus. There he flew semi-weekly eight-hour missions above 41,000 feet (clear of Earth's troposphere) in a specially modified C-141 "Starlifter" military cargo plane in order to take infrared readings of astronomical objects. From 1996-99, Burress helped pioneer the Naval Prototype Optical Interferometer program at Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff, AZ, the facility where Pluto was discovered. The interferometer program, the first of its kind, allows astronomers to simulate a telescope of enormous breadth (and power) by combining readings from two telescopes in different locations. Burress is an accomplished public speaker whose unique style and easy manner cuts through scientific jargon and makes him a popular interview subject.

Conrad Jung, Astronomer Jung is renowned as one of the nation's premier astrophotographers. Three of his photographs – of the Trifid Nebula, the Pleiades star cluster and a total lunar eclipse sequence – were featured in a three-month Smithsonian Institute exhibition in 2006. Jung (the "J" is pronounced, not silent) is Chabot's longest-serving employee. He was hired in 1978 as a part-time teacher's assistant under Kingsley Wightman, the pioneer of Chabot's education program. Over nearly three decades, Jung has seen more than 150,000 students pass through his astronomy classes at Chabot. Jung has captured hundreds of images from the night sky over the past 30 years by marrying camera and telescope in a variety of creative ways. His Smithsonian exhibition was praised by that institution's curator of Space History for its ingenious rigging - a Canon 20Da digital SLR camera mounted on a rare 7-inch Schmidt-Cassegrain telescope.

Eric Havel, Environmental Specialist A Chabot Space & Science Center employee since 1998, Havel has spearheaded Chabot's intense focus on environmental issues since the opening of its state-of-the-art facility high in the Oakland hills in August 2000. Havel (rhymes with gravel) graduated from the University of California-Berkeley with a bachelor's degree in Environmental Sciences. He serves as the board vice-president for the Friends of Sausal Creek, a watershed advocacy group that works to preserve and restore Oakland's Sausal Creek ecosystem. He pioneered Chabot's EnviroGarden program after procuring a grant from Stopwaste.org and is the driving force behind CSSC's environmental teaching program, which now includes five classes for k-12 students. Havel is adept at breaking down complicated environmental issues and is an expert of a wide array of environmental issues, including: global warming; sustainable development; green design and infrastructure; watershed preservation; redwood forest ecosystems; and Bay Area ecology.

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Please email PR@ChabotSpace.org, to schedule an interview.

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Chabot Space & Science Center is a nonprofit interactive science center whose mission is to inspire and educate students of all ages about Planet Earth and the Universe. Founded in 1883, the Center is located at 10000 Skyline Blvd. just off Highway 13 in the Oakland hills. For more information, visit www.chabotspace.org.