

UM Department of Physics and Astronomy

SEPTEMBER 1, 2024

DEPARTMENT NEWS

STUDENT NEWS

Dipika Barman: Fall 2024 Global Ambassador

Dipika was selected as a Fall 2024 Global Ambassador. The [Global Ambassador Program](#) pairs international students with Global Ambassador student mentors to foster cultural understanding and community connections.

Lane Taylor: Sandia Labs Intern

Lane worked at [Sandia National Labs](#) in New Mexico as an R&D intern in the summer. Lane performed statistical analyses and inspection and testing of equipment. Lane is now working in a year-round remote position with Sandia.

PhD, MS and Prospectus Defenses: 05/28/2024 - 07/24/2024

Dissertations: Joe Rivest, Akshay Khadse and Saroj Pokharel. **Theses:** Paul Gebeline, Adnan Azwad, Wil Stacy, Dinura Hettiarachchi and Cody McCammon. **Prospectuses:** Bishnu Acharya.

New Graduate Students: Fall 2024

Our new students this fall are Logan Benninghoff, Tong Feng, Bibek Karn, Tanmayee Gujar, Gokul Sreekumar Nair, Samuel Junior Osei-Nketiah and Zahin Rabbi joining the PhD program and Harrison Roth and Nancy Sharma joining the MS program.

Harrison Roth and Zahin Rabbi: Incoming Graduate Student Awards

Harrison Roth was awarded a Graduate School Access Fellowship. The purpose of this award is to enhance access to graduate education. Zahin Rabbi received a Provost Elite Scholar's Program award. The purpose of the program is to recruit highly competitive graduate students to advance the research mission of the university.



Photo: Dr. Alakabha Datta at ICHEP

General Department News

- Dr. Alakabha Datta gave a plenary talk at the [42nd International Conference on High Energy Physics \(ICHEP\) 2024 in Prague](#) on flavor physics. ICHEP is a series of international conferences organized by the International Union of Pure and Applied Physics (IUPAP). Physicists from around the world gather to share the latest advancements in particle physics, astrophysics/cosmology and accelerator science and discuss plans for major future facilities.
- Dr. Nicholas MacDonald was appointed the American Outreach Coordinator for the [Event Horizon Telescope Collaboration](#). The EHT is an international collaboration that has formed to continue the steady long-term progress on improving the capability of Very Long Baseline Interferometry (VLBI) at short wavelengths. The goal of the EHT is to directly observe the immediate environment of a black hole with angular resolution comparable to the event horizon.
- Dr. Cecille Labuda just joined the [JASA Editorial Board as a new associate editor](#) for the Journal of the Acoustical Society of America.
- Katelyn Fitts recently joined the department as our new administrative secretary. Katelyn will be in our front office to help faculty, students, staff and people visiting the department. Welcome Katelyn!
- Drs. Akshay Khadse and Saroj Pokharel have joined the department as instructors.
- Ray Siedlecki, Dr. David Sanders, and web developer Dave Cantwell have written and launched a [new physics lab website](#). The site will provide substantial improvements to content accessibility for our students and teaching assistants.

Events

- Dr. Anuradha Gupta will be running several Astronomy Gig outreach events this fall semester. Astronomy Gigs run in parallel with the monthly Sunday night Astronomy Open House events for night sky viewing run by Dr. Tibor Torma. The Gigs provide activities which include public talks, trivia nights, physics demonstrations, art contests and creative writing contests. The first Gig will be a trivia night held on September 8th from 7:30 – 8:30 pm in Lewis 101. Volunteers are invited to help with the activities. Fill out the [Google form here](#).