



Overview

Established in September 1998, PARI is a public not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing hands-on educational and research opportunities for a broad cross-section of users in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) disciplines.

Our goal is to become a recognized center for world-class research, while providing educational opportunities for all levels of students: K-12, undergraduate, graduate and post-doctoral. PARI's mission is to promote science and excite the imagination, to become a place where researchers can try unconventional ideas, where pure research combines with practical application, and where people can begin their education and be inspired to continue.

The PARI site was initially developed by NASA in 1962 as the east coast facility to track satellites and monitor manned space flights. Located in the half-million acre Pisgah Forest about 30 miles southwest of Asheville, North Carolina, the PARI campus is a well-protected site for astronomy and should remain so for generations to come. The 200-acre campus contains 30 buildings with more than 100,000 square feet of floor space, including a state-of-the-art Research Building. PARI has redundant systems for water, power, fire protection and security. An extensive fiber optic communications network connects campus buildings and provides remote access to telescopes and instruments via the Internet.

Scientific instruments at PARI include: two 26m (85ft) radio telescopes, a 12m (40ft) radio telescope, a 4.6m (15ft) radio telescope (dubbed "Smiley" and operated remotely by students and teachers), a high frequency Jupiter-Io/Solar antenna, 11 optical telescopes on the PARI Optical Ridge, five weather and atmospheric monitoring stations, and various environmental monitoring instruments including a Plate Boundary Observatory..

PARI is governed by a Board of Directors and is operated by a fulltime salaried staff, several part time staff, a network of consultants and an active roster of several dozen volunteers.

PARI is continuously involved with research and education programs with a number of universities in a multi-state area, is home to the Astronomical Photographic Data Archive (APDA) and is a member of the NC Grassroots Science Museums Collaborative. PARI's Exhibit Gallery displays a collection of rare meteorites and minerals as well as NASA Space Shuttle artifacts, many of which have flown in space.

To date, several thousand students have benefited from our programs. Our AdventureDome portable planetarium has hosted more than 75,000 visitors. And we have just scratched the surface of our potential.

*PARI is a public not-for-profit organization. See www.pari.edu for more information.
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