

## **Adler Planetarium President & CEO Michelle B. Larson, PhD Named to NASA Advisory Council Science Committee**

CHICAGO – August 24, 2018 –The Adler Planetarium is proud to announce the appointment of President & CEO Dr. Michelle B. Larson to the NASA Advisory Council (NAC) Science Committee. As a leader in the communication and presentation of Earth and space science research and discoveries, Dr. Larson will hold the Public Communications seat where she will contribute valuable insights on engaging with the public.

The Science Committee provides advice on all NASA Earth and space science-related programs, projects, activities, and facilities. The Committee focuses on the scientific areas of Earth science, planetary science, astrophysics and heliophysics, and cross-cutting endeavors such as public communications and STEM education, human spaceflight and exploration, technology, big data and commercial partnerships.

“Communicating scientific ideas to broad audiences has been a cornerstone of my life’s work—to promote science literacy and to engage people of all ages and backgrounds in the joy of discovery,” says Dr. Larson. “I am delighted to continue this work with the Science Committee.”

Appointed by NASA Administrator James F. Bridenstine, Dr. Larson joins the fifteen member committee, whose members are leading authorities and independent researchers with relevant experience drawn from academia, industry, and government agencies.. The committee meets three times a year.



The NAC Science Committee is a standing committee of the NASA Advisory Council, supporting the advisory needs of the NASA Administrator, the NASA Science Mission Directorate (SMD), and other NASA Mission Directorates, as required. It is an important vehicle by which NASA interacts with the science community. For more information, visit:

<http://science.nasa.gov/science-committee/>.

### **About Michelle B. Larson, PhD**

Michelle Larson discovered astronomy in her 20s, when she pointed a pair of binoculars at the Moon. The stunning details visible on its craggy surface were a complete surprise, and the experience left her eager to find out what other secrets the sky had to offer. Now, as the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Adler Planetarium in Chicago, Michelle leads a talented team that helps people of all ages explore and discover our Universe.

Before joining the Adler in 2013, Michelle held positions in science engagement and administration at Utah State University, The Pennsylvania State University, the Montana Space Grant Consortium, the California Institute of Technology, and the University of California–Berkeley. She earned a PhD in physics from Montana State University, where she studied neutron stars and realized her passion for sharing science with the public through a NASA project about our star, the Sun. Michelle is a

member of the American Astronomical Society, the American Physical Society and serves on several national and Chicago area advisory boards.

**About the Adler Planetarium**

The Adler Planetarium—America’s First Planetarium—is more than a museum; it is a laboratory, a classroom, and a community exploring the Universe together. Each year, almost 600,000 visitors experience the museum’s interactive exhibitions, live planetarium shows, hands-on, minds-on STEM education programs, and world-class collections. Founded in 1930 by Chicago business leader Max Adler, the Adler Planetarium is a recognized leader in public engagement. The museum’s scientists, historians, and educators inspire the next generation of explorers and invite you to explore space with us. For more information, [visit: www.adlerplanetarium.org](http://www.adlerplanetarium.org).