

AGE OF AQUINAS

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Foothill Fusion: Silicon Valley Astronomy Lecture Series

Lecture Will Profile Allen Telescope Array

As part of the ninth annual Silicon Valley Astronomy Lecture Series, SETI Astronomer Jill Tarter will present *The Allen Telescope Array: The Newest Pitchfork for Exploring the Cosmic Haystack*, an illustrated, non-technical lecture, **Wednesday, April 23, at 7 p.m.** in the Smithwick Theatre at Foothill College in Los Altos Hills. Admission is free and the public is invited. Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. Arrive early to locate parking.

Digital technologies are making possible huge improvements in our search systems. The Allen Telescope Array, being constructed in Northern California as a partnership between the SETI Institute and University of California Berkeley Radio Astronomy Lab, will be the most powerful tool for finding SETI signals ever built. It's an innovative radio telescope assembled from a large number of small dishes, using consumer off-the-shelf technologies whenever possible to minimize costs. In the next decade, this new 'pitchfork' will enable exploration of up to 10,000 times more of the cosmic haystack than was searched in the previous decade.

Dr. Tarter is director of the Center for SETI Research, and the leader of the main project looking for radio signals from alien civilizations (she was the model for the character Jodi Foster played in the film, *Contact*.) She will update us on the latest tools and plans in the SETI quest. She holds the Bernard Oliver Chair for SETI at the SETI Institute and is one of the best-known astronomers in the world. Although she is best known for her SETI work, she also coined the term "brown dwarf" for an object that just misses being a star. In 2004, *Time Magazine* named her one of the 100 most influential people in the world.

The free lecture series is sponsored by the Foothill College Astronomy Program, NASA Ames Research Center, SETI Institute and Astronomical Society of the Pacific. Past lectures from the series are available online in MP3-format.

Visitors must purchase a campus parking permit for \$2. Parking lots 1, 7 and 8 provide stair and no-stair access to the theatre. For more information, access www.foothill.edu or call (650) 949-7888.



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Meet at San Antonio and El Camino at 5:45 for dinner or 6:30 for carpooling, Wed. Jan 23. The lecture is at 7:00. For more information visit <http://paltoaltocatholic.org/aofa.html>, or contact Carrie, ckarnos@yahoo.com, age-of-aquinas@paltoaltocatholic.org, or call 408.739.2881.