

"Earth 2.0: The Quest For Other Worlds and the Diverse Scientists Who Will Find Them"

Astronomers have now found thousands of confirmed exoplanets — planetary worlds orbiting other suns — including now dozens of Earth-like planets orbiting Sun-like stars. These discoveries are transforming our understanding of how common are planets like our own and our knowledge of the potential habitability of these worlds as well as ones much stranger than our own. Dr. Stassun will present a number of extraordinary planetary discoveries from NASA's TESS mission, which has discovered these distant worlds by remotely sensing the slight diminution of starlight that occurs when a planet orbits in front of its parent star as seen by us here at Earth 1.0. This quest to discover Earth 2.0 is also transforming the field of astrophysics by providing new incentives for recruiting, training, and mentoring a new generation of scientists whose contributions will also be highlighted in this presentation.