MESDT: Overview

MESDT is a competition style research program for high school and college students led by Caltech and NASA/IPAC. The program allows teams of students from schools across the US to participate in research on an area of Mars. Participants learn about the scientific process through teleconferences led by scientists in the field and then create a PowerPoint presentation for a competition in April. The winners of the competition are invited to present their findings to scientists at Arizona State University and NASA’s Applied Physics Laboratory in Maryland. We participated in MESDT during 2012/13 and are continuing with it in the present 2013/14 academic year.

NITARP: Overview

NITARP is a program that allows students and teachers from high schools across the US to engage in astronomical research with help from some of NASA’s top astrophysicists. Through various activities and experiences, primarily astronomical research, with programs like NASA/IPAC Teacher Archive Research Project (NITARP), and the Mars Exploration Student Data Teams (MESDT), we have noticed a change in our learning style, career path, and general outlook on the scientific community. We strongly believe these kinds of opportunities should be made available to many other high school students. The purpose of our poster is to explore what they might find on their own. The experience allowed me to regain confidence in my abilities, and know that I am better educated than me. This experience prompted me to pursue a career in astrophysics, and to try again.