

# Ashton Observatory Public Nights

The Des Moines Astronomical Society invites you to visit the Ashton Observatory Saturdays, 8:00 p.m., April through October.

Most Saturdays include a classroom presentation, followed by stargazing as sky conditions allow.

Meet one of our presenters this season:

## Gabe Brammer

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Gabe Brammer is a native of Des Moines, and family members still live in Des Moines. Gabe has a bachelor's degree in astronomy from Williams College, Williamstown, MA, and a Ph.D. in astronomy from Yale University.

Math and science classes in school always appealed to Gabe, but he notes that reading Carl Sagan's "Cosmos" in high school years was a defining moment for him.

Gabe has been working at observatories ever since, now having spent countless hours observing the skies from mountain tops in Arizona (Kitt Peak) and Chile (Cerro Tololo, Las Campanas, and Paranal) to valleys in Japan (Nobeyama). "Going outside at night at one of these

observatories and seeing the eyes of giant telescopes staring up at the sky, gathering in photons from distant objects, is an extraordinary experience. I'm happy to now have a more normal sleep schedule at the Space Telescope Science Institute, but I appreciate still being close to the day-to-day operations of Hubble as an observatory and working on the front lines as photons from distant stars and galaxies hit the detectors.

In 2016 Gabe was a member of a team of scientists who discovered and published documentation about the farthest galaxy ever seen. The international team pushed Hubble to its limits to demonstrate that GN-z11 is the most distant galaxy ever observed. "The light that left this galaxy that we're observing now left the galaxy 13.4 billion years ago" said Gabriel Brammer, an astronomer at the Space Telescope Science Institute in Baltimore and the study's second author. "As far as we know, the universe itself is about 13.8 billion years old. We're seeing a galaxy as it was when the universe was about 3 percent of its current age."