Interested in being a student mentor?

By joining the Spacetime Archives mentorship team now, you are committing to being available anytime in February to spend 2-3 hours a week mentoring a younger student through a research project. The research projects typically last three months, so we highly encourage mentors to be with their student during the entire period, but the volunteer contract you will sign only commits you for February.

You would start as a mentor the month after the month you apply (so if you apply in January, you would begin your position on February 1st). Once your application is submitted, you will receive a more comprehensive, instructional email from my mentorship team which informs you of detailed expectations, guidelines, and forms.

Mentorship consists of several steps. First, once you are assigned a student you must help them find a research inquiry that both employs the math/physics/science knowledge they already have, and then challenges them beyond that. Afterwards, a mentor should spend time finding reading material for your student in order for them to build a conceptual understanding of the topic they are researching (you don't have to make this material yourself! textbook/journal articles work great).

Once the actual research period begins, you can assign to them a citizen science investigation from Zooniverse (zooniverse.org) and have them familiarize themselves with the data presented in those projects. After that, students can download the metadata of the project (coordinates of galaxies, species names, etc.) and begin to identify trends that they see, which can develop into a complex research project.

You can also connect the student with databases they can explore and collect data from. Then the student can follow the same process of finding trends in the data and building an investigation. A mentor should guide the student to resources and help them troubleshoot through researching issues. They should also have a hand in telling the student what they should "do next" in their project. Mentors can refer to Texas Astronomical Society subject-matter experts and other student mentors (contact at rishika@spacetimearchives.com) if they need help.