

Dear Colleagues,

First of all, a shoutout to Alexandra for putting together a great meeting, maybe the best-attended GRAM meeting of all!

I'm sending this email to the people who attended the steering committee meeting on Saturday. I came up with the list from memory, which is not so great, lately, so if you see that I've missed someone who was present, please forward this email to them.

Some of the things that were discussed were:

Future Gram meetings. We now have commitments for hosting a meeting until 2027. Here are the sites of future meetings and the contacts:

2024 - Georgia Perimeter College - Jay Dunn  
2025- Emory University - Alissa Bans & Merida Batiste  
2026 - University of North Georgia - Gregory Feiden  
2027 - University of West Georgia - David Mertins & Nicholas Sterling

New steering committee members. Normally, a good portion of the steering committees are composed of people who will host future meetings, but anyone who has an interest in GRAM is invited to be on the committee. There is no set number of people per term and the terms typically go for 3-4 years. The basic idea is to have a large enough pool of people so that at each GRAM there can be enough steering committee members present to have a brief meeting about future directions. The best way to keep GRAM going is to not lose momentum from one year to the next.

Given that we did not have any new members for the 2023-2026 term, we got 5 volunteers for the 2024-27 term. This should keep us well covered through the next 4 meetings. The new members are:

2024-7 Steering Committee: Merida Batiste (Emory), Alissa Bans (Emory), Phillip Groce (Helping Planetariums Succeed), Alexandra Yep (Agnes Scott), R. Scott Henry (Charlston Planetarium)

Some of the things that we discussed were:

The website. Currently, Jim Sowell (Georgia Tech) is running the website which is a nice source of historical and general information about GRAM. Jim is retiring soon, so it would be nice if someone would take over the website and either move it to a server at their institution or set up a private site. The website has a good list of members and email addresses. Alexandra and her students expanded the email list of contacts this past summer so it would be nice to update the list on the website. An updated email list of people who are interested in attending GRAM is maybe the most important resource for anyone hosting a meeting.

In that vein, I am retiring this coming June. Currently, I am the contact person on the GRAM website for general GRAM information (see:<https://astronomy.gatech.edu/GRAM/contacts.php> ). It would be nice if someone could take over that role from me. I maybe get at most a half-dozen inquiries a year and, some years, no inquiries at all, so it is not an onerous job.

There was some discussion of the Georgia Science Academy and its relation to GRAM, but I don't remember what we discussed.

It might be nice at some future meeting to invite the founder of GRAM, Chris DePree (it was his idea, I just went along for the ride), to give the Friday night talk. While the science meeting is always all day Saturday, the Friday night public talk and campus/observatory/planetarium tours are a great way to showcase your institution to your Georgia colleagues (and a great way to sell GRAM to your administration).

We also discussed the regional aspect of the meeting. Colleagues from South Carolina, Alabama, Florida,

and Tennessee institutions should be included in the mailing list (some already are) and the idea of a nearby institution outside Georgia hosting a meeting is certainly in the spirit of GRAM.

Also in the spirit of GRAM is the idea that amateurs should be welcome to attend. It would be good to reach out to the Atlanta Astronomy Club and other large amateur clubs in Georgia to remind them that they are always welcome at GRAM meetings. And that includes presenting their work.

The Georgia Space Grant Consortium can be a source of funding for the meeting that especially the smaller institutions should consider.

I probably have forgotten a few things, so please feel free to share them with this group.

It was great to see everyone (it always is).

Best,  
Loris