

Press Release:

Title: **Exploring the Extreme Universe**

Release: **Immediately**

Contact: Rob Lee, HHS Science Alliance Advisor, Healdsburg High School

rlee@husd.com

For Immediate Release

The Healdsburg High School Science Alliance is staging an “**Outside the Box**” public lecture series for the Healdsburg community featuring various speakers on a broad range of scientific topics. The first speaker will be Lynn Cominsky, NASA Fermi Astrophysicist and Chair of the Physics and Astronomy Department at Sonoma State University. The talk will be on **Monday, March 29th, beginning at 6:30pm in the Healdsburg High School BlackBox Theater. *The community is encouraged to attend this unique opportunity to hear a leading local scientist in this dynamic field of science.*** Donations are appreciated and students will be admitted free of charge. Dr. Cominsky’s talk, “Exploring the Extreme Universe,” will include:

Supermassive black holes, merging neutron stars, streams of hot gas moving close to the speed of light ... these are but a few of the marvels that generate gamma-ray radiation, the most energetic form of radiation, billions of times more energetic than the type of light visible to our eyes. What is happening to produce this much energy? What happens to the surrounding environment near these phenomena? How will studying these energetic objects add to our understanding of the very nature of the Universe and how it behaves? (from: <http://fermi.gsfc.nasa.gov/>)

Lynn Cominsky is a NASA Fermi Astrophysicist and is Chair of the Physics and Astronomy Department at Sonoma State University (SSU), where she has been on the faculty for over twenty years. Professor Cominsky is the founder and director of SSU’s Education and Public Outreach Group, which supports several different NASA high-energy astrophysics missions. Recently, she has served as the scientific director for the PBS NOVA television program “Monster of the Milky Way” and accompanying planetarium show “Black Holes: The Other Side of Infinity.” In 1993, Prof. Cominsky was named SSU’s Outstanding Professor and the California Professor of the Year by the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education. In 2007, she was named a Fellow of the California Council on Science and Technology, and in 2009, a Fellow of the American Physical Society. She and her husband, who is also a physicist, currently reside at the Little H-bar Ranch, where they are the servants to three horses, four cats and one dog.



For more information contact: Rob Lee: rlee@husd.com 707.431.3420 HHSScienceAlliance.com

HHS Science Alliance is committed to promoting and inspiring an appreciation for science in our school and community.