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ARMENIAN ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

ArAS Newsletter



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LOCAL NEWS

IV Regional Astronomical Summer School (4RASS)

From September 8–12, 2025, the 4th Byurakan Regional Summer School (4RASS) for young



astronomers was held at the Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory. This year's program focused on "Astronomy and Data Science."

Participants had the opportunity to work with the 1-meter Schmidt and 2.6-meter telescopes at the observatory and take part in practical tutorials on data reduction and analysis. The program also

included lectures on big data applications, astronomical databases, and Virtual Observatory tools.

Out of over 120 applications received this year, 20 international students were selected to participate, along with 15 young specialists from Armenia.

Over five days, participants engaged in hands-on observations, workshops, and discussions, gaining both practical and theoretical knowledge. The Byurakan Regional Summer School once again confirmed its importance not only as an educational platform but also as a bridge for international collaboration and the strengthening of new scientific connections.

The Regional Summer Schools are organized under the framework of the IAU South West and Central Asian Regional Office of Astronomy for Development (SWCA ROAD), hosted by Armenia since 2015. Following established tradition, regional schools are held in odd-numbered years, while international schools take place in even-numbered years.

International Symposium “Astronomical Surveys and Big Data 3” (ASBD-3)

From 15–19 September 2025, the International Symposium Astronomical Surveys and Big Data 3 (ASBD-3) was held at the Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory (BAO), Armenia. The symposium was dedicated to two landmark

anniversaries: the 60th anniversary of the Markarian Survey (First Byurakan Survey, FBS, included in the UNESCO Documentary Heritage “Memory of the World” International Register in 2011) and the 20th anniversary of the Armenian Virtual Observatory (ArVO), a member of the International Virtual Observatory Alliance (IVOA).



This was the third meeting in the ASBD series, following successful gatherings in 2015 (ASBD) and 2020 (ASBD-2), making these symposia a regular initiative of BAO. The observatory is recognized as one of the traditional world centers for astronomical surveys and Big Data, thanks to its digitized plate archive and ArVO.

The symposium brought together astronomers and computer scientists working in astronomical surveys, catalogs, archives, databases, Virtual Observatories (VOs), and all other Astroinformatics-related fields. Discussions covered both historical and contemporary data collection, digitization, and analytical tools, including Markarian surveys, extragalactic systems, and other astronomical topics.

ASBD-3 once again reinforced BAO's role as a hub for astronomical surveys, Big Data, and international scientific collaboration.

MoU between ArVO and China-VO

A Memorandum of Cooperation between the Virtual Observatories of China and Armenia was signed at the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) of Armenia on Monday during the international conference “Astronomical Surveys and Big Data – 3” (ASBD-3).

The memorandum was signed by the Virtual Observatory of the National Astronomical Observatories of China (NAOC) and the Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory (BAO) of NAS Armenia.

Cui Chenzhou, a representative of the National Astronomical Observatories of China, emphasized that

the Chinese observatory attaches great importance to cooperation with the Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory, which has long-standing scientific traditions and significant achievements.

According to him, the memorandum will facilitate the exchange of research data

between the observatories of the two countries and will also support the implementation of educational programs.

Areg Mikaelyan, Director of the Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory, described cooperation with Chinese colleagues as extremely important for scientific research.

The conference, which began on Monday, brought together more than a dozen leading scientists and specialists from Armenia, Germany, Spain, China, the Netherlands, the United States, France, and other countries.



Visit of Aragatsotn Province Governor to Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory

Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory hosted an official working visit of Aragatsotn Province Governor Sergey Movsisyan, accompanied by Deputy Governor Armen Grigoryan and representatives of the regional administration.



The purpose of the visit was to become acquainted with the observatory's research and educational programs, opportunities for expanding international cooperation, and existing challenges. During the meeting, the unique role of the observatory in Armenia's science, culture, and international reputation was highlighted.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

International Astronomy Olympiad 2025

The International Open Astronomy Olympiad took place in Sochi, Russia, from September 20 to 27, 2025.

The Armenian delegation was represented by students from the A. Shahinyan Physics and Mathematics School in Yerevan, who received high praise and achieved outstanding success.

The Armenian team won three gold and two silver medals. In the team ranking, they placed second, behind only Russia.

This result once again proves that Armenian students are competitive on the international stage and can confidently stand among the best in the world.

Gold Medalists

- Gor Hasratyan – 2025 graduate, first-year student at YSU
- Natali Margaryan – 12th-grade student
- Ruzanna Shiroyan – 12th-grade student

Silver Medalists

- Bagrat Bagratyan – 12th-grade student
- Anahit Galstyan – 12th-grade student

The team was led by Artavazd Harutyunyan.

Warmest congratulations to the students!



ANNOUNCEMENTS

CAP 2026 Conference

On May 25–29, 2026, the Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory after V. Ambartsumian of NAS RA will host the international conference ***“Communicating Astronomy with the Public 2026”*** (CAP2026) under the auspices of the International Astronomical Union (IAU) in Yerevan, Armenia (hybrid format).

For registrations, please visit [here](#).

More details are available [here](#).



The poster features a night-time photograph of the Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory dome, a large, cylindrical structure with a spiral staircase on the exterior, illuminated from within. The background is a dark sky with stars. Text overlays include the CAP logo (an orange stylized 'C' with a star) and the text 'CAP COMMUNICATING ASTRONOMY WITH THE PUBLIC CONFERENCE' in white and orange. Below this, 'YEREVAN, ARMENIA' is written in white. The dates '25-29 MAY 2026' are displayed in white. At the bottom, 'REGISTRATIONS ARE OPEN' is written in white, and the website 'capconferences.org/2026/' is shown in white on a dark background.

CAP
COMMUNICATING ASTRONOMY
WITH THE PUBLIC CONFERENCE

YEREVAN, ARMENIA

25-29 MAY 2026

REGISTRATIONS ARE OPEN

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ANNIVERSARIES

On 18th of September, we celebrate the 117th birthday of the eminent Armenian scientist Viktor Ambartsumian and Astronomy Day in Armenia.

Viktor Ambartsumian's birthday, September 18, has been officially celebrated as Astronomy Day in Armenia since 2009, according to a decision by the Government of Armenia.

Academician Viktor Ambartsumian (1908–1996) was one of the greatest scientists of the 20th century, a leading astrophysicist of the Soviet era, and the founder of the school of theoretical astrophysics in the USSR. He made fundamental contributions to astronomy and astrophysics, cosmogony, theoretical physics, mathematics, and philosophy. His groundbreaking work on stellar evolution and the activity of galactic nuclei was revolutionary for astrophysics, transforming our understanding of the Universe. Ambartsumian was also a visionary in the organization of science and an influential political and public figure. He founded the departments of astrophysics at Leningrad (Saint Petersburg) and Yerevan State Universities, the Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory (BAO), the journal "Astrophysics", and was one of the founders of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia.

Ambartsumian achieved pioneering results in the study of galaxy evolution, demonstrating for the first time that the central regions of galaxies—their nuclei—play a decisive role in observed instabilities. Beyond stars and diffuse matter, these regions must contain dense bodies of unknown nature. The activity of galactic nuclei determines the evolution of galaxies. Today, active galactic nuclei (AGN) are among the most intensively studied objects in extragalactic astronomy.

His research on stellar evolution led in 1947 to the discovery of a new type of stellar system—stellar associations. The presence of dynamically unstable and dissolving systems in galaxies provided the first observational evidence of ongoing star formation within them. V. Ambartsumian passed away on August 12, 1996, in Byurakan. In 2010, the Viktor Ambartsumian International Scientific Prize was established, becoming one of the most prestigious awards in astronomy, astrophysics, and related fields. It honors outstanding scientists worldwide for their significant contributions to physical and mathematical sciences, regardless of nationality.



ArAS News is the electronic newsletter of the Armenian Astronomical Society. It was distributed to all ArAS members from the beginning of 2002, 4 times a year, typically at the end of each trimester. In 2009-2014, 8 issues annually and since 2015, 12 issues annually have been released.

ArASNews publishes information materials on ArAS, Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory and the Armenian astronomy in general, reports on ArAS Annual Meetings and participation of the Armenian astronomers in important international meetings, articles on occasion of anniversaries of famous Armenian astronomers and ArAS members, acceptance of new ArAS members, achievements of the Armenian astronomers, astronomical education in Armenia, Armenian archaeoastronomy, as well as science articles (reviews) on important studies.

So, if you want to share your studies with the scientific community, send us your articles to lilit.darbinyan7@gmail.com. They will be reviewed for the publication in ArAS Newsletters next issues.

ArAS Newsletter issues are available online with the [following link](#).