



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

News Release

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PRESS CALL

**12.30PM, THURSDAY 5 MARCH, 2015
OLD COLLEGE RECEPTION
UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH,
SOUTH BRIDGE, EH8 9YL**

Leading astronomer urges women scientists to reach for the stars

An eminent astronomer and advisor to the White House will encourage women scientists to aim high in their careers at a lecture this week.

Professor Anneila Sargent, a former President of the American Astronomical Society, will give her talk at a University of Edinburgh event on Friday (6 March) to mark International Women's Day.

On Thursday (5 March), the University of Edinburgh physics graduate – who was born and raised in Fife – will talk about her remarkable career at a press event in Old College.

Professor Sargent has built up a strong scientific reputation internationally, most notably in the fields of star formation. She has also written extensively on the possibility of other life forms existing beyond our solar system.

After studying at Edinburgh, Professor Sargent completed a PhD at California Institute of Technology (Caltech), becoming Professor of Astronomy in 1998.

She was presented with the NASA Public Service Medal in 1998 and now sits on the US National Science Board – the team advising Congress and US President Obama.

During the lecture she will draw from her own experiences to discuss the challenges women may face when entering a career in science, offering suggestions on how greater opportunities might open up in the future.

Professor Sargent was presented with the University of Edinburgh's Alumnus of the Year Award in 2002 and received an honorary doctorate from the University in 2008.

Previous speakers at the University's International Women's Day lectures include Olympic gold medallist Katherine Grainger CBE and best-selling novelist Dr Phillipa Gregory.

Make it Happen – Women into Science takes place on Friday 6 March at 6pm in the Michael Swann Lecture Theatre, King's Buildings. The event is fully booked and there is a waiting list for returned tickets.

Professor Sargent is available for media interviews in Old College at 12.30pm, Thursday 5 March. Photographers are invited to attend at 1.15pm. To book a place, please contact Kathryn Dunlop on 0131 651 5587; or email kathryn.dunlop@ed.ac.uk

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