



# Universe Awareness UNAWE

Building the Scientific Mind  
Vancouver, Canada  
May 29, 2007

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**UNIVERSE AWARENESS**  
*Inspiring young children - the Beautiful Universe*



# UNAWE Philosophy

- Initiative for a worldwide scientific culture.
- Expose **very young** (ages 4 - 10 years), **underprivileged** children to the **inspirational** aspects of astronomy.
  - Broaden their perspective
  - Enhance their understanding of the world
  - Demonstrate the power of self-determined thought
- By broadening children's minds, UNAWE hopes to **stimulate tolerance and internationalism**



# Motivation

- Beauty and size of the Universe **excite** young children
- **Basic knowledge of the Universe is a Birthright**
- Ages 4 - 10 are crucial for **child development**
- Knowledge about the Universe can **broaden the mind**
- Why young and underprivileged children?
  - Need is greatest
  - Cognitive disparities increase with age
  - Cultural differences less pronounced

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# Astronomy for Peace Education

- Science
  - Investigation, curiosity
  - Ambassador for all sciences
  - Development of technology
- Culture
  - History
    - past & in the making!
  - Cultural heritage
- Multidisciplinary
  - The big questions
- FUN!
  - Beautiful images
  - Extreme conditions
  - Unreachable yet available to all



# Astronomy as Science

- Curiosity and sense of adventure
- Rational explanations
- Astronomy is multidisciplinary
  - physics, chemistry, maths, computer science, biology
- Super-history
- Challenging
  - Light from different times
  - Coherent movement across the sky
- Development of technology
  - Opportunities



# Astronomy as Culture

- Humankind's scientific and cultural heritage
  - Tool for positioning, navigation, timing (seasons)
  - Clock and calendar
  - Myths and legends
    - Serving educational purpose
    - Entertainment too!
  - Culture and emotional link to the sky, **Ownership**
    - Rational only leaves room for emotional catches such as dogma and superstition
    - Use FOLKLORE
    - e.g. Immigrant communities



# Astronomy as ambassador for diversity

- Cultural awareness - identity and tolerance through folklore
  - Exotic diversity (animal constellations: zoological diversity)
- Appreciation of diversity in building a value system



## Astronomy as heritage

- Astronomy a household name, part of the landscape
- “Training” as dialogue and enactment of the evolution of human understanding
- Delivery through communities: ownership enabling discussion of fears and dogmatic beliefs
- Debate among adults illustrates relativity of knowledge

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# Astronomy as Common Social Ground

- Bottom-up approach values people's contribution
    - Better respect
    - Better self-esteem
- For both the individuals and the communities
- Reproduced later in life



## Conclusions

- Astronomy more than rich and fun science, also emotional link to the sky
- History and culture (diverse human family)
- Multidisciplinary (environment, etc.)
- Tool for a culture of peace
  - In its subject matter but also in the delivery in an astronomy programme
- That's what UNAWE hopes to achieve