

techniques on studies of star-forming regions, galaxies and the high-*z* Universe. The students were also informed of the near-future opportunities with ALMA and the VLTI.

The invited lecturers were: Tom Armstrong (NRL), Dave Mozurkevich (Seabrook Engineering), Juan Uson (NRAO), Paul Van den Bout (NRAO), Al Wootten (ALMA), Robert Laing (ESO), Massimo Tarenghi (ALMA), Tony Beasley (ALMA), Ricardo Bustos (CBI), Paulo Cortes (University de Chile), Christian Hummel (ESO), Kotaro Kohno (University of Tokyo), and Markus Schöller (ESO). Additionally there was a wide range of topics presented in the poster session. The lectures can be found in the school web page.

The school was financially supported by the FONDAP Center for Astrophysics,



Participants and lecturers at the summer school pose in the sun at the Universidad Católica de Chile.

the ALMA-CONICYT committee, Sociedad Chilena de Astronomía, Fundación Andes, NRAO, ESO, ONRG and AFORS. There were nearly 150 registered participants from Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Venezuela, Mexico and Chile. The funding allowed full or partial support for all the

students attending the school. The school participants enjoyed a lively talk on “The Genesis of ALMA” by Paul Van den Bout at the school dinner at the Hacienda Santa Martina, and also visited the facilities of the Universidad Católica Observatory.

Report on the

Third Advanced Chilean School of Astrophysics

held at the Universidad de Concepción, Chile, 8–12 January 2007

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During the second week of January 2007, the third Chilean Advanced School of Astrophysics was held at the Universidad de Concepción, the third-largest university in Chile, on “Insights into Galaxy Evolution from Resolved Stellar Populations”. This school, targeted at Ph.D. students mainly from Chile and South America, but also open to students from other countries, was organised in the framework of the

Chilean FONDAP Center of Astrophysics which includes astronomers of the two largest universities in Santiago and the Universidad de Concepción. The school focused on a field of research which is very well represented in the Center. Additional support was kindly offered by the ALMA Committee, ESO Chile, the Católica and Concepción universities, and the Sociedad Chilena de Astronomía.

During one week, five mini-courses were delivered to the students, each with a frequency of one hour per day and ample time for discussion, which were complemented by a series of contributed talks, mostly given by the students. Most of the students had also brought a poster describing their Ph.D. research project. The lecturers and the topics of their courses were the following:

– Carme Gallart, Instituto de Astrofísica de Canarias: The history of the Local

Group (and beyond) through the analysis of colour-magnitude diagrams.

– Laura Greggio, INAF Osservatorio di Padova: Local dwarfs and giant ellipticals.

– Rolf Peter Kudritzki, Institute of Astronomy, Hawaii: Hot massive stars in the Local Group and beyond.

– Barry Madore, Carnegie Observatories: Stars as distance indicators.

– Eline Tolstoy, Kapteyn Astronomical Institute: Abundances and kinematics from high-resolution spectroscopic surveys.

We were very pleased to host about 110 enthusiastic students from Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, Honduras, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom (see Figure 1). They all manifested strong interest in the nicely complementary lectures our invited scientists had prepared for them, together providing a

comprehensive introduction to this very active field of research. The lectures can be found at the school website at http://www.astro-udec.cl/phd_school_2007. We were all lucky enough to enjoy a sunny week in Concepción of which the participants of the school could take advantage during the outdoor coffee and lunch breaks, and during the long summer evenings. Many participants were also impressed by the beauty of the campus of the Universidad de Concepción. During the week, many new friendships and working contacts were created among the students, and there was a lively interaction with the lecturers and organisers of the school. The social highlight was the conference dinner which took place in the Canto de Luna restaurant on the shore of the Laguna Chica de San Pedro, a beautiful lake on the southern side of the Bio Bio river which divides



Figure 1: Group photograph of the Advanced School of Astrophysics at the Universidad de Concepción.

Concepción into a northern and southern part. The dancing party extended to well beyond midnight, and several of our invited lecturers showed unexpected skills in this activity as well.

The organisers of the school were Wolfgang Gieren (Chair), Manuela Zoccali (Co-chair), Rene Méndez, Grzegorz Pietrzynski and Ivo Saviane. They were very effectively assisted by Andrea Lagarini who took care of the logistical aspects of the School and helped to make this a week everybody will like to remember.

ESO at the AAS, the AAAS and in Dublin

Henri Boffin, Claus Madsen (ESO)

The great variety of new distribution methods and tools available does not replace face-to-face communication, which remains a most valuable activity in presenting ESO and its future needs. Face-to-face communication, in turn, takes many forms ranging from formal lectures and speeches, through less formal and informal meetings and briefings, e.g. with decision makers or media representatives, to information stands at fairs and conferences. Information stands often provide a physical basis for important personal encounters. In 2006, ESO's Public Affairs Department organised or participated in more than 20 events, involving exhibitions, briefings and VIP visits. This constitutes a marked increase over the previous years, on the one hand reflecting the growing importance and visibility of ESO, and, on the other hand, a neces-

sity, given the need to enlist wide support for ESO's ambitious future projects.

This year for the first time, ESO was present at the 209th Winter Meeting of the American Astronomical Society (AAS) which took place in early January in Seattle, USA. The meeting, which was held jointly with the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Physics Teachers, gathered over five days about 3000 astronomers and hundreds of teachers, and also attracted many journalists. On account of its sheer size, the AAS Winter Meeting is one of the astronomical events of the year, especially for years in which there is no IAU General Assembly, and it is thus no surprise that ESO decided to be present with an exhibition stand, featuring a VLT model. ESO's presence was very much appreciated and many astronomers and teachers came by to get the latest information on the most recent developments. In particular interest



Photo: H. H. Heyer, ESO

Young Japanese scientists at the ESO stand at the AAS.

was high in the Laser Guide Star project, ALMA and, of course, the E-ELT. ALMA was also represented at the AAS meeting on the NRAO stand, our colleagues in this global project. In addition to the exhibition, ESO was present at some of the press briefings, including the one on the discovery of the first triple quasar (see