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January 18, 2013

Dr. Ray Jayawardhana to Speak at Regional Meeting of Amateur Astronomers

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C. – The research chair in observational astrophysics at the University of Toronto will be speaking at Gardner-Webb University as part of the 20th anniversary of the Regional Meeting of Amateur Astronomers. The event is open to the public.

Dr. Ray Jayawardhana (“Ray-Jay”) will provide a series of lectures on Jan. 25-26 at the University. On Friday, Jan. 25, Jayawardhana will speak to students, faculty, and interested members of the community at 1 p.m. in the Withrow Science Building.

On Saturday, Jan. 26, Jayawardhana will join other presenters for a day of information as part of the Regional Meeting of Amateur Astronomers at Stewart Hall in Tucker Student Center. Dr. Ray-Jay is expected to discuss the topic “Strange New Worlds: The Search for Alien Planets and Life Beyond Our Solar System.” His book of the same name received Library Review’s distinction as a Science-Technology Best Book of 2011.

In addition, several other notable speakers will be participating in the Jan. 26 event. Former GWU professor Tom English will present “Documenting the New Astronomy,” in which he will describe the emergence of two chroniclers of astronomy, separated by both time and distance. WCNC’s Chief Meteorologist, Brad Panovich, will discuss “Meteorology Related to Astronomy.” Other presenters include Joe Heafner, an astronomy and physics instructor at Catawba Valley Community College and contributing editor to *Sky and Telescope* magazine; and Hap Griffin, a retired VP of engineering at South Carolina Educational Television Network.

The event is co-sponsored by the Williams Observatory and the Cleveland County Astronomical Society. Funding was supplied by the Life of the Scholar (LOTS) program and the American Astronomical Society.

For additional information, contact Dr. Don Olive, GWU Associate Professor of Physics and Director of the Williams Observatory at 704-406-3804 or visit ccastro.org.

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University provides exceptional educational opportunities within a Christian environment, preparing students to think critically, to succeed professionally, and to serve faithfully as members of their local and global communities.