Supporting the Physics Identity and Practices of Both University and K-12 Students through Outreach

KATIE HINKO, JILA Physics Frontier Cente, Physics Education Research Group at CU Boulder

Many physics departments seek to bring newcomers of all ages into the field through the facilitation of outreach programs. Through careful design, such informal learning environments act as hybrid spaces wherein public audiences and physicists build and redefine physics community together. Participation in outreach has the potential to reinforce students’ identification with physics, reshape their view of the field, and hone their scientific and communication practices. Through interactions, participants negotiate roles, engage in authentic physics practices and provide feedback to each other. In this talk, I will discuss ways that outreach can affect the perceptions and practices of physics novices (K-12 students) and apprentices (undergraduate and graduate students) with regard to the physics community. I will also present findings from studies of undergraduates, graduate students and children who participate in an afterschool physics program sponsored by the University of Colorado Boulder and JILA.