

MAR15-2014-020841

Abstract for an Invited Paper
for the MAR15 Meeting of
the American Physical Society

The Physics Force presents The Physics Circus

E. DAN DAHLBERG, University of Minnesota

The Physics Force of the University of Minnesota is an outreach program developed with the goal to show students and the public Science is Fun, Science is Interesting, and Science is Understandable. The program grew from a rather small effort by three high school physics teachers and two University of Minnesota staff members. In the almost three decades since its humble beginnings of 100 attendees in a year, it has grown to an average attendance of over 36,000 annually. In the last three years alone, about 110,000 Minnesotans have seen a performance of The Physics Circus which is roughly 2% of the population of the state. In addition to the performances in Minnesota, The Force performed two years at Disney's Epcot Center, was featured on Newton's Apple, and made appearances on the very successful German TV science show, the Knoff-Hoff Show. I will begin the talk with some of our motivation to develop The Physics Force arising from the current "scientific state" of our society and then provide more information on The Force including both some history and examples taken from our Physics Circus.