



Cleveland Astronomical Society

www.clevelandastronomicalsociety.org

Thursday, December 6, 2007 Meeting Announcement

6:15—7:00 p.m. – Get acquainted and snacks

7:45—8:00 p.m. – Short Business Meeting

7:00—7:45 p.m. – Buffet Dinner (Reservations Required)

8:00—9:00 p.m. – Featured Speaker (Free to public)

Leonard Krieger CanalWay Center

4524 East 49th Street (turn onto Whittlesey Way to reach Center), Cuyahoga Heights, (216) 206-1000

Speaker: Dr. Karen Bjorkman

Professor of Astronomy & Assistant Department Chair
Ritter Observatory, University of Toledo

Direct Imaging (and Polarimetry?) of Disks Around Young Stars

Many young stars have circumstellar disks. In some cases the disks may play host to the formation of planetary systems. Dr. Bjorkman will report on a new observational project her team is taking to directly image disks around some young, intermediate mass stars. The disks are evidence that planets are most likely to form within them. Most extra solar planetary systems found so far are around stars similar to our Sun; however, we do not have evidence for planets forming around more massive stars. The technique Dr. Bjorkman's team is using, called "coronagraphic imaging," involves masking the light from the star before imaging the light of the disk alone. Other groups successfully have imaged several stars using this method. Her team is extending the process by trying to measure the polarization of the light from the disk while doing coronagraphic imaging. Dr. Bjorkman notes, "Most astronomers would say that this is a crazy thing to try!" Her talk will focus on the project and what her team has learned and not learned from its attempts.

High School Teachers interested in bringing two students, as our guests, please contact Bob Sledz, President, at 440-333-7827 or sledzbob@yahoo.com, if possible two weeks or more prior to scheduled meeting date.