



## Lunar CRater Observation and Sensing Satellite

### Interview with Brian Day!!!

By Alicia Scarberry, AAE 12<sup>th</sup> grade

I got the extraordinary opportunity to interview Brian Day, LCROSS Education and Public Outreach Lead. Brian Day has had an incredibly positive impact on students in the world of science. Brian Day is a NASA contractor through Planners Collaborative. He works at NASA's Ames Research Center in the Education Office where he serves as technical lead for the Ames Educational Technology Team. He is a part of a remarkable team that produces a wide range of educational products and programs highlighting NASA research, and targeting audiences in grades K through graduate school. They provide many programs for students to expand their knowledge. There is a wonderful website: <http://quest.nasa.gov/>. This site gives children the opportunity to explore the possibilities of space. There are challenges, free online tools, links, events, etc. Brian Day has the ability to make learning fun and exciting. Through passion and dedication he has inspired students to reach far beyond the stars. He has put unbelievable work into student development and the future of science.

**1. When did you decide working for NASA was for you?** I was not quite 4 years old when Alan Shepard made the first Mercury spaceflight. I still remember watching it on TV. I was hooked. I would watch each of the following Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo missions. They were a big part in me getting my first telescope while I was in grade school and showing my friends views such as craters on the Moon and the rings of Saturn. The space program can be incredibly inspirational, as I hope you are going to discover as you actually participate in our next mission to the Moon.

**2. How did you get to the position that you are currently at?** It started out with school where I took lots of science and math classes. After school, and before coming to work at NASA, I worked as a software engineer, astronomer, and teacher. I also became a pilot. All of these gave me experience that would be very useful in my current job at NASA.

**3. What is your role in the LCROSS Mission?** I am the Education and Public Outreach Lead for the LCROSS mission. A big part of this job is coming up with ways to make it easier for students and members of the public to become direct participants in the LCROSS mission.

**4. What is the importance of students to the LCROSS Mission?** Students will play key roles in the LCROSS mission. Through our partnership with the GAVRT program, students can become part of our Student Telemetry Team. Using the giant 34-meter DSS-13 dish at Goldstone, they will help us monitor the health and status of the spacecraft in flight. This is very important. We can't be listening to our spacecraft at all times. Students will be able to listen for transmissions at times when we are not. If something develops in the mission that requires attention, students may well be the first to hear about it and let our mission control know. Students with access to telescopes will also be making observations of the LCROSS impact. We are encouraging them to take images of the impact and share them with us. The more data we have, the better our understanding will be.

**5. How will students participating in the mission impact NASA's connections to education?** NASA is looking at a new way of doing education programs for K-12 students. This is called Participatory Exploration, and it means making it easier for students to become direct participants in a mission. The LCROSS Student Telemetry Team is a great demonstration of this idea. If it works out as well as I expect it to, I think that you could see more examples of this kind of program.

**6. Do you believe that student involvement will inspire the youth to reach for the stars and work for NASA?** I certainly hope so. I know from my own personal experience just how inspiring space exploration can be. Students today may have a wider range of opportunities open to them than ever before. There are now a number of college programs where students are designing

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building, and flying satellites. After graduating, today's students will have an exciting variety of career choices dealing with space exploration open to them. These could involve working at NASA as well as in the growing number of companies that are taking an active role in developing our presence in space.

**7. How do you personally feel about involving students in the mission?**

I am very excited about students directly participating in the mission. It's a win-win situation. NASA gets access to a talented group of intelligent individuals who bring their enthusiasm and interest to the mission and provide help in an important area of mission support. The students get a unique opportunity to be direct participants in a mission to the Moon. Not many people get a chance like this. Please remember what you did with the LCROSS mission as you are writing your college applications!

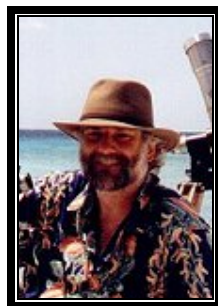
**8. What are your hopes for the future?** (Possibly continuing to have students interacts with Scientists/ Participate in missions.)

I am convinced that the partnership with GAVRT in the Student Telemetry Team is an important program. Long after the LCROSS spacecraft has become tiny pieces of metal scattered across the lunar surface, I hope the Student Telemetry Team continues with students participating in future missions to the Moon and beyond.

**9. What are other ways students can get involved with NASA?** There are internship programs at NASA for both high school and college students. Take a look at the NASA SHARP program (<http://www.nasasharp.com/>) for high school students, the USRP program (<http://www.epo.usra.edu/usrp/>) for undergraduates, and the NASA INSPIRE program ([http://www.nasa.gov/offices/education/programs/descriptions/INSPIRE\\_Project.html](http://www.nasa.gov/offices/education/programs/descriptions/INSPIRE_Project.html)) for high school and college students. Also, keep an eye on the various NASA mission pages (<http://www.nasa.gov/missions/>) for missions that offer opportunities for students and members of the public to participate in mission science. In particular, keep an eye on the LRO mission. Students will have an opportunity to participate in the exciting process of the photographic mapping of the lunar surface.

**10. Are you excited for LCROSS and the students who get to participate in such an amazing experience?** Absolutely! This is by far the most exciting job I have ever had. I've heard many of the scientists and engineers on the mission say the same thing. The people at NASA and the students who are working together on the LCROSS mission are doing something very important and spectacular here. I am especially looking forward to seeing the contributions made by the students and making these known throughout NASA.

Brian Day made me unbelievably excited about space! I hope through these questions you have been inspired to explore the unknown and take pride in your work. I personally have been profoundly motivated to show admirable dedication in every aspect of my life. Brian Day has had and will continue to have an outstanding impact on the world of science! We are blessed to have such a remarkable human being working to better our way of life and explore the impossible.



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