Some Introductory Remarks at CHARA’s 10th Gathering

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Ann Arbor, Michigan
The Last Time We Gathered...
At our 9th Annual Meeting, Flagstaff, 18-20 Mar 2013
The First Time We Gathered...
At our 1st “Annual” Meeting, Paris, 7-11 Feb 2005
CHARA Refereed Papers

104 to date (11 yr⁻¹)
2014 TAC Process

- 50 proposals from 38 PIs
- TAC comprised of 9 experienced CHARA observers
- Each member evaluated 21 or 22 proposals to yield 4 reviews per proposal
- Proposals were scored 1.0 to 4.0 (lowest to highest)
  - Highest ranked was 3.83 ± 0.35
  - Lowest ranked was 2.20 ± 0.25
  - Average score was 2.95
- No proposal was declined outright, but ...
- Amount of time assigned was given in direct proportion to a proposal’s mean score
- We owe the TAC considerable thanks for their service!
Recent Budget History

- **Total**: Decreasing trend from $600K to $400K
- **Salaries**: Stable trend from $166K to $88K
- **Supplies & Travel**: Decreasing trend from $166K to $78K

- Yes, a 2% raise!
Our Challenge

• From an institutional perspective, GSU is paying $460K per year to operate a facility with high outside use.

• They point out that GSU buys time from APO for our extragalactic folks at $50K per year. Why isn’t CHARA selling time in a similar fashion?

• These questions are not easy to answer.
Proposal to the NSF MSIP Program

• “Mid-Scale Innovations Program” was mandated by the Decadal Review.

• We submitted a proposal to open CHARA time to the US community and to provide archival data. The “CHARA Collaboration” PIs all graciously agreed to participate.

• The $3M, 5-yr program would allocate up to 50 nights per year.

• Proposals will be reviewed by the NOAO TAC as they have been doing in an experimental program since 2010.

• Archival data will be distributed through the Jean-Mariotti Center.

• In return, CHARA would receive support for 5 new staff positions and a modest amount of equipment upgrade support.

• We were among 12 of 39 proposals submitted in the first round invited to submit a full proposal for the 12 Mar deadline.
While the future is uncertain, I believe the best is still ahead

• The CHARA Array is still the highest resolution facility of its kind in the world & the most productive US interferometer ever.

• Our science crosses undreamt of aspects of stellar astrophysics.

• Significant gains are just around the corner from TT/AO improvements and detector developments.

• New classes of objects will soon be open to us.

• So, lean back, relax, and enjoy the next few days here in Ann Arbor.