

# Nancy Atkinson

**Writer/Journalist**

Rochester, IL

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## **Work Experience:**

March 2001-present: **Writer/Journalist.** Portfolio includes thousands of published articles on space and astronomy news and events. Daily contributor to Universe Today website; editor-in-chief and writer for the quarterly Space Lifestyle Magazine; articles published by Wired.com, Space.com, NASA's Astrobiology Magazine, as well as Space Times Magazine and several newspapers in the Midwest; production assistant with Astronomy Cast podcast, writing show notes.

November 2003-present: **Librarian,** Rochester Public Library, Rochester, IL. Responsibilities include developing and facilitating programs and classes, such as adult writing classes, book discussion group, and children's space and science programs; writing and publishing quarterly newsletter; maintaining library's website ([www.rochesterlibrary.org](http://www.rochesterlibrary.org)).

2002-2003: **Instructor** for Quest Youth Learning and Enrichment, Lincoln Land Community College, Springfield, IL. Responsibilities included developing curriculum and teaching classes on space exploration and astronomy.

November 2000-June 2002: **Curriculum Development Specialist and Teacher,** Science Museum of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN. Responsibilities included: developing curriculum and activities, and teaching space shuttle simulation classes for grades 4-7; developing and teaching classes to augment FOSS Science Kits for grades K-5; developing and teaching classes on space and flight for grades K-3.

March 1997-November 2003: **Substitute Teacher,** all grades, specializing in English and Science, Rochester Community Schools, Rochester, IL and Osseo Area Schools, Maple Grove, MN.

August 1989-July 1994: **Education Director,** World Timecapsule Project, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Responsibilities were to develop and write curriculum materials for teachers and students, contact school administrators and teachers for participation in the project, oversee disbursement of materials and collection of finished projects, visit participating classrooms to give presentations to teachers and students, write grants, and compile reports for the board of directors. Materials from the project were digitally copied and launched into space in July 1994.

## **Additional Experience**

January 2004-present: **NASA/JPL Solar System Ambassador**. Ambassadors give presentations to schools, universities, libraries, community groups, etc., to share the excitement and recent discoveries of NASA's space exploration with the general public. To date, I have given over 30 presentations. Ambassadors are competitively selected, and are required to take part in regularly scheduled training sessions and must perform a minimum number of public events each year to maintain their standing as an Ambassador.

August 2005-February 2006: **Developed online learning module** for Library U, an educational website for librarians: "Turning Library Science into Rocket Science: Adding Science Activities to Children's Programs." (<http://learning.libraryu.org>)

2005-2007: **Presenter** at Rolling Prairie Library System workshops (3), Reaching Forward South Conference for Library Support Staff, and the Shawnee and Lewis & Clark Library Systems Summer Reading Workshop. Topics presented were "Adding Space Science to Children's Programs," demonstrations of the "Explore, Fun With Science," and "Skytellers" programs from the Lunar and Planetary Institute, and "Starting and Maintaining a Book Discussion Group."

2001 & 2002: **Presenter** at "Space Science Across the Curriculum Conference," Science Museum of Minnesota. Topics presented were "The Mind is a Fire to be Lighted: Exploring Space Science in Literature," and "Mars in the Classroom: Activities to Learn about the Red Planet."

March 2002. Certified by NASA to receive, handle and demonstrate actual lunar and meteorite samples.

## **Education:**

Bachelor of Arts in English, University of Minnesota, Morris 1982

Numerous continuing education classes, conferences and workshops in writing, library science and education.

## **Awards:**

2007 "Go Above and Beyond" Space Journalism Prize, presented by New Forks Media, LLC

## **Memberships**

New Media Working Group for the International Year of Astronomy

Local Advisory Council for the 2009 International Year of Astronomy, sponsored by the Astronomical Society of the Pacific

International Science Writers Association

Planetary Society

## **References**

Available upon request