

Steven V. W. Beckwith



Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies

Steven Beckwith was appointed vice president for research and graduate studies in January 2008. In this newly created position, he serves as the senior systemwide research officer and is responsible for the University's long-term graduate education planning, outreach and recruitment, including coordinating systemwide planning for new graduate programs and identifying and developing responses to major research initiatives and opportunities.

Prior to his appointment, he served as director emeritus of the Space Telescope Science Institute and a professor of physics and astronomy at The Johns Hopkins University's Space Telescope Science Institute. As director of the institute from 1998 to 2005, he was responsible for overseeing approximately 600 people, including more than 100 Ph.D. scientists, on research activities for the Hubble Space Telescope, as well as for distribution of more than \$25 million annually in research funding. Beckwith is also credited with developing the Hubble Ultra Deep Field, the deepest optical image ever taken of the universe.

From 1991 to 1998, he was the managing director of the Max-Planck-Institut für Astronomie in Heidelberg, Germany, responsible for overseeing a staff of 200 scientists, engineers and technical specialists, and directing the scientific program in Germany and running the German national observatory in Calar Alto, Spain. Prior to that, he was a professor in the astronomy department at Cornell University, where he was hired after finishing his Ph.D. thesis at Caltech in 1978.

He has broad experience working with funding agencies and governments in the United States and Europe, including the National Science Foundation, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and their counterparts in Germany. He has served on oversight committees for some of the world's largest astronomical facilities – the European Southern Observatory, the Atacama Large Millimeter Array, and the Large Binocular Telescope – and he led committees that set national strategies for major investments in astronomy sponsored by the National Research Council and the European Space Agency. He has successfully initiated several partnerships between international organizations in

Europe to promote science, for which he won the Max Planck Society Prize for International Organization in 1997.

He continues to provide service to his community through memberships on boards and professional societies include the American Academy of Arts & Sciences, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Astronomical Society, the Astronomical Society of the Pacific, the Astronomische Gesellschaft, and the International Astronomical Union.

He holds an undergraduate degree in engineering physics from Cornell University and a Ph.D. in physics from the California Institute of Technology. A native of Wisconsin, he is married to Dr. Susan McCormick, with two children, Martha and Thomas.