

The James Webb Space Telescope— A New Look at the Universe

Larry Toy, PhD, retired

The James Webb Space Telescope in its short time in space has given us unprecedented views of the universe. The telescope took 25 years to design and build and was launched on Christmas Day, 2021. It is six times the size of the Hubble Space Telescope and already is revealing previously hidden objects and details from our local solar system to the most distant objects in the universe. This is a brief history of the why and how of its creation along with its unique location in space and how it stays there. Included will be a little history of astronomy from early in the last century (including some personal anecdotes) which expanded our knowledge of the scale of the universe. Finally, we will see some extraordinary photos and discuss what they mean.

Biography: Larry received his bachelor's degree from Harvard and masters and PhD from UC Berkeley, all in astronomy. He spent much of his career teaching astronomy at Chabot College and was honored as one of the first four outstanding faculty selected from the 15,000 faculty of the California Community Colleges. He was a founding board member of the Chabot Space and Science Center in the Oakland Hills. For the final decade of his career, Larry served as the founding president/CEO of the Foundation for California Community Colleges. He also served on the California Council on Science and Technology. He served as president of Lamorinda Village for the past three years.