“Bringing the Stories of the Skies to Your Library”: A Webinar to Help Library Staff Facilitate Virtual STEAM Programs

Brooks Mitchell
NASA@ My Library, Education Coordinator II
4/27/2020
“Bringing the Stories of the Skies to Your Library”: A Webinar to Help Library Staff Facilitate Virtual STEAM Programs

- The webinar highlighted NASA and NASA-related resources for libraries to help provide virtual STEAM programming for the 2020 summer reading theme, “Imagine Your Story.”
- Constellation stories from indigenous cultures from around the world were highlighted. Strategies and tips for conducting virtual programs (including night sky viewings) were discussed.
- 376 viewers attended the live webinar via Zoom with another 60 joining via YouTube Live. The recording has already been watched over 300 times.

Post-webinar survey quotes:
- **Fabulous support!** Not only did you present fun ideas but getting input from everyone on how they were revamping was invaluable!!
- **Inspiring.** Many great ideas for virtual programming. I may have to watch it again!
- The ideas discussions presented were very inspiring. Just thinking about these possibilities helps. Hearing what others are doing also sparks ideas I can do in my area.

Above: Brooks Mitchell (STAR Net) shows viewers how to make a constellation projector with supplies that they already have at home.
Below: Christine Shupla (LPI) discusses ways that library staff can still conduct virtual live sky presentations.

Night Sky Viewing

- **Live Sky Presentations**
  - Invite your patrons to step outside and discuss what they see with you
  - Start with easy-to-find objects (i.e., Moon, Venus), then direct attention to nearby features
  - Use a small telescope or binoculars to safely project the Sun and share it during a videoconference
  - Do not put your hand, arm, or face in front of the eyepiece or in front of the finder scope
  - Use the shadow of the telescope to help point it towards the Sun