



Dr. Jill Cornell Tarter  
Bernard M. Oliver Chair for SETI Research  
Director, Center for SETI Research

Jill Tarter holds the Bernard M. Oliver Chair for SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence) and is Director of the Center for SETI Research at the SETI Institute in Mountain View, California. Tarter received her Bachelor of Engineering Physics Degree with Distinction from Cornell University and her Master's Degree and a Ph.D. in Astronomy from the University of California, Berkeley. She served as Project Scientist for NASA's SETI program, the High Resolution Microwave Survey, and has conducted numerous observational programs at radio observatories worldwide. Since the termination of funding for NASA's SETI program in 1993, she has served in a leadership role to secure private funding to continue the exploratory science. Currently, she serves on the management board for the Allen Telescope Array, a joint project between the SETI Institute and the UC Berkeley Radio Astronomy Laboratory. When this innovative array of 350 6-m antennas begins operations at the UC's Hat Creek Radio Observatory, it will simultaneously survey the radio universe for known and unexpected sources of astrophysical emissions, and speed up the search for radio emissions from other distant technologies by orders of magnitude.

Tarter's work has brought her wide recognition in the scientific community, including the Lifetime Achievement Award from Women in Aerospace, two Public Service Medals from NASA, Chabot Observatory's Person of the Year award (1997), Women of Achievement Award in the Science and Technology category by the Women's Fund and the San Jose Mercury News (1998), and the Tesla Award of Technology at the Telluride Tech Festival (2001). She was elected an AAAS Fellow in 2002 and a California Academy of Sciences Fellow in 2003 (and CAS Scientific Trustee in 2007). In 2004 *Time Magazine* named her one of the Time 100 most influential people in the world, and in 2005 Tarter was awarded the Carl Sagan Prize for Science Popularization at Wonderfest, the biannual San Francisco Bay Area Festival of Science. In 2006 Tarter became a National Advisory Board member for the Center for Inquiry's Office of Public Policy in Washington, DC. She is also a Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP) Fellow.

Tarter is deeply involved in the education of future citizens and scientists. In addition to her scientific leadership at NASA and SETI Institute, Tarter has been the Principal Investigator for two curriculum development projects funded by NSF, NASA, and others. The first, the Life in the Universe series, created 6 science teaching guides for grades 3-9 (published 1994-96). Her second project, Voyages Through Time, is an integrated high school science curriculum on the fundamental theme of evolution in six modules: Cosmic Evolution, Planetary Evolution, Origin of Life, Evolution of Life, Hominid Evolution and Evolution of Technology (published 2003). Tarter is a frequent speaker for science teacher meetings and at museums and science centers, bringing her commitment to science and education to both teachers and the public. Many people are now familiar with her work as portrayed by Jodie Foster in the movie Contact.

## **Education**

- 1975 Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley
- 1971 M.A., University of California, Berkeley
- 1965 B.E.P. Cornell University, School of Engineering

## **Employment History**

- 1999–present Director, Center for SETI Research, SETI Institute
- 1997–present Bernard M. Oliver Chair for SETI
- 1993–1999 Director, Project Phoenix, SETI Institute
- 1989–1993 Project Scientist for NASA SETI Microwave Observing Project (MOP) later called High Resolution Microwave Survey (HRMS)
- 1983–1993 Associate Research Astronomer, UC Berkeley (50%)

## **Activities and Services**

- Manages SETI-related research and technology development
- Chair, International Square Kilometer Array Steering Committee (2002)
- Past Chair, US Square Kilometer Array Consortium (2000-2002)
- Participates in on-going SETI observational programs at Arecibo and other observatories
- Curriculum development for NSF-IMD based on life in the universe and evolution
- Thesis research: observable properties (or lack thereof) of small brown dwarf stars that never successfully fuse hydrogen and the observability of interstellar gases stripped from the interiors of galaxies as they interact with other galaxies and their surroundings within rich clusters of galaxies.
- Founding member of the SETI Institute in 1984
- Initiated research activity entitled Observational Exobiology to assess potential for orbiting “Great Observatories” to enhance understanding of the origin and evolution of the biogenic element and compounds
- Developed IRAS strategy to search for Brown Dwarf stars

## **Professional Societies/Memberships**

- American Astronomical Society
- International Astronomical Union
- URSI – Commission J (International Radio Science Union)
- International Academy of Astronautics
- American Association for Advancement of Science
- International Society for the Study of the Origin of Life
- Women in Aerospace

## **Honors and Awards**

- Lifetime Achievement Award from Women in Aerospace (1989)
- Received two NASA Public Service Medals (one at Ames Research Center and one at NASA Headquarters in Washington, DC) and a HRMS Group Achievement Award (1993)
- Received Chabot Observatory Person of the Year Award (Feb. 1997)
- Bernard M. Oliver Endowed Chair, SETI Institute (1997- )
- Fellow of The Explorers Club (1998- )
- Received the Women of Achievement Award, Science & Technology category, presented by the Women’s Fund and the San Jose Mercury News (1998).
- Received the Tesla Award of Technology at the Telluride Tech Festival (2001)
- AAAS Fellow (2002)
- Named one of 100 most influential people in the world by Time Magazine (2004)
- Received Carl Sagan Prize for Science Popularization from Wonderfest (2005)
- California Academy of Sciences Fellow (2003), Scientific Trustee (2007)
- TED prize (2009)

## Publications

- Liebert, J., Allen, C., Schweizer, F., and Tarter, J.C. "Evolution of Super-Helium Rich  $2 M_{\odot}$  Stars," *P.A.S.P.* 83, p. 626 (1971).
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- Cuzzi, J.N., Black, D.C., Clark, T.A., and Tarter, J.C. "SETI: A Preliminary Search for Narrowband Signals at Microwave Frequencies." Proceedings of COSPAR Meeting, June 1977, Tel Aviv, Israel (1977).
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- Tarter, J.C. "Some Problems with the Interpretation of Recent Microwave Background Observations in the Direction of Galaxy Clusters, or, Beware of Negative Antenna Temperatures," *Ap. J.* 220, pp. 749-755 (1978).
- Tarter, J.C. and Wright, M.C.H. "Improved Limits of Intergalactic Intracluster HI in the Coma Cluster," *Astron. & Astrophys.* 76, p. 127 (1979).
- Tarter, J.C., Cuzzi, J.N., Black, D.C., Clark, T.A., Stull, M., and Drake, F.D. "SETI: High Sensitivity Searches at NASA with High Speed Tape Recorders." Paper #79-A-43 from 8th International CETI Review Symposium of the International Academy of Astronautics in Munich, Germany (1979).
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- Tarter, J.C. "Communication with Extraterrestrial Intelligence: Report on IAA 8th Annual CETI Review in Munich, Germany," *Cosmic Search* 2, p. 18 (1980).

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- Reynolds, R.T., Tarter, J.C., and Walker, R.G. "A Proposed Search of the Solar Neighborhood for Sub-Stellar Objects," *Icarus* 44, p. 772 (1980).
- J. Billingham, J., Edelson, R., Gulkis, S., Olsen, E.T., Oliver, B.M., Tarter, J.C., and Seeger, C.L. "A Search Strategy for SETI." Paper #IAA-80-57 presented at 9th CETI Review Meeting of the International Academy of Astronautics in Tokyo, Japan (1980).
- Bowyer, C.S., Zeitlin, G.M., Tarter, J.C., Lampton, M., and Welch, W. "Analysis of SETI Data Collected in the Parasitic Mode." Paper #IAA-80-58 from 9th International CETI Review Meeting of the International Academy of Astronautics in Tokyo, Japan (1980).
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- Tarter, J.C. "Radio Frequency Interference at Jodrell Bank within the Protected 21 cm Band." Paper #IAA-86-425 presented at the 15th International SETI Review Meeting of the International Academy of Astronautics, Innsbruck, Austria (1989). Specia issue *Acta Astronautica* 19, No. 11, C.L. Seeger and A.R. Martin (eds.) pp. 907-912 (1989).
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