



Apr 14th, 1:15 PM - 2:35 PM

Keynote Speaker - Richard P. Binzel, Professor of Planetary Science, Department of Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology: "Exploration in the 21st Century: NASA's New Horizons Mission to Pluto"

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KEYNOTE SPEAKER

**"EXPLORATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY:
NASA'S NEW HORIZONS MISSION TO PLUTO"**

Richard P. Binzel, Professor of Planetary Science
Department of Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Science
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

1:15 p.m. Anderson Auditorium (C101)

Richard P. Binzel, Professor of Planetary Science in the Department of Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Sciences at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is one of the world's leading scientists in the study of asteroids and Pluto. Binzel, who published his first scientific paper at the age of 15, completed his Bachelor's degree in physics at Macalester College (St. Paul, MN) and received his Ph.D. in astronomy from the University of Texas. His current research focuses on mapping the geology of the asteroid belt through telescopic observations revealing the compositions of nearly 2000 asteroids. He is credited with having established compelling evidence linking certain Earth-impacting meteorite types with specific asteroids. In 1999, Binzel devised the Torino Impact Hazard Scale, which assigns a number to the likelihood that a newly discovered asteroid will strike the Earth. Binzel has written two articles for Scientific American describing Pluto (June 1990) and the origin of asteroids (October 1991). Binzel was honored with a Presidential Young Investigator award from George H. Bush in 1990 and the Harold C. Urey Prize from the American Astronomical Society Division for Planetary Sciences in 1991. Currently he is a Science Team Member on the NASA New Horizons Mission to Pluto launched in 2006 and arriving in 2015. In recognition of his excellence in undergraduate teaching at MIT, Binzel was named a MacVicar Faculty Fellow in 1994. Asteroid number 2873 bears his name, an honor bestowed by the International Astronomical Union in recognition of his contributions to the field.