PREFERRED TOPIC AREA: Education
SESSION ORGANIZER: Dr. Nahid Khazenie, NASA GSFC
TITLE: AN OVERVIEW OF THE TOPEX/POSEIDON OUTREACH PROGRAM
AUTHOR: Edward J. Christensen, Jet Propulsion Laboratory, 4800 Oak Grove Drive, Pasadena, CA 91109, phone (818) 354 1992, fax (818) 393 4965, email <ejc@stealth.jpl.nasa.gov>
POSTER PREFERENCE: Oral Presentation With Video Preferred

A joint effort between the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the French space agency (Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales - CNES) to study Earth's oceans, the TOPEX/POSEIDON mission will observe the global ocean circulation for three to five years. The oceans play a fundamental role in maintaining the current habitable climate on Earth by transporting an enormous amount of heat through their large-scale circulation systems. Understanding the dynamics of ocean circulation and the role this circulation plays in climate change is the main goal of the TOPEX/POSEIDON mission. TOPEX/POSEIDON will measure sea levels; map basin-wide variations in currents, and monitor the effects of currents, such as the Gulf Stream, on global climate change. Additionally, the mission's measurements will allow scientists to study ocean tides and waves, marine geophysics and wind.

The project is continually in the process of transferring knowledge about its scientific results to outside organizations through a vigorous public, educational, technological, and international Outreach Program. The cornerstone for this program is the TOPEX/Poseidon Mosaic Home-Page on the internet's world-wide-web. Products are developed to serve both the Mosaic interface and a variety of education programs distributed on CD-ROM. The system provides for

- o A Complete Browse-and-Select Atlas of Science Products
- o Animated Sequences of Global Science Parameters
- o A "Build-Your-Own" Animation Capability
- o An "El Nino Watch" Weather Service
- o Links to Home-Pages on Related Subjects
- o Tutorials on the Spacecraft, Instruments, and Related Science
- o Draft Publications and Abstracts of Technical Papers
- o A Mission Description, Including Orbit Animation
- o Biographical Sketches & Pictures of Program Scientists and Engineers
- o A Set of Research Newsletters
- o A Frequently Asked Questions List
- o A Calendar of Significant Events

Future plans include

- o Videos through Mosaic
- o Lectures through Mosaic

The system is designed to synergistically interact with other related interdisciplinary Outreach Programs.