

NATIONAL ASTRONOMY AND IONOSPHERE CENTER

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September 13, 2004

Dr. Steve Torchinsky
Arecibo Observatory
HC03 Box 53995
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Dear Steve,

I would like to take a moment and express to you my sincere appreciation for all your efforts in planning and providing support for the activities that were part of the recent scientific meeting "Diffuse Matter in the Galaxy: Observations Confront Theory" that was held at the Arecibo Observatory.

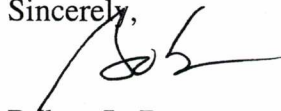
As you know, this particular meeting grew from an initial concept for a small party in celebration of Carl Heiles' 65th birthday to be held on the beach at Arecibo on a night with a full moon, to a major scientific conference with well over 100 attendees. Many people mentioned to me that the meeting was a huge success scientifically and, in spite of the vagaries weather, they found it to be extremely enjoyable. The credit for this success goes to you and to the many people at the Observatory who worked so very hard to make it a success.

The meeting was extremely beneficial to us because it gave us a chance to showcase our facilities and capabilities to that significant fraction of the meeting participants who had never been to the Arecibo Observatory previously. But, coming as it did on the heels of the GALFA3 meeting, and at a time when all 3 of the ALFA precursor observations were running on the telescope, I know that it also meant that you were working a succession of extremely long days. I believe that the kind of dedication shown by you and your colleagues illustrates what is best about the Observatory; it reflects extremely well on the personal and professional quality of the entire Observatory staff.

With the meetings behind us, I hope that you will have the chance to return to the research and tasks that you find most rewarding.

Thanks again.

Sincerely,



Robert L. Brown
Director, NAIC