

# **Parshati Patel**

**Science Communication at Stellar Dreams**

London, ON, CA

An astrophysicist turned science communicator, space educator, author and space artist with a passion to bring space to the public!

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## **Biography**

Dr. Parshati Patel is an astrophysicist turned science communicator, space educator, author and artist. Originally from Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India, Parshati moved to Canada in 2006 to pursue Astronomy and graduated in Hons. BSc in Astronomy & Physics from the University of Toronto in 2010. She received her M.Sc. and Ph.D. in Astronomy and Planetary Science and Exploration under the supervision of Dr. Aaron Sigut & Dr. John Landstreet from Western University. For her Ph.D., Parshati studied young, massive stars and the disks surrounding them. She has completed professional certification in Public Relations and Communications, Project Management as well as certification in Digital Communications and Innovation from Western University's School of Continuing Studies. Parshati is a Certified Agile Project Manager. Parshati developed a passion for STEM education and outreach and transitioned into the field of Science Communication. For over a decade, Parshati has shared her passion for space, fostering awareness among the masses, particularly youth. She accomplishes this by spearheading award winning space outreach initiatives, organizing educational public events, delivering invited talks and contributing regularly to the media both in-person and online. Previously, she has worked as Educational Outreach and Communications Specialist at the Institute for Earth and Space Exploration at Western University and as a Program Designer and Education Advisor with the Youth STEM Initiatives team at the Canadian Space Agency (through the InterChange Canada program). Dr. Patel is an Adjunct Research Professor in the Faculty of Education at Western University. Parshati has conducted research in the Faculty of Education to understand and gauge the engagement of the participants as well as their outlook on STEM careers and interest in STEM fields. In addition to consulting for science books, she also recently authored a children's book called "My Books of Stars and Planets". Parshati often talks about her experience as a woman of colour venturing into the field of astronomy and barriers she had to overcome as an international student in the hopes to help others. She has co-founded Women of Color in STEAMM Canada in 2018. She co-founded Professional Managerial Association's BIPOC Network in 2020 and co-chaired it until 2023. She is also currently on the Board of Advisors for SEDS-Canada and Zenith Pathways.

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## **Industry Expertise**

Training and Development, Research, Education/Learning, Program Development

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## **Areas of Expertise**

Sci Art, STEM Education, Astrophysics, Astronomy, Planetary Science, Circumstellar Disks, Massive Stars, Science Communication, Education and Outreach, Public Engagement in Science, Women of Color in STEM

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## **Education**

### **University of Toronto**

B.Sc. (Hons.) Astronomy and Physics

### **Western University**

M. Sc. Astronomy (Planetary Science)

### **Western University**

Ph. D. Astronomy (Planetary Science and Exploration)

### **Western University**

Certificate Project Management

### **Western University**

Certificate Innovative Thinking

### **Western University**

Certificate Digital Communications

### **Western University**

Professional Certificate Communications and Public Relations

### **Western University**

Master the Entrepreneur Skillset Entrepreneurship/ Entrepreneurial Studies

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## **Accomplishments**

### **Professional Award of Excellence**

The Junior Astronauts Camp core team won the Canadian Space Agency's 2021 Award of Excellence. Parshati was Deputy Project Manager for the Junior Astronauts Camp project and was responsible for overall planning of the camp, working with the experts to develop the camp activities, develop camp processes and protocols, and lead the team throughout the planning and facilitation of the camp.

### **Woman of Influence**

Parshati was awarded the 'Women of Influence' award in May 2021 for her outstanding contributions to the field of space and science communications as a Gujarati in Canada. Parshati was born and brought up in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India, before she moved to Canada.

### **Award of Excellence - Operations**

Parshati proposed and led the Western University's Space Explorers Program at the historic David Dunlap Observatory in Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada, in partnership with The Town of Richmond Hill. The town of Richmond Hill and the partner organizations (including Western University) were awarded for unique programs, activities and events at David Dunlap Observatory in March 2019 by Parks and Recreation Ontario.

### **Gujarat Gaurav (Pride of Gujarat) Award - Female**

Parshati was awarded the Gujarat Gaurav (Pride of Gujarat) award in the Female category by Gujarat Public Affairs Council of Canada for outstanding contributions to Outreach and Research as a Gujarati in Canada in May 2019 in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

### **Social Media Prize by IAU**

Parshati was awarded a Social Media prize (a certificate and a telescope) by International Astronomical Union for outstanding contributions for popularizing the events on social media during the 100 Hours of Astronomy Campaign in January 2019. Parshati talked to various universities, organizations and members of the public during the 100 Hours of Astronomy Campaign.

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