

Why Astronomy?

- Personal
- Practical



1
00:00:10,559 --> 00:00:11,559

"My name is Amy Mainzer.

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00:00:11,559 --> 00:00:12,559

Hi I am Amy Mainzer.

3
00:00:12,559 --> 00:00:15,000

I am a research scientist at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

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00:00:15,000 --> 00:00:20,410

Right now I am working on WISE.

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00:00:20,410 --> 00:00:22,869

I am the deputy project scientist for that mission.

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00:00:22,869 --> 00:00:27,590

I am also working on another project using the data from WISE to search for asteroids

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00:00:27,590 --> 00:00:28,590

and comets.

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00:00:28,590 --> 00:00:30,359

That project is known as NEOWISE.

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00:00:30,359 --> 00:00:34,420

I am the principal investigator of the NEOWISE program.

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00:00:34,420 --> 00:00:39,030

My first thought of being an astronomer was when I was about six years old.

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00:00:39,030 --> 00:00:44,430

I would say the single most influential on my career as a whole has been my mother.

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00:00:44,430 --> 00:00:45,700

My mom is not a scientist.

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00:00:45,700 --> 00:00:46,739

She is an artist by profession.

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00:00:46,739 --> 00:00:50,519

She has always been interested in things.

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00:00:50,519 --> 00:00:51,710

She loves nature.

16

00:00:51,710 --> 00:00:53,390

Loves to look at birds and plants.

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00:00:53,390 --> 00:00:56,609

When I came home one day and said I wanted to become an astronomer.

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00:00:56,609 --> 00:00:58,649

She thought hey that is great.

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00:00:58,649 --> 00:00:59,760

Go do that.

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00:00:59,760 --> 00:01:01,119

Have fun.

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00:01:01,119 --> 00:01:04,860

Because of that she gave me the freedom to pursue my dream.

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00:01:04,860 --> 00:01:06,510

She was always very happy for me.

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00:01:06,510 --> 00:01:07,960

I was learning something.

24
00:01:07,960 --> 00:01:11,140
She was supportive of me when times got tough.

25
00:01:11,140 --> 00:01:14,000
When I had hard problems to solve at school.

26
00:01:14,000 --> 00:01:15,829
When I got my first job.

27
00:01:15,829 --> 00:01:20,170
It really made a big difference to have someone like that in my life.

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00:01:20,170 --> 00:01:23,549
I remember reading in this particular book about a place called JPL.

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00:01:23,549 --> 00:01:24,650
The Jet Propulsion Lab.

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00:01:24,650 --> 00:01:26,424
I said wow I guess that is where I ought to be.

31
00:01:26,424 --> 00:01:27,759
That is where they do this stuff.

32
00:01:27,759 --> 00:01:32,520
I was growing up in Ohio and JPL was in California which seemed like it was on the other side

33
00:01:32,520 --> 00:01:34,249
of the planet.

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00:01:34,249 --> 00:01:36,640
I always knew I needed to go there.

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00:01:36,640 --> 00:01:40,009

There is a lot of variety which I really like.

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00:01:40,009 --> 00:01:41,590

One day is never the same as the next.

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00:01:41,590 --> 00:01:44,819

Every day is different and really fun.

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00:01:44,819 --> 00:01:49,729

I started off as a kid wanting to work at JPL because of missions like Voyager.

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00:01:49,729 --> 00:01:53,600

The fact that it is still going on is incredible to me.

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00:01:53,600 --> 00:01:55,469

Don't be afraid to be curious.

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00:01:55,469 --> 00:02:00,530

Don't be afraid to ask silly questions.

42

00:02:00,530 --> 00:02:02,049

Why is the sky blue?

43

00:02:02,049 --> 00:02:06,719

It turns out silly questions have profound answers.