

Bio – Keivan Stassun

After earning A.B. degrees in physics and astronomy from UC Berkeley, and the PhD in astrophysics from the University of Wisconsin, Keivan Stassun was a NASA Hubble postdoctoral fellow before joining the Vanderbilt faculty in 2003. A recipient of a CAREER award from NSF and a Cottrell Scholar Award from the Research Corporation for Science Advancement, Stassun's research on stars and exoplanets has appeared in nearly 500 peer-reviewed journal articles. He is a co-investigator for the NASA Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) mission and chairs the executive committee of the Sloan Digital Sky Survey. From 2004 to 2015, he served as founding director of the Fisk-Vanderbilt Masters-to-PhD Bridge Program, which has become one of the nation's top producers of PhDs to underrepresented minorities in the physical sciences. To date, he has mentored 30 PhD dissertations in astronomy and astrophysics and placed more than 20 PhDs into academic research careers. He has served on the Astronomy and Astrophysics Advisory Committee (AAAC), the NSF Committee for Equal Opportunity in Science and Engineering (CEOSE), is a recipient of the American Physical Society's Nicholson Medal for Human Outreach, and is an elected Fellow of the American Physical Society, American Astronomical Society, and American Association for the Advancement of Science. He has served as an expert witness to the US House of Representatives Committee on Science and Technology. Stassun serves as founding director of the Vanderbilt Initiative in Data-intensive Astrophysics, and in 2017 he launched the Center for Autism & Innovation in Vanderbilt's School of Engineering, focused on advancing science and engineering through the engagement and advancement of individuals with autism. The Center has become permanently endowed by a \$10 million gift from Frist Family Foundation. Most recently, Stassun was selected for a \$1 million HHMI Professor award, was named Mentor of the Year by the AAAS, was honored by the White House with a Presidential Award for Excellence in Science and Engineering Mentoring, and served on the National Academies' Decadal Steering Committee for Astronomy & Astrophysics.