



# **Mars Exploration Rover Mission Focus of CSU Channel Islands Business & Technology Partnership Holiday Mixer**

Camarillo, Calif., Dec. 1, 2008-California State University Channel Islands Business & Technology Partnership (B&TP) will host its sixth-annual Holiday Mixer on Thursday, Dec. 4. The event will begin with a reception at 5:30 p.m. and will be followed by a presentation entitled, "Robotics: The Mars Exploration Rover Mission" beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Both the reception and presentation will be held on the CSUCI campus at the Aliso Hall Auditorium. The event is open to the public. Tickets are \$35 for B&TP members and are \$50 for non-members. Reservations are required for this event and can be made by contacting Mitchel Sloan, Director of University Affairs, 805-437-8916 or [mitchel.sloan@csuci.edu](mailto:mitchel.sloan@csuci.edu). Parking is complimentary for those who have made reservations. There will be way-finding signage on campus directing attendees to parking and the event.

The keynote speaker for the event is Mark A. Schwochert, a member of the Instruments and Science Data Systems Division Staff at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL). JPL, as a key member of the NASA team, enables the nation to explore space for the benefit of humankind by developing robotic space missions.

Schwochert is currently the Instrument Manager for the Orbiting Carbon Observatory (OCO) Mission that will launch in January of 2009. The OCO mission will collect precise global measurements of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in the Earth's atmosphere. Schwochert's previous work includes: Wide Field/Planetary Camera II - One of the main instruments on the Hubble Space Telescope; Cassini Imaging Science Subsystem - the imaging cameras on the Cassini mission to Jupiter and its' moons; Stardust Navigation Camera - imaging and science camera used to help navigate the Stardust spacecraft as it flew through the coma of comet Wild II; collecting dust samples for return to Earth; and the Mars Exploration Rover Cameras. He started as a summer intern at JPL in 1986 prior to receiving his bachelor of science degree in Mechanical Engineering from California State University Northridge in 1987. He also received a master of science degree in Mechanical Engineering from CSUN in 1993. Schwochert was presented the NASA Exception Achievement Medal in 2004 for his work on the Mars Exploration Rover Cameras.

For more information about this event contact Mitchel Sloan, Director of University Affairs, at 805-437-8916 or [Mitchel.sloan@csuci.edu](mailto:Mitchel.sloan@csuci.edu).

For media inquiries about this event contact Ceal Potts, Communication Specialist, at 805-437-8940 or [cecilia.potts@csuci.edu](mailto:cecilia.potts@csuci.edu).

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*CSUCI Mission Statement*

*Placing students at the center of the educational experience, California State University Channel Islands provides undergraduate and graduate education that facilitates learning within and across disciplines through integrative approaches, emphasizes experiential and service learning, and graduates students with multicultural and international perspectives.*