

# DR. PASCAL LEE APPOINTED AS NATIONAL SPACE SOCIETY VICE PRESIDENT FOR PLANETARY DEVELOPMENT

*Noted Planetary Scientist is Best Known for His Work in Mars Science and Human Exploration*

ALHAMBRA, CA, UNITED STATES, February 26, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Dr. Pascal Lee, a planetary scientist at the SETI Institute and NASA Ames Research Center, has been selected by the [National Space Society](#) (NSS) as its Vice President for Planetary Development. Lee has been a member of the organization for decades and a contributor to its outreach efforts. He has also received the society's coveted Space Pioneer Award for his work in Mars science and his field work on Moon and Mars exploration strategies in the Arctic. He joins other society VPs such as Dr. Greg Autry, the VP of Space Development, and Dr. Madhu Thangavelu, VP of NSS-Indian Relationships, in building a strong relationship between the NSS and academia.

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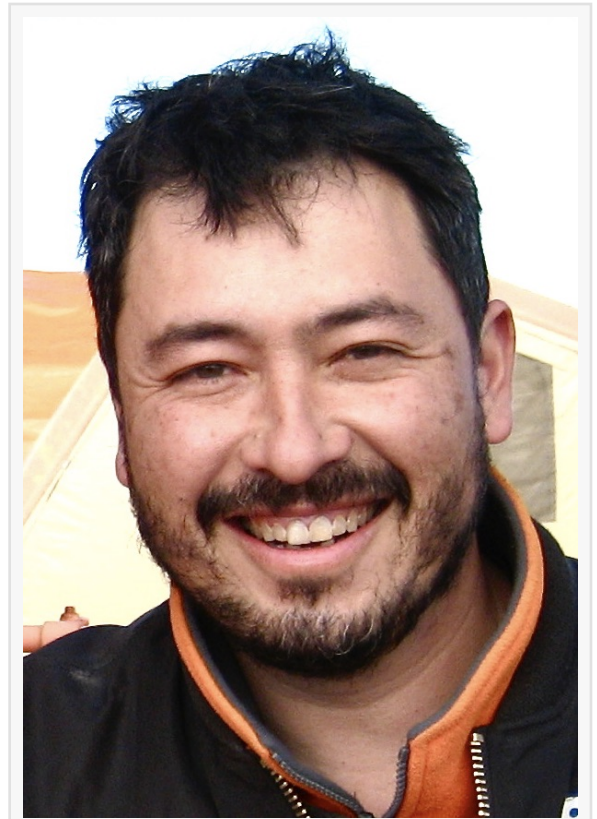
*Dale Skran, NSS COO/SVP*

The purview of this position includes the exploration, development, and settlement of celestial bodies with a focus on the Moon and Mars. In this capacity, Lee will help to represent the NSS to the scientific community, NASA, and the broader space community. He will also bring relevant scientific, industry, and NASA matters to the attention of the NSS leadership.

“The NSS team looks forward to working with Dr. Lee in crafting NSS strategy and projects with regard to Mars and the Moon,” said Dale Skran, NSS COO and SVP. “Dr. Lee brings a wealth of experience to the NSS, and will support NSS participation in the fast changing world of Martian and Lunar exploration and development.”

Lee's lengthy resume in space sciences includes over a quarter-century of Mars analog fieldwork as the leader of the NASA [Haughton-Mars Project](#) (HMP) on Devon Island in the High Arctic and his proposal of the Cold Early Mars model. Lee has also made significant contributions to the design, development, and field testing of advanced concepts and technologies for future Mars exploration.

Recent accomplishments include two important discoveries relating to the geological evolution of Mars. The first was his team's 2023 discovery of a relict modern glacier near the Martian equator. Lee commented, "Finding signs of recent glaciation near the equator of Mars opens up new possibilities in our search for life on that planet. Also, if our relict glacier still harbors ice, it would mean that humans could have access to water in regions where the climate is significantly less frigid than at higher latitudes." The second was the co-discovery, in 2024, of a previously overlooked volcano in the Noctis Labyrinthus region. This "Noctis Volcano", as it is currently called, is estimated to be about 280 miles (450 kilometers) in diameter and reaches about 5.6 miles (9 kilometers) at its highest point. It had gone unrecognized since Mariner 9 returned the first high-fidelity images in 1971 as its shape has been severely modified by deep erosion and collapse over time.



Dr. Pascal Lee. Credit: Mars Institute/Pascal Lee

Other accomplishments include the co-founding of the Mars Institute in 2002, the establishment of the Haughton-Mars project base on Devon Island in the High Arctic in 1997, leading the record-setting Northwest Passage Drive Expedition across the Arctic, and his recent service on the National Academies' Steering Committee on "A Science Strategy for the Human Exploration of Mars." Lee has written or co-authored several hundred scholarly papers. Important works include studies of Mars exploration with an emphasis on the design, development, and field testing of many advanced concepts and technologies, from robotic planetary rovers, helicopters, and hoppers, to spacesuits, crewed rovers—both unpressurized and pressurized—and planetary habitats.

Lee is also a space artist whose oil paintings, mostly about Mars exploration and space travel, are found in collections worldwide.

"These are defining times for our human future in space, particularly on the Moon and Mars," says Lee. "I am grateful for this opportunity to help the National Space Society shape this exciting future by sharing our members' boundless vision but also by advocating pragmatic, science-informed exploration and development strategies."

#### ABOUT THE NSS

The National Space Society is the preeminent non-partisan citizen's voice on space exploration, development, and settlement, reaching millions through its membership, numerous outreach channels, and media activities. The organization was founded in 1987 via a merger of the

National Space Institute and the L5 Society. To learn more about the NSS and its mission to establish humanity as a spacefaring species, visit us on the web at [nss.org](https://nss.org)

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