THE ✳ KAVLI PRIZE

BIOGRAPHIES
ASTROPHYSICS 2012

David C. Jewitt, Jane X. Luu and Michael E. Brown

David C. Jewitt

David Jewitt was born in the United Kingdom in 1958 and studied astronomy at University College London. In 1979 he began postgraduate work at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, winning a doctorate in 1983. His first job as an assistant professor began the same year at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, and it was there that he began his Slow-Moving Objects (SMO) survey in collaboration with Jane Luu that would eventually lead to the discovery of the Kuiper belt.

In 1988, during the course of the SMO survey, Jewitt moved to the Institute of Astronomy at the University of Hawaii as an associate professor. He continued to work there and at the university's Department of Physics and Astronomy until 2009 when he moved to the University of California, Los Angeles, as a professor in the Department of Earth and Space Sciences. In 2011 Jewitt was appointed direc-

tor of UCLA's Institute for Planets and Exoplanets.

In 1996 Jewitt was named Hawaii Scientist of the Year and awarded a NASA Exceptional Scientific Achievement Medal. In 2005, he was made a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and a member of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences.

Jane X. Luu

Jane Luu was born in South Vietnam in 1963. When the North Vietnamese army arrived in Saigon in 1975, Luu and her family had to flee the country because her father had been an interpreter for the US Army during the Vietnam War. Arriving in the United States as refugees, the Luus ended up with relatives in Kentucky. Luu excelled at science in school and won a

scholarship to study physics at Stanford University.

Graduating in 1984, she spent the summer before starting post-graduate studies at the University of California, Berkeley, working at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena. Inspired by the pictures of planets on the walls taken by the Voyager probes, she resolved to study planetary astronomy. After Berkeley she moved to the Massachusetts Institute for Technology and it was there, while working on her doctorate, that she teamed up with David Jewitt on the Slow-Moving Objects survey of the outer solar system. Luu won were doctorate in 1990 and then moved on to a job at Harvard University's Center for Astrophysics and later to the University of Leiden in the Netherlands. On returning to the United States, Luu took a break from observational astronomy and now works on instrumentation at MIT's Lincoln Laboratory, which seeks technological solutions to problems of national security.

In 1991 the American Astronomical Society awarded Luu the Annie J. Cannon Award in Astronomy. Asteroid 5430 Luu is named in her honour.

Michael E. Brown

Michael Brown was born in Alabama in 1965 and launched his career with an honourable mention in his fifth-grade science fair. He studied physics at Princeton University and went on to graduate studies in astronomy at the University of California, Berkeley, earning his Ph.D. in 1994. A couple of post-doctoral fellowships eventually led him to the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena in 1996, and it was there that he carried out his search for the tenth planet. He is now the Richard and Barbara Rosenberg Professor of Planetary Astronomy at Caltech.

Brown was awarded the Urey Prize by the American Astronomical Association's Division of Planetary Sciences in 2001 and Caltech's Richard P. Feynman Award for Outstanding Teaching in 2007. Following the discovery of Eris and the subsequent media attention, Time magazine named Brown one of the 100 most influential people of 2006. Brown is author of the book How I Killed Pluto and Why It Had It Coming.