

## **Eduardo Bendek, PhD, 2012**



### **What influenced your decision to attend graduate school at OSC?**

Mostly the fact that UA is a powerhouse in astronomical telescopes, and the mirror lab was manufacturing the Giant Magellan Telescope (GMT) mirrors. I saw a big opportunity to become specialized on the GMT mirrors, and then go back to Chile to work on that project.

### **What do you wish you would have known your first day of graduate school? Was there anything you wish you had done to prepare more for graduate school?**

I spent 10 years working in industry before coming back to graduate school. So, you can imagine that my first class of Electricity & Magnetism (E&M) was a bit rough. Taking a math 'refresher' course before I started would have probably been a good idea.

### **Which classes did you find most enjoyable? Which ones did you find most difficult?**

Most enjoyable was OPTI 505R with Professor Milster. Most difficult was OPTI 501, E&M, with Professor Mansuripur.

### **Was there an individual (professor, advisor, staff, friend, family member) who played a particularly important role in your education?**

Gail Varin, in the Academic Programs office, provided valuable advice on which classes to take and how to 'navigate' the PhD program.

### **What was your research while attending OSC?**

Multi-laser adaptive optics for astronomical telescopes.

### **What was the cost of rent in Tucson while you were in school?**

Approximately \$500/month for my room.

### **If you owned a car during graduate school, what year and model was it?**

2003 Toyota Corolla.

### **What was your favorite restaurant/student hangout near campus?**

The Taco Shop.

### **What did you do for fun during your time in graduate school?**

Mountain biking and road trips.

### **What was most memorable about your commencement ceremony?**

Having my parents attend my commencement ceremony.

### **At the time of your graduation, what were the most sought-after jobs/most popular industries/most popular companies?**

Tech industry in Silicon Valley—Apple, Google, Facebook, etc.

### **What was your first job after graduation?**

NASA Postdoctoral Fellow.

### **What was the most significant world event during your time in graduate school. How were you affected by this event?**

Election of President Barack Obama.

### **Was there a campus or community event in Tucson that was especially important to you?**

Davis-Monthan Airshow.

**What advice would you give to this year's graduating class?**

Enjoy learning the class material—this may be your last opportunity to be a full-time student. Now, I barely manage to spend one or two hours a week learning something new.