

Stanislav Yurevich Sazykin

Stanislav Sazykin, an associate research professor of physics and astronomy who was highly respected in his field of space science, died suddenly on May 4, 2021 at the age of 49.

Dr. Sazykin joined Rice in 2000 as a postdoctoral researcher, rising quickly to associate research professor.

“Stan was a distinguished computational physicist and a well-established and highly respected member of the space plasma physics community,” said Richard Wolf, a professor emeritus and research professor of physics and astronomy at Rice. “He was one of the smartest people any of us have ever encountered, with an extraordinarily rigorous and penetrating mind.”

After completing bachelor’s and master’s degrees at the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology, Sazykin came to the United States in 1993 as an exchange student as part of the Bush-Gorbachev Exchange Program. He earned an additional bachelor’s degree and a Ph.D. from Utah State University under the direction of Bela Fejer.

At Utah State, Sazykin initially worked on equatorial and low-latitude thermospheric winds, but later shifted to theoretical studies of the penetration of magnetospheric electric fields in the ionosphere under the guidance of Fejer, as well as Richard Wolf and Robert Spiro at Rice.

As a graduate student, Sazykin reprogrammed most of the Rice Convection Model (RCM) of the Earth’s inner magnetosphere. At Rice, he led the continued development and use of the RCM, extending its usefulness by participating in multiple code-coupling projects with other large-scale models.

“It is largely through Stan’s efforts that the RCM is being used by several research groups around the country and is available for scientific use through NASA’s Community Coordinated Modeling Center,” Wolf said. “When anyone had questions about the RCM and its implementation, Stan was the person to consult.”

He also played an important role in the development of the Space Weather Modeling Framework, a University of Michigan-led effort that, coupled with the RCM, continues to provide a comprehensive picture of the space environment near Earth for commercial, government and private customers.

“Stan was an active member of the space science community, convening sessions at meetings and focus groups, chairing sessions with good humor and penetrating comments,” said Frank Toffoletto, a professor of physics and astronomy. For five years, he was a member of the steering committee of the National Science Foundation’s Geospace Environment Modeling program.

Stan is survived by his wife, Ying and three sons, Andrew, Logan, Victor and his parents, Larisa and Yuri Sazykin.

A Celebration of Life



Stanislav (Stan) Sazykin

April 17, 1972 – May 4, 2021

Cohen House, Rice University
May 21, 2021



Order of Service



Musical Prelude

"YOU RAISE ME UP"
Sung by: Josh Grobin

Welcome

James Mayer
CHAPLAIN

Tributes

James Mayer
CHAPLAIN

Thomas Killian
DEAN, WIESS SCHOOL OF
NATURAL SCIENCES

Thomas Hill
RICE COLLEAGUE

Musical Interlude

"I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU"
Sung by: Dolly Parton

Tributes

Andrea Isella
RICE COLLEAGUE

Edward Cruz
WESTBURY SOCCER

Poem

"E PLURIBUS UNUM"
Written by: Andrew Sazykin

Musical Postlude

"TIME TO SAY GOODBYE"
Sung by: Sarah Brightman & Andrea Bocelli

Reception at the Cohen House following the service

The Sazykin family wishes to acknowledge with deep appreciation the many expressions of concern, sympathy, and kindness during this difficult time.