

# Athena Community People



## Laura Brenneman

Laura is an astrophysicist at the **Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory** (Cambridge, MA, USA). She studies the X-ray properties of supermassive black hole systems in AGN and has leadership roles in designing future X-ray missions for **NASA** and other international space agencies. Laura has been a pioneer in the field of determining how fast black holes spin and has published over 40 articles in scholarly journals on her research, including a short book on measuring the angular momenta of black holes (Springer, 2013).

Laura is currently a co-leader of Athena's "Energetic Universe" science working group, charged with overseeing the development of the science objectives and observing plan for the study of the formation, growth and evolution of moderate-to high-redshift AGN, feedback from local AGN and star-forming galaxies, the immediate environments of supermassive black holes, the physics of accretion in stellar-mass binary systems, and luminous extragalactic transients.



Credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech/R. Hurt (IPAC)

Artist's impression of a supermassive black hole with millions to billions times the mass of our sun.