Alberto Behar 1967-2015

Dr. Alberto Behar, a long-time researcher at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, died January, 9, 2015 in a small-plane accident near Van Nuys, CA.

An expert on robotics for exploring extreme environments on Earth and other planets, Behar worked in the Avionics, Instruments, and Science divisions at JPL. He played a key role in developing in situ robotic systems for measuring Earth's ice sheets in Antarctica and Greenland using submarines, ice rovers, and boats. He also participated in the exploration of Mars, serving as the Investigation Scientist for both the Dynamic Albedo of Neutrons (DAN) instrument on the Curiosity rover and the High Energy Neutron Detector on the Mars Odyssey orbiter. Alberto was a research professor in the School of Earth and Space Exploration at Arizona State University. He held a PhD in Electrical Engineering from the University of Southern California.

Thomas Wagner, the Cryosphere Program Scientist at NASA Headquarters, summed up Behar this way: “From his submarines that peeked under Antarctica to his boats that raced Greenland's rivers, Alberto's work enabled measurements of things we'd never known. His creativity knew few bounds. He is, and will forever be, sorely missed.”