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Observing Gravitational Waves with Advanced LIGO and Hunting for Counterparts

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In 2015 the LIGO detectors observed gravitational waves from two distinct stellar-mass binary black hole mergers. This long awaited feat allowed us to test general relativity in the strong-field regime and estimate the rate of compact object mergers consisting of black holes and neutron stars. During this first observing run alerts were sent to electromagnetic partners, hunting for potential counterparts. The same continues in the second observing run of the Advanced detector era, which started in November of last year and is currently underway. In this talk I will discuss the first detections, our search for gravitational waves from the merger of compact objects and the quest for a coincident electromagnetic signal.

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