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NASA SELECTS STUDENT EXPERIMENTS TO FLY ON SOUNDING ROCKET

NASA has selected students from nine schools around the country to prepare and fly their experiments on a NASA sounding rocket.

During the next four weeks students and their teachers will work with engineers and technicians from NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, Wallops Flight Facility, Wallops Island, Va., to prepare their experiments for flight. The student experiments will be flown on a NASA suborbital Orion sounding rocket on June 8.

The students will study the effects of the flight environment, such as radiation and high gravitational forces, on a variety of materials as the rocket flies to an altitude more than 25 miles above Earth. In addition, atmospheric and solar experiments will be conducted.

"Sounding rockets provide the opportunity for students to fully experience the thrill of developing their own experiment and have hands-on involvement in a NASA rocket project," said Phil Eberspacher, chief of the Sounding Rocket Program Office at Wallops. "We hope this experience shows them the cool stuff NASA does and that they will want to come be a part of the team as we explore the universe," he added.

The nine teams were competitively selected to participate in the national program. Four of the teams were selected as part of the NASA Student Involvement Program (NSIP) while the other five were selected as part of the FreeSPACE program.

The NSIP program is a national program of six investigations and design challenges for grades K-12 that link students directly with NASA's exciting missions of exploration and discovery.

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The FreeSPACE project offers students an opportunity to fly secondary experiments on NASA Sounding Rocket Program missions. The five schools participating in the FreeSPACE project were selected through the NASA Explorer Schools program.

The schools represent 5 of the 100 NASA Explorer Schools in the program at the present time. The schools partner with NASA over a three-year period to increase student interest, performance and participation in science, mathematics, and technology fields of study and careers.

Approximately 35 NSIP and FreeSPACE students will spend the launch week participating in the final preparations of the experiments and launch reviews, receive instruction in rocketry, view the launch of the rocket, and begin analysis of their data.

The winning entrees in the NSIP flight opportunities competition are:

North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics, Durham, N.C.
Columbus High School, Columbus, Ga.
Susan E. Wagner High School, Staten Island, N.Y.
Glenbrook North High School, Northbrook, Ill.

The FreeSPACE schools are:

Greencastle-Antrim High School, Greencastle, Pa.
North Ridge Elementary School, Moreno Valley, Calif.
Key Peninsula Middle School, Lakebay, Wash.
Waimea Middle School, Kamuela, Hawaii
Wendover High School, Wendover, Utah

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