

# NASA News



National Aeronautics and  
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## **NASA WALLOPS TEAMING WITH AIR FORCE ACADEMY FOR ROCKET LAUNCH**

Part of a rigorous and demanding capstone project, senior cadets from the United States Air Force Academy are prepared to launch their suborbital sounding rocket from the NASA Wallops Flight Facility, Wallops Island, Va.

The Air Force Academy cadets have planned, designed, fabricated and tested the rocket, named FalconLaunch V. Only one step remains: launch.

FalconLAUNCH V is scheduled for launch between 6 and 9 a.m. (EDT), May 22, with backup launch dates of May 23 through 25. A previous launch attempt in April from Wallops was canceled because of high winds.

The cadets plan for FalconLAUNCH V to travel to an altitude of 28 miles, while carrying a 5 pound payload. The rocket is nearly 10 feet in length and 7 inches in diameter.

“The Air Force Academy cadets put a lot of effort in this project. All the preflight testing went extremely well and we have every expectation that the flight will be picture perfect,” said Phil Eberspecker, chief of NASA’s Sounding Rockets Program Office.

The academy’s FalconLAUNCH sounding rocket program began in 2002. The program is a two semester capstone design course for seniors majoring in astronautical engineering, systems engineering and systems engineering management. The goals for the program are to provide a “hands-on” educational experience for cadets, while applying a high level of practical engineering to solve real-world problems.

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“This project was a great collaboration between NASA and the US Air Force that allowed the Air Force Academy cadets to learn the NASA approach to conducting a small suborbital space mission,” Eberspacher said.

The Air Force Academy project is one of several university student design activities being supported by the NASA Wallops Flight Facility. These projects develop critical skills and capabilities needed to support science research and the Vision for Space Exploration.

For more information about the NASA Wallops Flight Facility on the Internet, visit  
**<http://www.nasa.gov/wallops>**

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