

Cooperative Agreement NCC8-222

Visiting Researcher Exchange and Outreach (VREO) Program Report Five-Year Cooperative Agreement with a One-Year No Cost Extension May 1, 2001 to April 30, 2007

Location: NASA Marshall Space Flight Center, Huntsville, AL

Point of Contact: Dr. Donald Perkey, Universities Space Research (256-961-7734)

Program Description: The Visiting Researcher Exchange and Outreach (VREO) is a partnership between the NASA Marshall Space Flight Center (NASA/MSFC) Academic Affairs Office and Universities Space Research Association (USRA). The project is designed to stimulate involvement of university, private sector, and government agency researchers in NASA/MSFC research and development. VREO's goal is to provide an effective link for collaboration between NASA/MSFC scientists, engineers, and technologists and the education and aerospace industry communities. Visiting Researchers include scientists and engineers, high school, undergraduate and graduate students, college faculty, post-doctoral and distinguished senior researchers. Visiting researchers are requested and funded by NASA/MSFC project offices, laboratories, and directorates. VREO meets the just-in-time, specialized researcher needs of MSFC. It provides flexibility in duration of researcher services, access to a wide network of universities, and allows for industry specialists as well as uniquely qualified students to perform research on and off site. Appointments vary in length and are structured to meet the specific research task or need being addressed. Labs requesting researchers pay salaries or stipends and any associated costs such as travel and per diem. The funding provided by the requesting organization includes a fee to cover the administrative costs of the program.

Relevance to NASA: VREO brings the talents of professionals, outside of NASA, to bear on NASA projects. It allows students, faculty, and private sector experts opportunities to contribute to our nation's space program.

Benefits to Society: Students are educated in high technology fields so that they can contribute along with other professionals in those technologies which drive this nation's economy.

Goals: VREO's goal is to provide an effective link for collaboration between NASA/MSFC scientists, engineers, and technologists and the education and aerospace industry communities.

Accomplishments: All-in all, VREO has fulfilled its mission and met its goal of facilitation involvement of university, private sector, and government agency researchers in NASA/MSFC research and development. VREO's 150 participants included high school through graduate students, K-12 teachers through university faculty, and visiting

professionals and researchers from 20 states, Puerto Rico, and France. VREO also facilitated several workshops.

Student Accomplishments: VREO links NASA/MSFC programs to expertise from academia, private industry, and other governmental agencies to further NASA missions and goals. Educationally, VREO has provided opportunities for university and pre-college students through student research appointments.

Participants in VREO from the first through the sixth project year have included a total of 150 individuals. From May 2001 through April 2007, VREO participants have included:

- 1 High School Student
- 69 Undergraduate Students
- 28 Graduate Students
- 19 University Faculty Members
- 12 K-12 Teachers
- 16 Visiting Professionals
- 1 Administrator
- 5 Visiting Researchers
- 4 Workshops
- 1 Seminar