



News Release

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Five Century Students Chosen for NASA Program

Five [Century College engineering](#) students have been selected to participate in the National Community College Aerospace Scholars program at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston May 20 to 22.

Century will be sending more students to the program than any other college in the country.

The Century students chosen for this honor are Dan Pitts of Eagan, Alex Schmidberger of Lino Lakes, Dale Frolik of St. Paul, Jonathon Pechuman of Roseville and Deborah Baran of White Bear Lake. All are pursuing degrees in electrical engineering, except Schmidberger, who is focusing on mechanical engineering. Schmidberger is a Forest Lake High School student who is attending Century through the Post-Secondary Enrollment Options program.

The Century students are among 60 community college students from across the country to be part of this pilot program. To be selected, the students completed four Web-based assignments during the school

year, scoring at least a 96 average to qualify for the experience. The assignments required the students to design a mission to Mars, including a timeline, budget and a complete proposal with details about equipment, propulsion and communication. They also had to compose a drawing of a MARS rover.

The Century students said they spent from 20 to 30 hours on each assignment and learned more about Mars than they ever thought possible.

Century Engineering Prof. Tim Grebner encouraged the students to apply for the program.

The NASA experience will involve spending three days at NASA's Johnson Space Center. Students will have the opportunity to interact with each other as they learn more about careers in science and engineering. Students will form teams and establish fictional companies aimed at Mars exploration. Each company is responsible for developing a prototype rover, designing a line drawing of the rover and forming the company infrastructure, including a budget, communications and presentations.

The on-site experience includes briefings by noted NASA employees – including astronauts.

The students agreed that working at NASA is a dream come true for engineering students.

“Having the opportunity to go there and work with the scientists will allow us to grow as engineering students,” said Pechuman.

The National Community College Aerospace Scholars is a pilot program based on Texas Aerospace Scholars, originally created by the state of Texas in partnership with NASA and the Texas educational community. Both programs are designed to encourage community college students to enter careers in science and engineering and ultimately join the nation's highly technical workforce.

With this program, NASA continues the agency's investment in educational programs that attract and retain students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, disciplines critical to NASA's future missions.

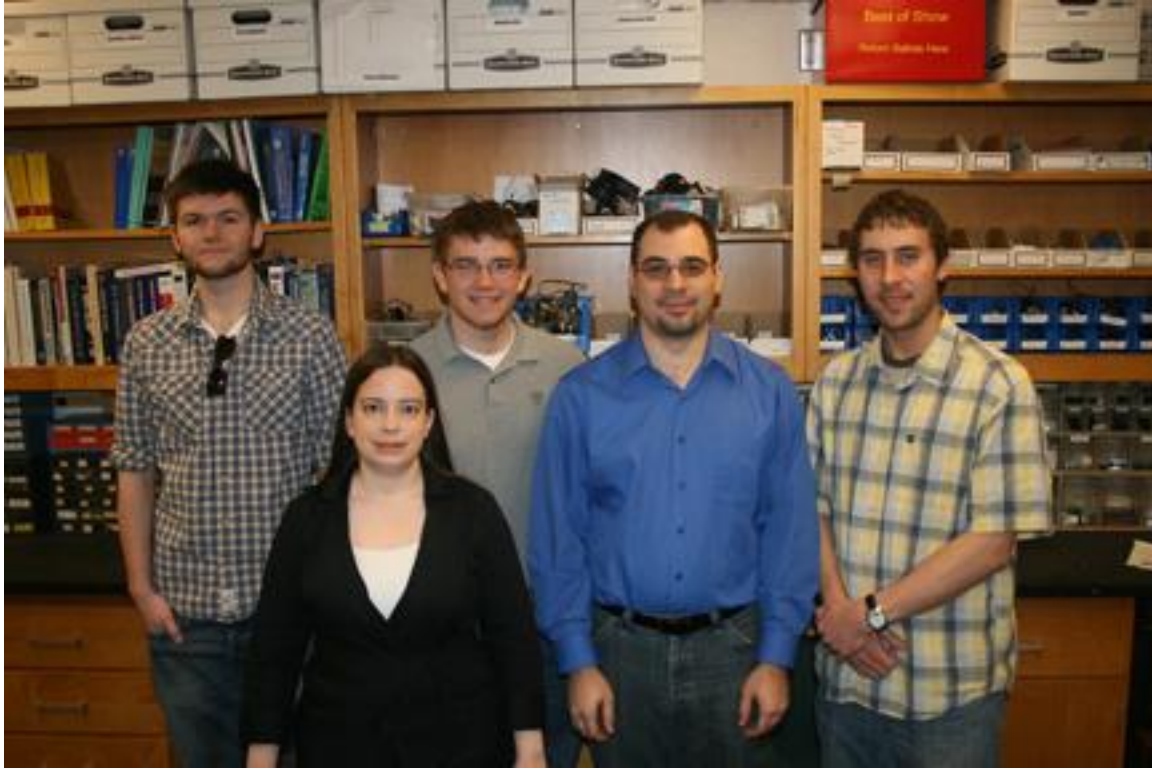


Photo: Century students Dan Pitts, Deborah Baran, Alex Schmidberger, Dale Frolik, Jonathon Pechuman