



NATIONAL SPACE DESIGN COMPETITION

StellarXplorers X National Finals Set for April!

STELLARXPLORES
National Space Design Competition
2023-2024 NATIONAL FINALISTS

- Edmond Memorial High School #1 – Edmond, OK
- Edmond North High School #3 – Edmond, OK
- Great Mills High School – Great Mills, MD
- Irvine High School #1 – Irvine, CA
- Irvine High School #2 – Irvine, CA
- Irvine High School #3 – Irvine, CA
- North Allegheny High School AFJROTC #1 – Pittsburgh, PA
- North Quincy High School AFJROTC – North Quincy, MA
- Palos Verdes Peninsula High School #1 – Rolling Hills Estate, CA
- Red Mountain High School #6 – Mesa, AZ

After 6 online rounds (practice and qualifying), 99 teams advanced to the Semifinal Round held Feb 8-11, 2024. From that weekend of competition, emerged the top 10 teams that will be competing in the National Finals Competition in Denver, CO in April.

The Finalist teams include some familiar organizations, but also some brand-new to the Finals' stage.

With every round, the competition increases in its level of difficulty, and the National Finals is no different. During this last phase to determine the competition champions, teams will solve a mission involving all the skills they've developed over the course of the season challenging what they've learned regarding orbits, satellites and launch vehicle components. Teams will also present their solutions to a panel of industry experts on the second day of competition, in addition to completing a final academic quiz testing their

knowledge of the material covered in Nova Space's *StellarXplorers Space Foundations* course.

While only 10 teams make the National Finals, every team that competed this season should be proud of their accomplishments. It was a season of challenging missions, new academic quiz content, and great opportunities for learning.

STELLARCAMPS



Looking for STEM programs to offer students during the summer or want to bolster your StellarXplorers skills? We've got you covered!

Individuals and organizations interested in a space-focused summer camp can now purchase our StellarCamps curriculum. [The full camp curriculum is available for purchase now on our website.](#)

Participants learn about space systems (just like what they would be learning in our National Space Design Competition), **and no prior experience is required!**

StellarCamps are best suited for middle and high school students who are just getting into aerospace and want to learn more.

SPONSOR NEWS

AFA Welcomes Bahethi Family Foundation as Newest STEM Program Supporter

StellarXplorers is thrilled to announce its latest sponsor aiding the effort to inspire students to pursue STEM careers – **Bahethi Family Foundation**.

Om and Sara Bahethi established the Bahethi Family Foundation (BFF) in 2012 to empower individuals in science and technology. Since then, they have generously contributed over \$3 million to scholarships, schools, colleges, and universities across the United States and Rajasthan, India. Their dedication to fostering STEM education propels the foundation's ongoing commitment to giving back and creating opportunities for others, as they once received themselves.

Bahethi Family Foundation is not only supporting StellarXplorers this year, but also AFA's other STEM program, CyberPatriot.

AFA is excited to have their support heading into new competition seasons, as these critical funds help to ensure high-quality and impactful programs are provided to the next generation of STEM scholars and space professionals. [Click here to read the full announcement.](#)



**BAHETHI FAMILY
FOUNDATION**



STEM RESOURCES

Join the StellarXplorers Alumni Network

The StellarXplorers Alumni Network is intended to connect program alumni with each other and with program sponsors and supporters from industry and academia. Within this group we will share networking opportunities, available internships, job postings, and more!

This is a private group for past and present StellarXplorers participants. You must be at least 16 years of age to join, per LinkedIn account regulations. All requests to join will be reviewed by StellarXplorers staff to verify participation in the program.

To join, visit: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12721859/>



SSAI and the Bahethi Family Foundation partnering to provide scholarship opportunities

The BFF Riya Bhakkad Memorial Scholarship Program focuses on inclusivity and diversity in professional development committed to shattering barriers and implicit unconscious bias in recruitment, aimed at empowering underrepresented groups. It's a step towards creating a diverse workforce enriched with highly qualified candidates from various backgrounds. This program aims to increase visibility for leaders in diversity, enhance engagement, and attract top talent from underrepresented and disabled communities.

Selected recipients will receive a scholarship of up to \$10,000 to participate in a 12-week program with an advisor from SSAI in a remote environment for the duration of the program. In addition to technical training within STEM fields, this program will offer and support professional development training tailored to each intern.

The application window for the Summer 2024 session opens this Monday, March 18th and will close April 12th. For more information, visit <https://bahethifoundation.org/scholarship/>.



The Riya Bhakkad Memorial Scholarship



Program Eligibility

Candidates must be:

- Currently enrolled at an accredited school
- In good academic standing with their institution (there is no GPA requirement)
- Majoring in a field within STEM guidelines
- Committed to and have the availability to participate in the program for 12 weeks



Scholarship web page

Application Requirements

The application window opens on March 18th and will close on April 12th. Application documents must be submitted, preferably in one combined PDF or Word document to bff.internships@gmail.com by 11:59 pm EST on April 12th, 2024.

All applicants must submit the following:

1. Answers to the essay questions listed at right, answered concisely on separate pages, adhering to a MAXIMUM of 400 words per question:
2. One academic or professional recommendation letter
3. Your most recent unofficial transcripts
4. Current resume

Science Systems and Applications, Inc. (SSAI) and the Bahethi Family Foundation (BFF) are partnering to provide equitable opportunities to the STEM community. SSAI, in partnership with HBCUs, MSIs, and other select colleges and universities, has crafted a specialized program for ambitious students eager to expand their horizons. Selected candidates will embark on a transformative journey, enhancing their knowledge and skill set through real-world training with leading experts from prestigious organizations like NASA, NOAA, USDA, USAID, EPA, and NIH. This program is not just education, it's a fusion of academic pursuits tightly aligned with the student's degree goals and personal interests.

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- a. Provide 3 STEM areas of interest.
- b. What are your personal goals in the next 5 years?
- c. How would this program help to support those goals?
- d. This program allows students to provide projects or research ideas they would like to work on during their internship. If applicable, please list those ideas in detail.
- e. In your opinion, how do STEM careers make a societal difference in communities?
- f. How would this scholarship award help support your financial and academic needs?

SPACE NEWS



Curious About What's Happening Overhead?

Check out the Space.com [Space Calendar](#) to stay up to date with upcoming planned rocket launches and skywatching-worthy dates.

And in case you missed it...

- 1 FEB 2024 | [Space Force Guardian to reach orbit for 1st time on SpaceX's Crew-9 astronaut launch](#)
- 1 FEB 2024 | [Japan's SLIM moon lander snaps final pics before going dormant](#)
- 5 FEB 2024 | [Solar maximum is coming, but we won't know it happened until 7 months after it's over](#)
- 8 FEB 2024 | [SpaceX launches NASA's PACE satellite to study Earth's oceans, air and climate](#)
- 14 FEB 2024 | [SpaceX deorbiting 100 older Starlink satellites to 'keep space safe and sustainable'](#)
- 15 FEB 2024 | [SpaceX launches private 'Odysseus' lander on moon mission by Intuitive Machines](#)
- 15 FEB 2024 | [Russian plans for space-based nuclear weapon to target satellites spark concern in US](#)
- 18 FEB 2024 | [Rocket Lab launches ADRAS-J space junk inspection satellite for Astroscale](#)
- 20 FEB 2024 | [Why Firefly Aerospace's Alpha rocket deployed satellite in wrong orbit in December](#)
- 21 FEB 2024 | [NASA brings back retro 'worm' logo for upcoming Artemis 2 moon mission](#)
- 21 FEB 2024 | [Private Varda Space capsule returns to Earth with space-grown antiviral drug aboard](#)
- 22 FEB 2024 | [NASA Eclipse Soundscapes Project will record how 2024's total solar eclipse impacts nature](#)
- 26 FEB 2024 | [Ingenuity Mars helicopter snapped rotor blade during landing last month](#)
- 26 FEB 2024 | [It's alive! JAXA's SLIM moon lander sends home new photos](#)
- 26 FEB 2024 | [NASA's OSIRIS-APEX asteroid probe wakes up after surviving close pass by the sun](#)
- 27 FEB 2024 | [NASA's Dana Weigel will be 1st female program manager for ISS](#)
- 29 FEB 2024 | [Goodnight, Odysseus. Intuitive Machines' private moon lander goes offline — but could it rise again?](#)

Images from space:



A Gaseous Rose

Roses are red, violets are blue, and this stunning image of the Rosette Nebula captured by Tommy Lease of the Denver Astronomical Society is seriously breathtaking. (Image credit: Tommy Lease (Denver Astronomical Society))



[James Webb Space Telescope sees the infrared skeleton of a galaxy](#)

The James Webb Space Telescope's infrared view of the spiral galaxy NGC 1559. (Image credit: ESA/Webb/NASA/CSA/A. Leroy, J. Lee and the PHANGS Team)

JUST FOR FUN

Apollo Astronaut's Granddaughter Opens Immersive 'Lunar Light' Moonwalk Experience in Dallas



Unlike in some other VR experiences, in "The Lunar Light" all of the virtual surfaces (like the lunar surface seen here) are molded in real life so what you virtually touch you actually feel. (Image credit: Back to Space)

What do you get when you mix an Apollo astronaut's legacy with a trio of shipping containers, the latest in VR technology, the cousin of a "Star Wars" robot and an escape room like no other?

Well, if you are Danielle Roosa, the answer is clear: An immersive experience that can give anyone (10 years of age or older) [the chance to explore the moon](#).

Launching on Leap Day (Feb. 29) in Dallas, Texas, "[The Lunar Light: Discovery](#)" is the creation of Roosa's "Back to Space," a transmedia organization that is working to inspire more interest in space, science and technology through mixed-reality installations. Part interactive theater and part virtual simulation, "The Lunar Light" is an hour-long adventure that challenges groups of visitors to become astronauts as they arrive on the moon following

an asteroid strike in the year 2055. [Click to read more on Space.com](#).

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We would love to share any stories about your team. Send them our way: info@stellarxplorers.org.

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