



# Spring 2023 Highlights

## WVU and NASA help plant the seeds for STEM among West Virginia youth in Plant the Moon Challenge



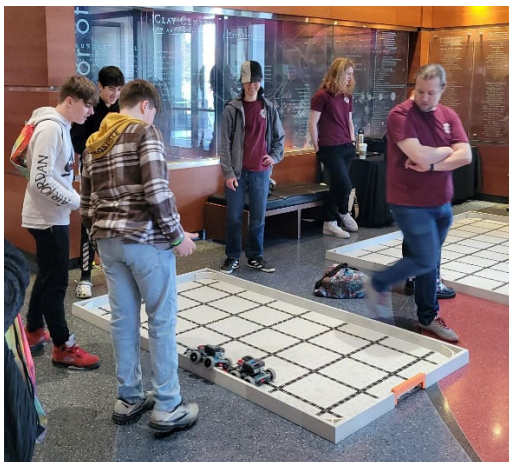
Seventy-four teams from schools and organizations serving diverse populations of traditionally underserved and underrepresented elementary, middle, and high school students in West Virginia participated for the first time in the Plant the Moon Challenge. Sixty-four of the teams were funded by a NASA OSTEM KIDS grant and ten were funded by WVSGC. Dr. Laurie Ruberg of Plants LLC, our state-wide coordinator, did an outstanding job of helping our teams throughout the 8-week grow season. True to form, WV showed the world what they are made of and had **two teams** place in the **international competition!** Only four awards were

given out per age group, and over 700 entries. Congratulations to Princeton Middle School (Team Demeter, coach Christina Lester) and Princeton High School (Team Gernips, coach Carol Whitteker). The top eight WV teams won experiential STEM awards as a part of the grant.

The project's Plant the Moon Challenge will be offered again in the spring semesters of 2024 and 2025 and we hope to have even more teams compete.

**NASA Day 2023** was **April 3<sup>rd</sup>** at the Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences in Charleston, WV. The NASA Day continues to be one of the largest events that we host - over 250 students attended. This year's theme was "Engineering the Stars." Rocket Scientist Dr. Constance Meadors shared a powerful presentation: Diamonds in the Sky, Engineering Tomorrow's STARS Today!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bPiHQGWfe-4>



### **A very special thank you to:**

The Clay Center and their staff for hosting the event; Dr. Todd Ensign, Josh Revels, and all the volunteers from NASA IV &V ERC; Hannah Payne and Vathani Amarasingham from WV State University (CASTEM); Marcus Fisher, Lucas Kniska and Marcos Kniska from Trinity Christian School; Deacon Stone and Kara Mullins from RCBI and the team of undergraduate students from WV State University, Marshall University, and WVU for providing the hands-on science activities for the day.

The following West Virginia Middle Schools attended this year's event:

Clay, Sissonville, South Charleston, Horace Mann, Cross Lanes Christian, and Fayetteville.

### **April 13<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup>: NASA WV Space Grant and the NASA WV EPSCoR Board Meeting**

Thursday evening events were at the Embassy Suites in Charleston, WV, where guests received a dynamic presentation by Senior Education Officer Sue Ann Heatherly at the Greenbank Observatory. Sue Ann shared the success story of the WV Science Public Outreach Team (SPOT) and the 10-year partnership with WV Space Grant. Dr. Marek Krasnansky presented on the Space Flight Design Challenge, sharing the program's success, and reigniting the passion for others to join. We also enjoyed the encouraging remarks from Dr. T. Ramon Stuart, President of West Virginia University Institution of Technology. Dr. Stuart advocates for students, and we look forward to collaborating with him for many years at WVU Tech. On Friday, the Board meeting was held on the campus at West Virginia State University. Thanks, Dr. Zaman, for hosting and to Provost Carney for her greetings and support of students.

Following the working meeting many of the board members joined Dr. Zaman for a tour of the historic campus. To the left, see Dr. Weist at the Kathryn Johnson statue at West Virginia State University. Dr. Wiest shared that West Virginia Wesleyan also has a Katherine Johnson statue.



### **Congratulations on all the 2023-2024 NASA WV SGC and NASA WV EPSCoR awards.**

**Non-student awards** went to the following Institutions: Bluefield State University, Fairmont State University, Glenville State University, Marshall University, Shepherd University, West Liberty University, West Virginia University and West Virginia University Institution of Technology

### **NASA WV SGC awarded 40 student awards!**

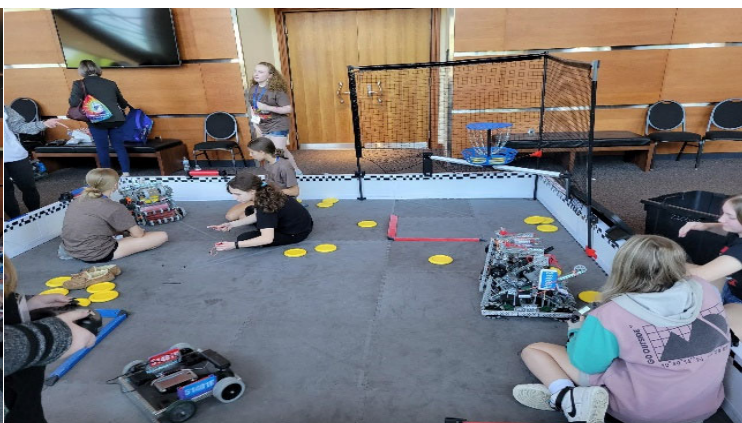
Please extend a special thank you to faculty members at all affiliate institutions for the time and dedication they give to mentoring our students. We appreciate you.

## **Thank You!**



**May 10<sup>th</sup>**, we held the 2<sup>nd</sup> COVERAGE All-Girls VEX Robotics Expo at the Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences. The West Virginia Middle school girls experienced an amazing expo and hands-on demonstrations of the First Lego League and VEX robotics as well as drone competitions. The event is designed to advance girls education and inspire/support female students to pursue STEM careers. In the morning, they met and heard from several accomplished West Virginia women in the STEM field. The after school robotics clubs were funded by the Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation and the event is funded by NCWIT and NASA WV SGC.

Dr. Michelle Foster, Engineer and President and CEO of the Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation gave remarks as well as one of our newest board members Dr. Tamara Floyd-Smith, Dean LCN College of Engineering and Sciences WVU Tech. There was also a keynote presentation by Roya Maher, PMP President & CEO of her own business [A3LFederalWorks.com](http://A3LFederalWorks.com)





## Around Town

We cannot be everywhere, but we certainly appreciate being invited. Remember we can send materials or help sponsor events in your area. Below are two of the many spring events we helped sponsor.



Bluefield State University held their **34<sup>th</sup> annual spring career fair in March** and it is great to see the students representing WV SGC on campus – including the soccer team and honors students.

On **April 28, the 28th Annual Research Symposium** was held on the campus at West Virginia State University. The event was sponsored by US Dept of Education and Title III, WV Department of Education, AEP, AT&T Marathon Corporation, and NASA WV SGC.

A special thank you to Dr. Marek Krasnansky, Tyler Walker, Zimren Dixon and Zachery Toler for sharing the research presentation that was sponsored by NASA WVSGC. Dr. Zaman said, “It was the best research symposium ever!”



### TWENTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM



April 28, 2023  
Sponsored by:



US Department of  
Education and Title III



West Virginia DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION





## Space Flight Design Challenge Update



The Space Flight Design Challenge teams were in Morgantown to integrate all their experiments together. There are students from WVU, WVSU, WVWC, WVUIT and BRCTC. At this moment they are almost done with the work. Integration and testing at Wallops will be June 19, 23 and RockSat-X launch is scheduled for August 15, 2023. Space Grant team member Alyssa George has been helping the teams order their supplies this year (and there are a lot of them) and will be able to join them at Wallops. If you would like to attend the Rocket launch from [NASA Wallops Flight Facility](https://www.nasa.gov/wallops-flight-facility), Wallops Island, VA, please let Alyssa know and we will get some VIP passes!

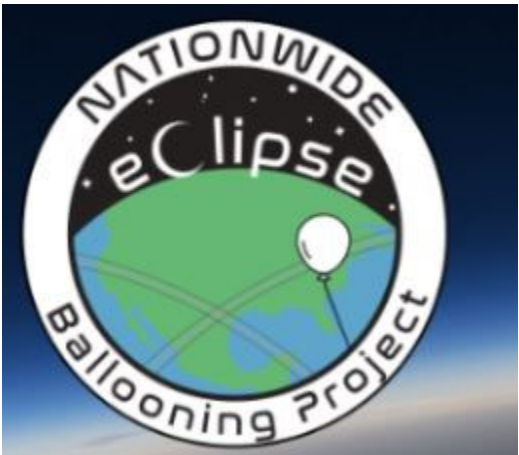
### Student Round-UP

Our former NASA WV SGC Student worker, WV SGC fellowship awardee, and NASA Scholar Savannah Toney (mechanical engineering and aerospace engineering) was named among the 52 WVU Foundation Outstanding Seniors! We are so proud of Savannah!



Multiple fellowship awardee Mateo Cerasoli (mechanical engineering and aerospace engineering, WVU) won the best undergraduate presentation award for his space grant funded work at the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics' Young Professionals, Students and Educators conference. He was also extensively involved in the experimental rocketry club and has landed a position at the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab.





## NEBP Update

The Nationwide Eclipse Ballooning Project is being co-led by Candy Cordwell and Mr. Marcus Fisher (former board member for IV&V and then Fairmont State). Their proposal to MT space grant was funded – congrats to them (<https://www.wvspacegrant.org/national-eclipse-ballooning-project/>); The build team is high school students and we have college student mentors from Glenville State University and WVU for the team. We plan to be at the 2023 and 2024

Eclipses! Let Candy know if you are interested participating in this project or have a student or student club that wants to be mentors.

### SHARE YOUR STORY!

Please Contact NASA WV SGC to share your stories and keep us updated on events at your Institution.

**Please enjoy the summer, our team will catch you all in the Fall.**

**Dr. Melanie Page,  
Candy Cordwell,  
Kisstaman Epps and  
Alyssa George**



NASA WV Space Grant Consortium  
NASA WV EPSCoR  
1374 Evansdale Drive  
Room 341 Mineral Resource Building  
Morgantown, WV  
<http://wvspacegrant.org>