



## Upcoming Events

- Registration for StellarXplorers III, 1 May to 15 Oct 2016
- NSTA STEM Forum & Expo, Denver, CO, July 27 - 29
- STLX III Practice Rounds, November & December

## Notable Quote

“This year, we saw StellarXplorers expand to 27 teams across the globe and there are plans to expand further in next year’s competition. So needless to say I think this is fantastic growth, the program is really catching on.”

Hon. Deborah Lee James  
Secretary of the Air Force  
April 12, 2016



Dick Bundy, AFA Vice Chairman for Aerospace Education congratulates the National Champions, Regina Lee, team captain, Eugene Lin, Saahil Parikh, Yodai Takeuchi, Sher Shah, and Team Director Mrs. Elizabeth Grenier, along with MajGen Roger Teague, USAF

## “Sirius Potatoes” New National Champions

The 'Sirius Potatoes' team from Palos Verdes Peninsula High School of Rolling Hills Estates, CA took top honors as the National Champions of StellarXplorers II, the National High School Space Competition. The award was presented by MajGen Roger Teague, Director of Space Programs, and Mr Dick Bundy, AFA Vice Chairman for Aerospace Education. General Hyten, Commander, USAF Space Command, and MajGen Denker, Deputy Director, NRO, also were in attendance.

Ten National Finalist teams, comprised of 54 students representing schools and other organizations from California, Colorado, Utah, Alabama, and Kaiserslautern (Germany), com-

peted at the Space Foundation's Discovery Center in Colorado Springs, CO, April 12-15, 2016 on a challenging space engineering design problem. "Star Fleet," also of Peninsula High team, finished in second place followed by last year's champion, the Rangeview High School "Space Raiders" from Aurora, CO.

"StellarXplorers has broadened our vision on aerospace engineering with real life situations. Our team performed exceptionally well and the competition allowed us to learn so much more about space, satellites, and engineering," said Regina Kim, Sirius Potatoes team captain.

Students were required to define an optimal satellite orbit, choose spacecraft components, and select rocket boosters to meet a stringent set of mission requirements in an intense eight-hour period. The next day, teams were required to brief their solution to a panel of experts.

Team Director Elizabeth Grenier remarked, "From all of us here at Peninsula High School, we're thankful for this awesome opportunity. StellarXplorers has positively impacted the students tremendously this year, as well as in their future!"

(continued on page 2)

## Space: Diverse Discipline, Diverse Population

The successful members of the National Finalist teams are as diverse as the disciplines a successful space system requires. Space is the most multi-disciplinary of human technological endeavors, incorporating virtually every technical specialty. It requires college-trained scientists and engi-

neers, as well as a host of skilled technicians of all types.

No wonder a space competition like StellarXplorers attracts students with a broad set of interests from a variety of backgrounds. The members of the National Finals teams, coming from the top of Palos Verdes

Peninsula to an American high school in western Germany, represented the many faces of the United States. Nearly 30% of the finalists were female; more than half emanate from minority populations; and four of the teams come from Title 1 schools. (continued on page 2)



# STELLARNEWS



## Recent News from the StellarXplorers Program



Dick Bundy with Team "Star Fleet": Amy Ross, Nathan Kim, Rishi Gattu, Harmont Grenier, Bethany Grenier, Team Director Mrs. Elizabeth Grenier, David Noh, and MajGen Teague

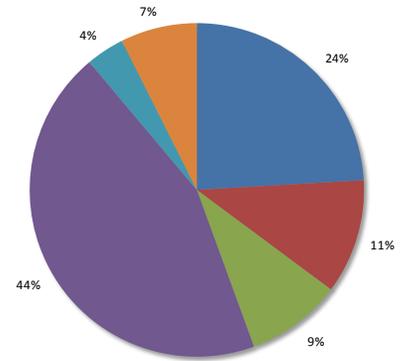


Team "Space Raiders" Team Director Tom Brown, Tusany Chick, Stephen Gourley, STLX Chairman, Rebekah Ramey, Dick Bundy, Dominick Dunn, Gage Niles, Ian Hunt, and MajGen Teague

### Sirius Potatoes (from p 1)

Twenty-seven teams registered to compete for the StellarXplorers II season, comprised of nearly 150 students from Alaska to Florida, California to South Carolina, plus Kaiserslautern. Many of this season's teams are planning to compete again, and most of the Team Directors indicated they would have more teams for the 2016-17 season. StellarXplorers III opens its registration period on 1 May with the objective of 150 teams and 900 students participating in this exciting and stimulating program.

"These students are the future of our nation and its space community, and we couldn't be prouder of the way they have met every challenge set before them," said Stephen K. Gourley, AFA StellarXplorers Chairman. "We're thrilled to be offering a program that has generated such excitement amongst students and their educators."



STLX National Finalists represent the myriad faces of the United States

## StellarXplorers Official AFA STEM Program

The Air Force Association's Board of Directors has approved StellarXplorers as an on-going, STEM program. The Board recognized the positive results demonstrated by the April, 2015 Proof of Concept and this season's Pilot National Deployment, which indicate the competition is attractive, exciting, and fun for students and educators, alike.

For StellarXplorers III, the principal goal is to develop the capability to scale the competition to larger numbers. AFA is expects 125-150 teams, nearly 900 students, in the coming season, and will develop the information systems necessary to execute the competition. As the program matures and the number of

teams grows, additional levels of competition will be introduced, expanding the breadth of space system development and operation the teams will experience.

AFA is also establishing an Advisory Board, an experienced group of leaders from government and industry sponsors who can support the Association in achieving the goals of Stellar-Xplorers. The Board will provide counsel to the Program, while guiding it in attracting sufficient revenue to meet expenses.

StellarXplorers relies on its sponsors to bring this innovative opportunity to high school age students, across the US and overseas locations.

### Diverse Student Population (from p 1)

The finalists represented all the major races: 44% were Caucasian, 24% were Asian/Pacific Islander, 11% Hispanic, and 9% African-American (4% were more than one race and 7% declined to designate). These students not only represent the best the US has to tackle our next technological challenges, they represent several populations of potentially untapped technical prowess.

The future is bright for future competitions. The diverse disciplines space systems require will continue to attract students from diverse backgrounds with diverse interests. In addition, only one third of the finalists is graduating seniors and will be moving on. The other two-thirds are experienced and prepared to bring an even greater level of competition in the next years' seasons of StellarXplorers.

## Registration for the new season opens 1 May!

**Recent News from the StellarXplorers Program**

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*ADVOCATE for aerospace power and STEM education.*

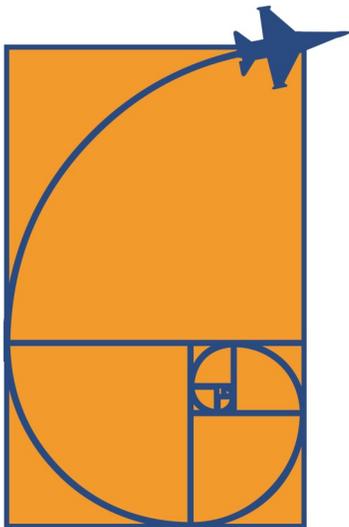
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