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NASA SELECTS STUDENT TEAMS FOR MICROGRAVITY RESEARCH FLIGHTS

WASHINGTON -- NASA has selected 24 undergraduate student teams to test science experiments under microgravity conditions. The teams will fly during 2012 as part of the agency's Reduced Gravity Education Flight Program (RGEFP).

The teams will design and build their experiments at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston and conduct tests aboard an aircraft modified to mimic a reduced-gravity environment. The aircraft will fly approximately 30 parabolas with roller-coaster-like climbs and dips to produce periods of weightlessness and hyper-gravity ranging from 0 to 2g's.

"The program provides unique opportunities for students all over the country to experience life as a scientist or engineer in the working world," said Douglas Goforth, RGEFP manager at Johnson. "We hope the experience of performing experiments in microgravity will help inspire students to pursue careers in technical fields."

Ten of the teams will participate through the Systems Engineering Education Discovery (SEED) flight week April 20-28. They will work with NASA scientists and engineers as part of ongoing systems engineering projects pertinent to future agency research and missions.

The 2012 SEED teams are from Carthage College, Georgia Institute of Technology, Northwest Nazarene University, Oklahoma State University, University of Houston-Clear Lake, San Jacinto College, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Washington University in St. Louis and Yale University.

The other teams were selected through the Microgravity University program and will conduct their research June 8-16. Those teams are from Arizona State University, University of Southern California, Yale University, University of Florida, Boise State University, Purdue University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Missouri University of Science and Technology, Santa Ana Community College, Lamar University, University of Texas-El Paso, Virginia Polytechnic

Institute and State University, University of Washington and West Virginia University.

The RGEFP experience includes scientific research, experimental design, test operations and outreach activities. The program supports NASA's goal of strengthening the nation's future workforce.

For more information about the Reduced Gravity Education Flight Program, visit:
<http://microgravityuniversity.jsc.nasa.gov>

For more information about NASA's education programs, visit:
<http://www.nasa.gov/education>

For information about NASA and agency programs, visit:
<http://www.nasa.gov>

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