

JANUARY 2024 NEWSLETTER

Celebrating 25 Years of HAS

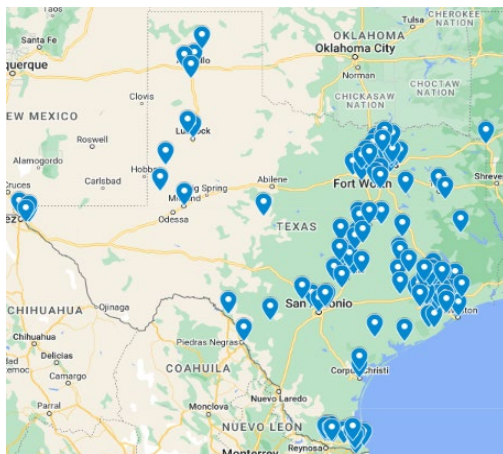
From 1999 to 2024, High School Aerospace Scholars has served Texas junior high school students for 25 years. To celebrate, we have a new logo depicting the HAS connection with the journey from Earth to the Moon to Mars, as well as our shared anniversary with the International Space Station.

We have a new mentorship program for senior high school HAS alumni, engineering design challenges throughout the junior online course, and an eclipse-focused astronomy course for grades 8-10 educators. In this newsletter, you'll read about these new additions, recent activities, and our upcoming events.



By the Numbers

- 802 junior scholars accepted
- 61.4% junior scholars are historically underrepresented in STEM fields
- 39.9% female junior scholars
- 31.4% Hispanic or Latino junior scholars
- 124 of 150 Texas House districts represented
- All 31 Texas Senate districts represented
- 93% of junior scholars completed first module
- 85% of junior scholars completed second module
- 75% of junior scholars completed third module
- 64 returning senior alumni in new mentorship course
- 97% of senior mentors currently active



Map of junior scholar locations across Texas.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Feb. 5-7 – Career & Technical Association of Texas Mid-Winter Conference

Feb. 9 – Space Exploration Educators Conference

Feb. 20-24 – Third Engineering Design Challenge Week

March 2 – UHCL's Greater Houston Area STEM Conference

March 4-April 26 – Astronomy Course for Educators

March 22 – Texas Science & Engineering Fair Night at the Zach

April 1-6 – Fourth Engineering Design Challenge Week

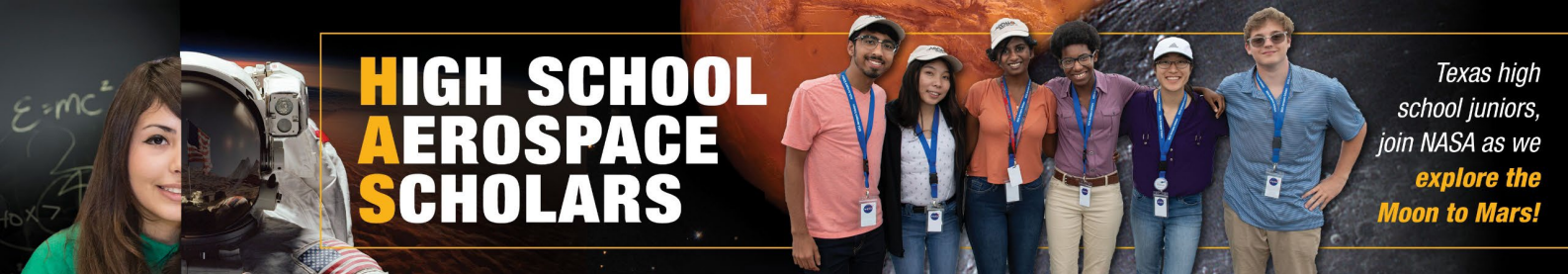
April 7 – HAS Online and Senior Mentor Courses Conclude

April 17 – Moonshot Acceptance Letters Sent

Texas High School Aerospace Scholars is an authentic STEM learning experience for Texas high school juniors to engage with NASA's missions and become the next generation of explorers.

Learn more at nasa.gov/has or email the team at jsc-has@mail.nasa.gov.





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In Partnership

Dr. Gamliel Cherry, director of the Office of STEM Engagement at NASA’s Johnson Space Center, Dr. Jakarda Varnado, HAS activity manager, and the HAS team met with the Texas A&M University Spark! PK-12 Outreach team in College Station, TX, on Thursday, January 25, to discuss our ongoing partnership. The Spark! representatives included director Shelly Tornquist, Andy De La Cruz, Pam Simmons-Brooks, and Magda Lagoudas.

The HAS team is excited to work in collaboration with the Spark! team on a variety of student opportunities. Upcoming opportunities include engineering design challenges, promotion of a new eclipse-themed astronomy course, and Night at the Zach at the Texas Science and Engineering Fair.

Engineering Design Challenges



During the online course, we added virtual and in-person engineering design challenges for junior scholars. During challenge weeks, scholars can sign up to participate in NASA-themed activities where they will apply the skills they have been developing in the course. Scholars learn about relevant NASA missions, brainstorm together, design models, and test and improve their ideas.

In Frisco, TX, design challenge facilitators have led two in-person events for these challenges, inviting current scholars and local high school students to participate and collaborate together. The scholars are able to collaborate in person and share about HAS with the local students.

Scholars participating in the first engineering design challenge virtually and in person in Frisco, TX.

Two more engineering design challenges will be held in February and April.

“It seemed like it would be fun and make me think about what kind of challenges NASA engineers face regularly as well as how to solve these problems. I also thought it would be a good way to meet some of the other HAS scholars and see what kind of ideas they had about the challenge.” – HAS Scholar on Engineering Design Challenge #1

Fort Bend ISD Career Day

The HAS team attended FBISD Hodges Bend Middle School’s STEM Career Day on Friday, January 19. We presented to over 300 8th grade students regarding career opportunities at NASA and educational programs available that would allow for skill building and networking. There was a booth set up to disperse NASA and HAS information and educational materials. As HAS expands to engage students prior to their junior year of high school, opportunities like these engage students in the NASA mission and encourage them to start or continue their own STEM journey.

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