



# Higher Orbits

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## **Two teams win August 2020 *Go For Launch!* competition in Spring Grove Students work with astronauts; winning projects compete for launch to ISS**

**CHICAGO — August 2020 —** Two student teams from the Chicago area won the August 2020 *Go For Launch!* in Spring Grove, Illinois. Now, the winning proposals compete for development and launch to the International Space Station (ISS). Team Galactic Fireflies, consisting of Hannah Nader, Katie Furby, Nyki Malek, Stella Ristic, demonstrated the value of studying fireflies in space. Team Luna Loco, with team members Zachary Martin, who traveled from Oklahoma to compete, Leia Spaniak, Elizabeth Fournier, are researching perchlorates in microgravity.

On Aug. 3 and 4, high-school students attending the Higher Orbits *Go For Launch!* in Spring Grove program worked with astronauts Wendy Lawrence, Charlie Bolden, Don Thomas, and scientists familiar with ISS research applications to create research projects that will compete to be developed and launched in coming months. The two-day event at the Shores of Turtle Creek provided ample room for social distancing.

Two members of Luna Loco, Spaniak and Fournier, won a 2018 *Go For Launch!* in Highland Park. Their team, *Reginae Reginarum*, witnessed its winning project launch to the ISS via Cygnus spacecraft aboard Antares from Wallops Island Flight Facility in Virginia in November. That project studies the stress of microgravity on the production of an antioxidant produced by algae, which could have medical applications. Video of the launch is available on the Higher Orbits YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0CbeOgvvEfo>.



**Team Galactic Fireflies**



**Team Luna Loco**

Higher Orbits is an educational nonprofit 501c3 that uses space to promote STEM, leadership, teamwork, and communication. Higher Orbits encourages high-school students nationwide to conceptualize and propose viable research projects that are launched other International Space Station. More than a dozen student projects have been developed for research in microgravity. Nine have launched to the ISS and the first art in space project launched to sub-orbit in December. More projects are being developed for launches in the coming year.

Higher Orbits is grateful for this event's support from Scot Forge and Tech Max Machine, Inc. For more information about Higher Orbits, visit [higherorbits.org](http://higherorbits.org) or contact Michelle Lucas, 281-451-5343, [media@higherorbits.org](mailto:media@higherorbits.org).

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