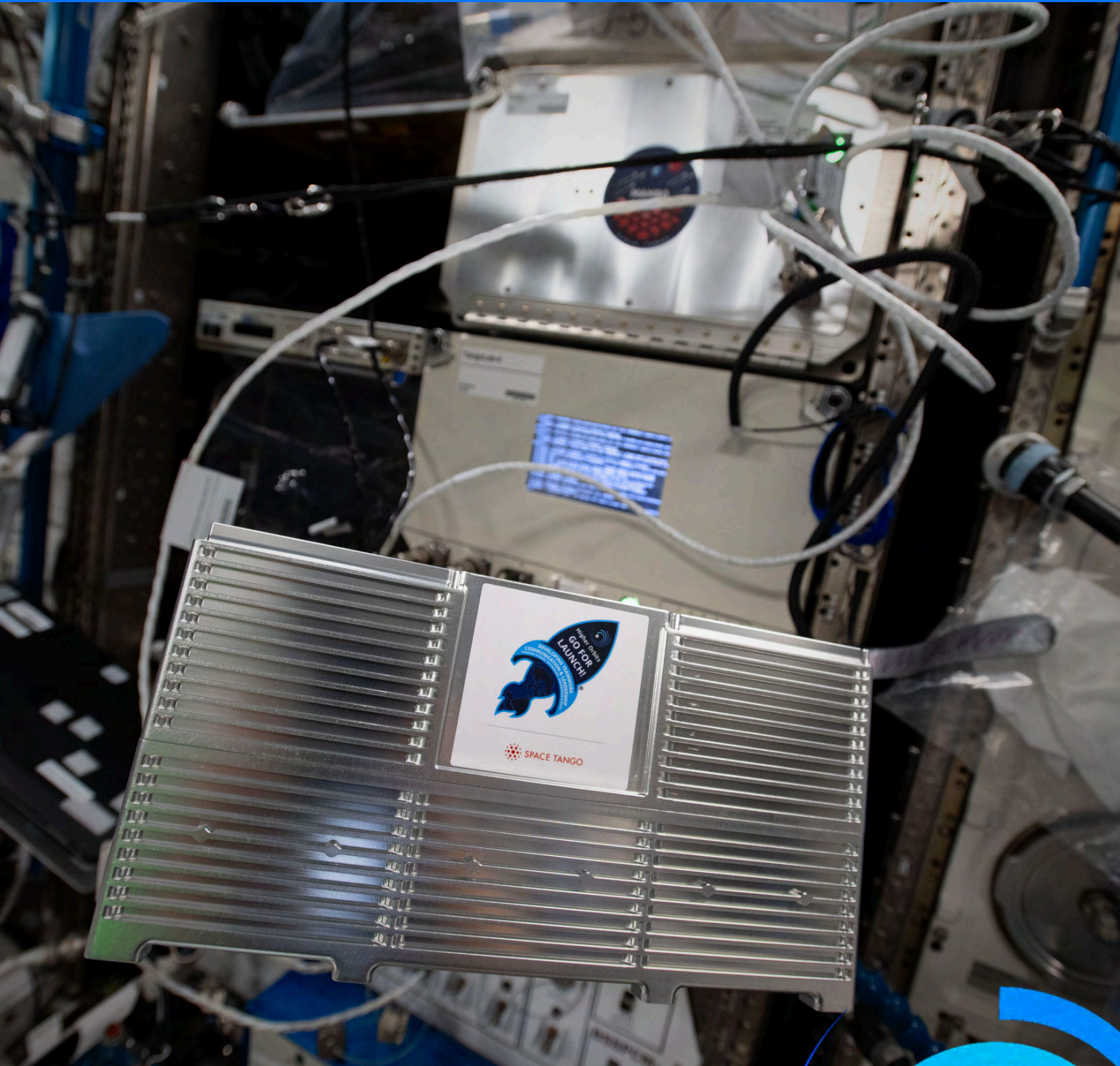




Higher Orbits



IMPACT REPORT
2025



GO FOR LAUNCH!

DEVELOPING TEAMWORK, COMMUNICATION & LEADERSHIP
THROUGH SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING & MATH (STEM)

MISSION

Higher Orbits is a non-profit with the mission to inspire and engage high-school students through the use of spaceflight, in hands-on, project based learning experiences that are designed to promote Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) and prepare them for future academic and career success by building confidence, perseverance, teamwork, leadership, critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills.



Go For Launch! is a multiday program that uses Space Exploration as a platform to launch student involvement in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM), STEAM (Art), teamwork, communication and leadership. The program was developed for high school-aged students.

Students are immersed in the wonder of Human Spaceflight through a variety of talks delivered by experts in the fields of space & STEM: such speakers have included an astronaut, former International Space Station (ISS) and Space Shuttle Flight Controllers, Astronauts Instructors, scientists, and engineers. Students get insight and feedback from experienced space and STEM professionals whose goals are to illustrate the numerous possibilities that exist in the world of STEM. A unique facet of *Go For Launch!* is that the students will work with an Astronaut throughout each day of the event.

Collaborative activities are designed to build leadership and teamwork skills, as well as enhance communication skills. The culminating exercise is a design project. Each team must define and design a space experiment. At the conclusion of each program, the teams will present their ideas to a panel of judges from the Space & STEM fields, who will then choose a winner from each *Go For Launch!* event. Depending on the Series, winning experiments will be launched to and conducted aboard the International Space Station or on a suborbital flight!



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IMPACT

Since the start of Higher Orbits programs in 2016, we have directly worked with 2,750+ students through our Space at Home & Go For Launch! programs.

We have conducted 96 Go For Launch! programs in 23 different states, launched 24 student designed experiments to the International Space Station. In 2025 we ran 13 Go For Launch! Events including our 1st events in New Mexico and Alaska.

We continued partnerships to run events with Amazon Kuiper (now Amazon LEO), NDIA Michigan, and Florida 4-H.

We finished our 3rd Series of Events in Midland, TX - the Apollo Series - and started the 4th Series of events in Midland, TX - titled the Artemis Series - in continued partnership with Midland Development Corporation and Midland ISD with support from Chevron.

Higher Orbits once again had the privilege of selecting the only 5 students to attend the International Science School in Sydney, Australia. The students were immersed in science lectures and hands on labs while working in teams with students from across the globe.





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STUDENT EXPERIMENTS IN SPACE

We launched 4 student experiments to the International Space Station aboard SpaceX-33 on August 24, 2025.

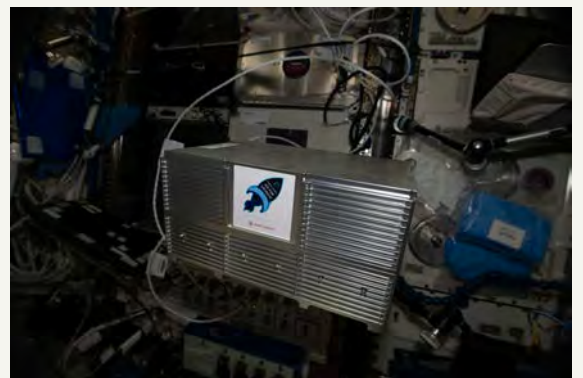
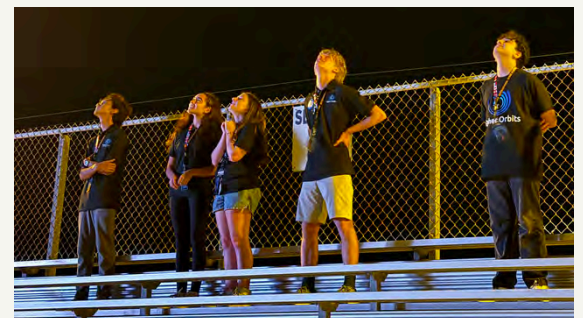
This launch marked something new - we were able to team 2 winning teams from different events up to work on their experiment in space together!

Teams whose experiments were part of this launch

- SuperNOVAS (Winners of *Go For Launch!* 2023 Series; were part of the *Go For Launch!* Space Coast event) - Experiment: Creation of a biodiesel in microgravity using *Chlorella Vulgaris*
- Aeroloco (Winners of *Go For Launch!* Kuiper) & Cosmic Critters (Winners of *Go For Launch!*) Mars - Experiment: Slime Mold in Microgravity
- Icarus (Winners of *Go For Launch!*) Nogales - Experiment: Sustainable Food Growth in Microgravity
- Chaparral Champions (Winners of *Go For Launch!* Midland 2023 Series) - Experiment: Silkworms in Space

These teams represent students from Texas, Florida, Virginia, Arizona, Pennsylvania

Our experiments to the International Space Station continue to be built in partnership with our Implementation Partner Space Tango.





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CONFERENCES & OTHER EVENTS

We had the privilege of bringing students to various conferences across the country this year.

AIAA SciTech - we had a panel of 6 students at this event where the students shared their STEM journeys as well as their aspirations for the future and advice for how industry can help them best become part of the workforce. Title of Panel - Space Inspires the Next Generation of STEMists & Explorers. These students represented grades 8-senior year at University. Two students were selected as AIAA Rising Stars in Aerospace.

Space Symposium - For the first time ever one of our students was able to participate in this conference thanks to the support of The Exploration Company. Abigail Younger, who was a senior in Aerospace Engineering at CU Boulder at the time, supported their booth at the event and was able to explore the expo hall and network as she learned even more about the space industry.

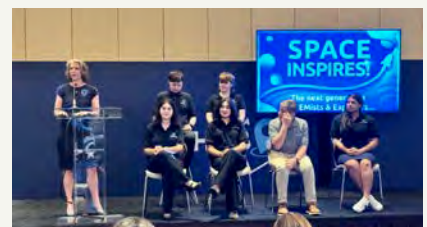
AIAA ASCEND - We had the privilege of bringing 6 students to AIAA ASCEND to speak on a panel in The Hub as well as another past student who is now a young professional to speak on a panel with our industry representatives that was led by Michelle. Title of Panel - STEM & Future Hopes from Higher Orbits.

Von Braun Symposium - Higher Orbits with student Kiera Fehr attended the Von Braun Symposium where Kiera soaked in all the space knowledge and did some great networking.

ASGSR - Student Alexis Simon, team member from Icarus whose experiment launched to the International Space Station aboard SpaceX-33 did a poster presentation about her team's science at this event.

Midland Fly Into Fall - Higher Orbits was over the moon to participate in the 4th Annual Midland Fly Into Fall in August. (We have been part of all 4 of these events they have done.) In addition to spreading the word about Higher Orbits, Astronaut Greg H. Johnson shared his journey to becoming an Astronaut at the event and stellar student Brianna Ortiz shared about her experiences in her STEM journey with Higher Orbits.

Spaceport America Open House - Higher Orbits had a booth to share about our programs. Additionally Michelle and Wendy Lawrence were part of a panel discussion to talk about Why Space is important. Also on this panel were representatives from the NASA Flight Director Cadre, a Virgin Galactic Astronaut, and the Executive Director of Spaceport America. Michelle and Wendy also each give an individual talk .





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10th ANNIVERSARY OF HIGHER ORBITS

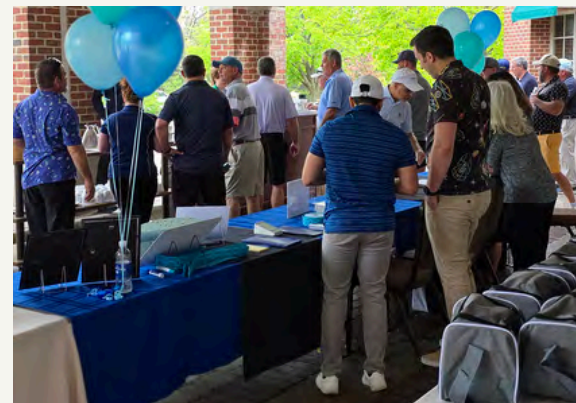
In August we celebrated the 10th Anniversary of Higher Orbits. Our paperwork from the IRS, declaring us a 501c3 non-profit was stamped August 10, 2015 so hence our birthday!

We held a celebration in Colorado to commemorate the event and were over the moon that many cosmic colleagues, stellar students, and members of our space family came out to celebrate! Thank you to the following companies for their support: Think Orbital, Colorado Air & Space Port, Launch Pad Brewery, AIAA Rocky Mountain, KSAT, CSBR (Colorado Space Business Roundtable)

Galactic Golf - We held our annual Galactic Golf Outing in May at The Glen Club. Sponsors, Supporters, and Friends came out to support STEM as they golfed with Astronauts Mike Foreman and Greg H. Johnson.

National Astronaut Day - Higher Orbits is over the moon to continue to be a charity partner for National Astronaut Day as we celebrate the trailblazers and heroes that inspire us!

Stars in Orbit - We launched our first cohort of students who will receive additional mentorship and conference opportunities based on their continued engagement with the organization and commitment to their STEM journey.





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THANK YOU!

2025 MAJOR SUPPORTERS:

Amazon Kuiper Government Solutions
(Now Amazon LEO)
NDIA Michigan
Midland Development Corporation
Midland ISD
CIRI
Burns & McDonnell
Amentum
N2K / T-Minus Daily
Space Tango



Additional thanks to all of our supporters and partners for empowering and inspiring our students to reach for the stars.

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through science, technology, engineering & math



(Click Icons Above for Socials & Website)

