



For Immediate Release

Reno, NV

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AACT Students Win Second Place in NASA-Sponsored International Challenge

Reno, NV (April 19, 2017) – A student engineering team from the Academy of Arts, Careers & Technology (AACT) recently earned second place at the NASA Human Exploration Rover Challenge at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama. The team competed against 100 teams from high schools and colleges around the world in engineering, technology, systems, and technical writing.

“I am so very proud of these outstanding students and their tremendous accomplishment in this international competition,” said Dr. Dana Ryan, director of the Washoe County School District (WCSD) Signature Academies & Career and Technical Education (CTE). “Their award is a testament to the strength of AACT’s engineering program and the hard work of the students and teachers here. This is a great example of how CTE curriculum embraces both technical and academic principles, and I am thrilled that our students have earned this recognition.”

“The success of these students is a direct result of their hard work this past year,” said Addison Wilhite, an instructor at AACT. “NASA’s Rover Challenge offers an extraordinary opportunity for our students to demonstrate how academically rigorous our school is, while also embracing the hands-on project based learning that is the hallmark of Career and Technical Education. The AACT Rover program is made possible through a partnership with the University of Nevada, Reno and Fleischmann Planetarium, and we are grateful for their support of our students.”

NASA sponsors the annual competition to challenge and encourage students to design, build, and test technologies for mobility devices that could be used to explore other planets and moons. In the course of preparing for the competition, students learn technologies and concepts that will be needed in future exploration missions.

The Human Exploration Rover Challenge requires teams of six students to build a human-powered rover which can carry two students—one male and one female—over a rigorous half-mile obstacle course of simulated extraterrestrial terrain, traversing craters, boulders, ridges, inclines, crevasses, and depressions.

As part of the challenge—and before traversing the course—student drivers must carry the unassembled rovers to the course starting line, assemble them, and check them for safety. The students then take their rovers over the course on two timed runs. The team that has the shortest total time for assembling its rover and traversing the course wins the competition.

The team from AACT traversed the course twice, shaving more than a minute off the original time during the second run.

Media Opportunity

What: Students who participated in the competition will demonstrate their rover and discuss how they designed and constructed it. They will also assemble and ride the rover for the media.

When: Thursday, April 20
10 a.m.

Where: Academy of Arts, Careers & Technology
380 Edison Way
Reno

Who: Students and their teachers will be available for interviews.

Take a Look: Several videos have been posted from the competition here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9tO4HkCH1fg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ftvGgoa4R4w>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k_1fxU9LEjs

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