OCT 2025

NESSP NEWS

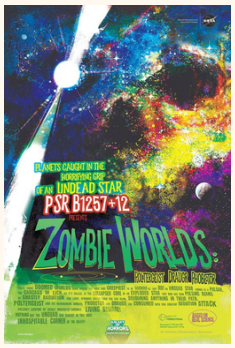
Official Newsletter of Northwest Space and Science Pathways

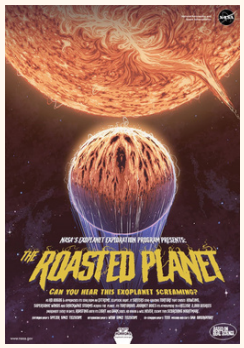
IMPORTANT DATES

- Washington Aerospace Scholars Open Enrollment Closes Tuesday, Oct 21, 2025
- Skywatching Highlights
  - October 6th, The October Supermoon
  - October 6-10th, The Draconid Meteor Shower
  - October 21st, The Orionid Meteor Shower Peaks
- ROADS Earth to Venus Professional Development
  - **Live Session 2** Wednesday, October 8th, 2025 4:30-6:30 PM PST
  - **Live Session 2** Saturday, October 11th, 2025 9:00-11:00 AM PST
  - **Live Session 3** Wednesday, October 1st, 2025 4:30-6:30 PM PST
  - **Live Session 3** Saturday, October 4th, 2025 9:00-11:00 AM PST
  - **Live Session 3** Wednesday, October 15th, 2025 4:30-6:30 PM PST

GALAXY OF HORRORS

With Halloween just around the corner, NASA has released its latest Galaxy of Horrors posters. Download your favorite at science.nasa.gov/exoplanets/immersive/galaxy-of-horrors





IN THIS ISSUE

MONTANA LEARNING CENTER

Aspen McKee, an astrophysics student at Montana State University, has been awarded the 2025 MLC Founders' Scholarship by the Montana Learning Center (MLC). McKee's involvement with the MLC began as a camper and progressed to staff member. She is also an Ambassador for the Montana Space Grant Consortium (MSGC), where she built a spectroheliograph for the MLC's astronomy program.

Additionally, her team at MSU's BOREALIS Lab designed a payload for a high-altitude ballooning program that will fly to the International Space Station in June 2026. The $5,000 scholarship, established by Merrilee Alexander Kick, honors Kick's parents, Gil and Marilyn Alexander, who founded the Montana Science Institute, the precursor to the MLC. McKee dedicates her summers to the MLC to inspire young students' love for science. The MLC offers youth STEM summer camps, teacher development, and an astronomy program, and partners with Montana State University for NASA's Northwest Earth & Space Science Pathways program.

WASHINGTON AEROSPACE SCHOLARS

Washington high school juniors with a passion for space and science are invited to apply for the Washington Aerospace Scholars (WAS) program—an exciting, two-phase experience hosted by the Museum of Flight in partnership with NASA and the University of Washington.

Phase One is a no-cost, online course focused on NASA history, aerospace, aeronautics, and astronautics. Students who complete the course earn five college credits from the University of Washington.

Phase Two is a week-long summer residency where selected students collaborate with NASA scientists, STEM professionals, and university mentors. They'll engage in hands-on engineering challenges and team projects while exploring real-world STEM careers. Financial aid is available.

WAS also provides ongoing support through a national alumni network, plus access to exclusive internships and scholarships after the program.

Open Enrollment: September 15 – October 21, 2025
Phase One Dates: October 28, 2025 – March 17, 2026
Eligibility: High school juniors in Fall 2025, Washington State residents
Learn More at: museumofflight.org/WAS

Universe of Monsters

Looking for something a bit spookier than the Galaxy of horrors?
Check out NASA's Universe of Monsters using this link: science.nasa.gov/exoplanets/immersive/universe-of-monsters/

OCTOBER 4TH, 2025 INTERNATIONAL OBSERVE THE MOON NIGHT

Join observers from around the world this Saturday, for NASA's International Observe the Moon Night. The annual event offers and opportunity for everyone to celebrate the inspiring bond between the Earth and the Moon under the same sky. As a bonus we can all share the excitement of NASA's preparations for Artemis II. Which should be launching in early 2026.

To learn more about this event use the link below:
science.nasa.gov/solar-system/moon/join-nasa-on-oct-4-in-looking-up-celebrating-moon/

October 2025 Skywatching Tips

A supermoon takes over the sky on the evening of October 6! Be sure to look up and prepare to be amazed as the full moon is bigger and brighter! The Moon could appear to be about 30% brighter and up to 14% larger than a typical full moon!

Between October 6th and 10th, you might witness the first of two October meteor showers, the Draconids! The Draconids peak around October 8th, but if you don't see them you can always blame it on the supermoon. Don't fret if you can't see them because a few weeks later The Orionid meteor showers will peak on October 21. It should shoot about 20 meteors per hour across the night sky!

To learn more about what's happening in the night sky this month use the link below:
science.nasa.gov/solar-system/whats-up-october-2025-skywatching-tips-from-nasa/

LiftOff 2026 Moon to Mars: A New Era of Discovery

Educators are you interested in a weeklong professional development program for the summer of 2026? Look no further, LiftOff Summer Instute is a program that emphasizes science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) learning experiences by incorporating a **space science theme supported by NASA missions**. You will hear directly from the scientists, engineers, and mission leaders advancing spaceflight technology and developing commercial platforms in Low Earth Orbit.

To learn more about this amazing opportunity and apply click the link below:
csr.utexas.edu/education-outreach/liftoff-summer-institute/

ROADS FROM EARTH TO VENUS COMPANION COURSE LOANS SUPPLY REQUESTS OPEN OCT. 10, 2025

ROADS from Earth to Venus Companion Course Loans - Supply Requests Opens October 10, 2025
Educators who have completed a NESSP Professional Development Workshop in the last 3 years are eligible to request ROADS from Earth to Venus Companion Course classroom supplies.

NESSP's companion course program offers lessons for educators to integrate concepts from our ROADS challenges into their classroom plans. Lessons support Next Generation Science Standards and are aligned with NASA missions.

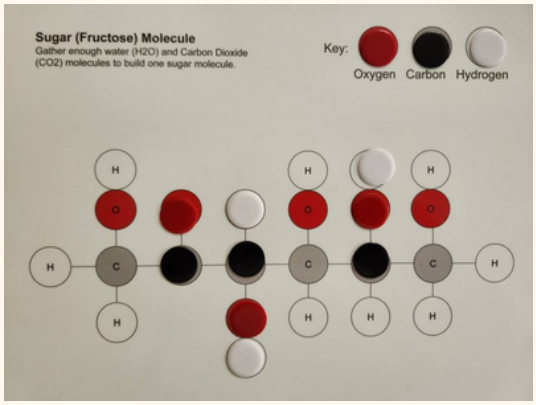
Our ROADS program (Rover Observation And Discoveries in Space) is a framework that allows students to explore STEM concepts through hands-on activities. ROADS takes inspiration from real NASA projects and guides students on space-related missions. Each year, we update ROADS to address different science and engineering problems and to explore various solar system bodies. For 2025-2026 we have developed eight Mission Objectives (MO) and Lessons across four units inspired by potential missions to Venus.

ROADS From Earth to Venus is our first course focused on Venus organized around the guiding question: "How can we use experiments, models, and NASA data to help us better understand both Earth and Venus and to plan a successful mission to Venus.

If you've completed a ROADS PD in the last 3 years, create an account or log into your ROADS Educator account to request ROADS From Earth to Venue classroom supplies. Available sets are described below.

Supplies are available for the following lessons.

Lesson 1: Documenting your Mission
ROADS from Earth to Venus Loterîa



Lesson 3: Modeling Moving Carbon
The Fructose Game

Lesson 5: Capturing Data From Afar
Aeropod & Kite

Lesson 6: ROV-ing for Detailed Data
LEGO SPIKE Robotics Kit & Data Collection Area