

Warren Students 'Reach for the Stars'

What happens to the formation of crystals in an environment with both increased radiation and microgravity?

This month, three 17-year-old seniors at Macomb Mathematics Science Technology Center (MMSTC) in Warren, will learn the answer to this question and potentially many others when their experiment travels to the International Space Station (ISS) as part of Student Spaceflight Experiments Program (SSEP) Mission 4.

Sydney Waynick, Steven Prascius and Hunter Montrose are the three seniors.

Earlier this year, MMSTC was selected as one of 11 communities across the country to participate in this national science, technology engineering and mathematics initiative.

Subsequently, The Chrysler Foundation, the charitable arm of Chrysler, provided the school with a \$17,500 grant to help fund the cost of sending the science experiment to the International Space Station aboard a rocket launched from the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport (MARS) on Wallops Island, Va.

"The Chrysler Foundation is proud to help these students literally reach for the stars," said Jody Trapasso, senior vice president - External Affairs, and president, The Chrysler Foundation. "We hope this program inspires students to explore careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, which are vital to America's future."

Overseen by the National Center for Earth and Space Science Education, SSEP typically gives 300-plus students across select communities the ability to design and propose real microgravity experiments to fly in low Earth orbit, originally conducted on the Space Shuttle and now conducted on the ISS.

Mark Supal, a technology teacher at MMSTC, said having a team of his students selected is "fantastic."

"Part of my job was to come up with a written proposal and a way to fund the experiment," Supal said. "I contacted a lot of companies, and The Chrysler Foundation really came through. They are providing 78 percent of the funding for the experiment. Beaumont Health Systems and DTE Energy are providing the rest of the money."

Supal's students were divided into teams of three. The team of Waynick, Prascius and Montrose ended with the winning experiment for the school, which Supal submitted to the SSEP.

Back in May, the Mission 4 Step 2 Review Board met at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, reviewed all 33 finalist proposals and selected one proposal to fly for each community, for a total of 11 flight experiments.

"Our experiment will test if silver nitrate crystals can be formed in space and if they have similar properties to the ones formed here on Earth," Waynick said.

The experiment will be con-

tained within a six-inch, double-walled plastic tube, sealed at both ends with removal caps, Supal said. A clamp at the tube's midpoint separates a solution of silver nitrate from a small coil of copper wire. When the clamp is removed, the copper wire is immersed in the solution and crystals begin to form. The students will perform the same experiments on Earth.

"If our hypothesis is correct and these crystals that are grown in space have the same properties as those in our lab, they may show that the crystals, due to their porous and rigid nature, could have a use in storing natural gas in space," Prascius said.

As part of their research, the students will also compare the color, average size, symmetry, and structural differences between the samples. By comparing the crystals in these categories, it will be evident if the space crystals are physically the same as those formed on Earth.

"The space project is a great way to apply math and science to real life," Montrose said.



From left, Hunter Montrose, Sydney Waynick and Steven Prascius

The Mission 4 to ISS flight opportunity was announced on Nov. 15, 2012, Supal said. By the start of program operations on Feb. 25, 2013, 11 communities from seven states were aboard and 3,080 grade 5-12 students were formally engaged in experiment design.

The launch, which is scheduled for no earlier than Dec. 15, will be shown live on NASA TV and on the NASA TV portal at the SSEP website: <http://www.nasa.gov/multimedia/nasatv/index.html#UnfQre3IP0M>.

The specific date and time of launch is subject to change.

Silverado Named Urban Truck of Year

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its bread-and-butter pickup truck. In highline crew cab trim, it is fully capable as a utility vehicle.

"But it's also so good, it can go from being the second vehicle in the garage to the ONLY vehicle in the garage."

The UWA judging panel spent several months determining the most stylish, practical, and attainable new vehicles for 2014 by driving and evaluating dozens of cars and trucks in a variety of North American urban settings

before settling on the winners, said Randi Payton, president of Decisive Media.

One of the first vehicle awards announced each year, the Urban Vehicles of the Year have consistently honored cars and trucks in the last seven years that went on to dominate many other top awards, Payton said.

The multicultural/multi-gender Urban Vehicles of the Year judging panel comprised some of the most notable and respected automotive reviewers in the country, said Payton.

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