

IAF SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)
Sending out a Signal: Innovative Outreach and Communications Initiatives (7)

Author: Mrs. Joan Misner
NASA, United States

Mr. Jarrod Bales
NASA, United States
Mrs. Anna Vastola
NASA, United States

LAUNCHING BETTER OUTREACH: NASA LAUNCH SERVICES PROGRAM'S MODERN
APPROACH TO OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

Abstract

Since inception, NASA inspired the public and provided countless Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) spin offs embedded in every aspect of modern life. As a publicly funded organization, NASA must consider public interests when sharing findings, achievements, and opportunities. Combining effective education and outreach can improve opinion of NASA science initiatives, recruit the next generation, and indirectly ensure support for funding these continued efforts.

NASA's education and outreach approach must adapt with the current landscape. Established in 1998, NASA's Launch Services Program (LSP), is responsible for delivering spacecraft to orbit that explore the universe. LSP has developed a comprehensive outreach approach that levies the excitement of NASA missions and brand toward its goals.

Domestically, NASA regularly brings a well-rounded group of employees to discuss their roles and teach students about the missions and the diverse careers available. LSP has also levied partnerships with private companies including Rocket Lab. During the TROPICS Launch campaign in New Zealand, LSP visited five schools and showcased the mission and company. It was surprising that students were not informed about Rocket Lab, which is primarily based in New Zealand, but knew NASA. Polling nearly 500 students, it became apparent that NASA's outreach garners excitement and recruitment for future science and space industry leaders.

LSP also launched their Student Volunteer Experience program, a condensed one-week internship experience for students whose schedules prevent typical internships, such as student athletes. Selected students receive a behind-the-scenes look at the LSP and careers available, then share the lessons they learned at a local school. This initiative gives LSP access to an untapped pool of high-performing individuals. Additionally, NASA expands their impact through the media accounts of these students and schools to reach new audiences.

NASA LSP personnel also support outreach and non-profit events outside normal working hours. One LSP engineer helped raise over \$50,000 of school supplies and flew to South America to deliver them and hold events about STEM, space, and the opportunities available to international partners.

LSP plans to visit all 50 states by 2024 and to expand the outreach internationally. If selected for IAC, LSP will discuss statistics of outreach performed to date (over 122 schools and approximately 20,000 students), impact, challenges faced, and lessons learned through the programs outlined above. LSP continues to innovate approaches to spread education, inspiration, and accessibility to anyone who wants to work in the space sector.