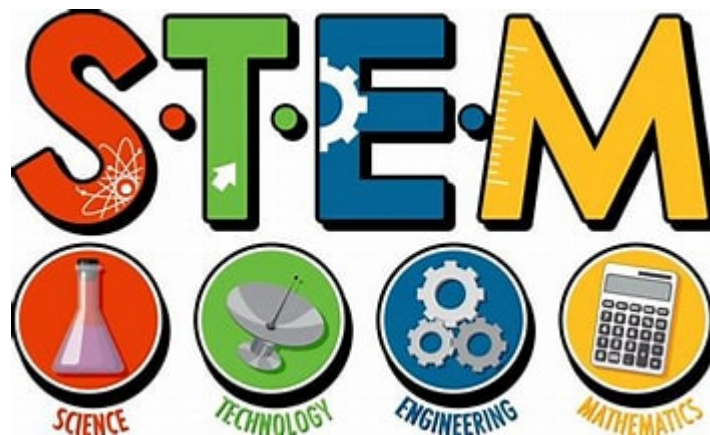




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NEWSLETTER

Winter 2023 /2024



How about a yearly Ad Astra STEM Day?

Since 2016, there has been a National STEM Day in November to encourage young people's interest in science, technology, engineering and math. Some states have annual STEM days of their own.

It seems time to highlight our STEM potential here in Kansas and contributions made in all areas of STEM by our state--to recognize, inform and inspire with this day.

There will be a resolution submitted this legislative session declaring an Ad Astra STEM Day on April 24. It will be submitted by Sen. Kristin O'Shea of Topeka.

We hope this will eventually become a statute, making it annual. Please follow us as we work toward that goal.

image credit: public domain



[Find yourself at the Capitol Feb. 7?](#)

Stop in and say "hi"

AAKF will be displaying our organization's

work and projects for legislators and visitors in the State House Ground Level Hall on February 7 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Stop and say "hi", learn more about us and grab a snack. Photo of capitol dome credit: Visit Topeka website



More than 16 topics

Online seminar makes space science accessible to all

- The upcoming Interstellar Seminar LASI 150G/750G at WSU has a free option for anyone who is interested in it, but does not need the college credit. This 1-hr. non-technical course connects listeners with the interstellar community. Expert guest speakers present in their area of expertise. It's a great way to be informed about the latest in space research.
- Interested? Join the seminar on zoom at: Meeting ID: [95271409199](https://wichita.zoom.us/j/95271409199) Password:



Time to declare a new epoch on the Moon?

What to do about human influence on the Moon?

LAWRENCE--More than a hundred spacecraft, including NASA's Apollo Lunar Modules, have been to the moon since the USSR spacecraft Luna 2 in 1959; each leaving their own mark on the moon surface.

The future will bring more missions and more extreme changes, to the face of the moon. According to anthropologists and geologists at KU, humans have become the dominant force shaping the moon's environment. This calls for a declaration of new geological epoch: the Lunar Anthropocene, which views the moon from this perspective.

"The concept of a Lunar Anthropocene aims to raise awareness and contemplation regarding our impact on the lunar surface, as well as our influence

296620 beginning January 17

- Topics include astronomy, missions, exoworlds, rockets, advance manufacturing, crew rationale, life support, health, psychology, language, culture, sci-fi.
- For more: www.wichita.edu/space

on the preservation of historical artifacts," said Justin Holcomb, postdoc researcher with the Kansas Geological Survey." Photo: Buzz Aldrin during Apollo 11 Credit: NASA

Read more [here](#)

Did you know?



Coming in January-- Coffee at the Cosmo

HUTCHINSON--"*Totality or Bust: Throwing Shade at the 2024 Solar Eclipse*" will be the topic of the Cosmosphere's first Coffee at the Cosmo event in 2024 on January 18, from 9-10 a.m. CT. Cosmosphere STEM educator Mary Smith will present. The talk will be available on the Cosmosphere's YouTube channel about a week later.

Free and open to the public.



More space manufacturing coming to Kansas

WICHITA--In November Lockheed Martin announced two contracts for Wichita's Perfekta Inc. manufacturing company.

One is to provide parts for the Orion Spacecraft, which will be taking man back to the Moon. The second is for parts for a satellite missile warning system.

An aviation and aerospace component manufacturer, customers include Boeing, Textron, Airbus.

Founded in 1985, the Wichita-based company



Google Earth creator is KU's newest National Academy of Inventors fellow

LAWRENCE--Brian McClendon, KU professor of electrical engineering & computer science, was named among the 162 academic inventors in the 2023 Class of Fellows on Dec. 12. Election as an academy fellow is the highest professional distinction awarded solely to inventors.

McClendon earned a bachelor's in electrical engineering from KU in 1986. In 2001, he was one of the original investors in Keyhole Inc., a software visualization application, where he was vice president of engineering. Google acquired Keyhole in 2004; and its main application suite, Earth Viewer, formed the basis of Google Earth. Photo: KU website

Read more [here](#).



is now part of Cadence Aerospace.

Update on Nova-C Moon lander mission

CAPE CANAVERAL--Intuitive Machine's Nova-C lander, carrying ILO-X imaging instruments is set to launch in Mid-Feb 2024 on SpaceX Falcon 9 and land at the Moon's South Pole region, Malapert A, about a week later.

The goal is for ILO-X precursor instruments to capture the first robotic image of our galaxy ever from the Moon, according to Steve Durst, ILOA director and AAKF board member. *Image*

credit ILOA



LOOK UP: New NASA App Helps Stargazers Spot Space Station

NASA is making it easier for the public to spot the International Space Station as it passes over Earth with a new Spot the Station mobile app.

The mobile app is available to download now on [iOS](#) and [Android](#).

The app builds on the agency's [Spot the Station](#) website by providing additional capabilities and information to enhance the station sighting experience for the public. An augmented reality interface makes it easier for users to locate the station and provides options for capturing and sharing pictures and videos of their sightings in real-time. With the power of augmented reality, the app's built-in compass will show you where the space station is - even if you're on the other side of the globe. Users also can sign up for mobile notifications of upcoming viewing opportunities based on their exact location.

The ISS can only be seen when it is dawn or dusk. Sighting opportunities can be only once a month to several a week, since it has to be both dark where you are, and the space station has to happen to be going overhead. With the Spot the Station mobile app, users will know when the station is overhead and how to locate it.

The application was developed by the ISS Program in NASA's Space Operations Mission Directorate and the [Center of Excellence for Collaborative Innovation](#). The app's code is [open source](#) for anyone to access, modify, and use in their own projects and to provide optional feedback to the developers. NASA will continue to update and improve the mobile application on a rolling basis.

NASA invites public to send names

aboard Artemis robotic Moon rover



NASA is inviting people to send their names to the surface of the Moon aboard the agency's first robotic lunar rover, VIPER – short for Volatiles Investigating Polar Exploration Rover. The rover will embark on a mission to the lunar South Pole to unravel the mysteries of the Moon's water and better understand the environment where NASA plans to land the first woman and first person of color under its Artemis program.

As part of the “Send Your Name with VIPER” campaign, NASA will accept names received before 11:59 p.m. EST, March 15. Once collected, the agency will take the names and attach them to the rover.

[To add your name](#)

A RESOLUTION designating April 24th as
Ad Astra STEM Day to celebrate scientific
achievement across the state of Kansas

WHEREAS, Kansas has a rich history of innovation, both on land and in the air, for growth and development in our state; and

WHEREAS, This legacy of excellence in science, technology, engineering and mathematics continues today; and

WHEREAS, Kansas is blessed with innovative businesses and industries, quality universities, dedicated educators and curious young minds that nurture increased knowledge, economy, quality of life and global competitiveness; and

WHEREAS, Kansans have and will continue to have a global impact in STEM development; and

WHEREAS, The state motto, "Ad Astra per Aspera," encourages us to celebrate our potential and is personified by astronaut Steve Hawley, who is a Kansas native and served as a mission specialist for the deployment of the Hubble Space Telescope after its launch from the Discovery space shuttle on April 24, 1990; Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Kansas: That we designate April 24th as Ad Astra STEM Day in Kansas to celebrate the scientific achievements and contributions made by Kansans across the state; and

Be it further resolved: That the Secretary of the Senate shall send an enrolled copy of this resolution to Senator O'Shea

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