

Cerritos Community College District • 11110 Alondra Blvd. • Norwalk CA 90650 • www.cerritos.edu

View the online release here: <http://www.cerritos.edu/releases-2025/01/NASA.htm>

Cerritos College's student team develops tools for NASA's moon exploration

Only community college in the nation selected for Phase II of Micro-g NExT Challenge

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 14, 2025

Media Contact: [Aya Aoki](#); Public Relations and Communications

NORWALK, Calif. – January 14, 2025 – Cerritos College's student team, known as Team Falcons, was selected to advance to phase II of NASA's 2025 Micro-g NExT challenge, making it the only community college team in the nation to reach the final stage of the highly competitive event. This is the third time Cerritos College's student team has advanced to phase II, following successes in 2021 and 2022.



Janet McLarty-Schroeder and Team Falcons (l-r)

NASA's Micro-g Neutral Buoyancy Experiment Design Teams (Micro-g NExT) is part of the Artemis Student Challenges. In this program, undergraduate students create and test a tool or device that solves a real challenge in space exploration. This challenge allows students to develop a necessary tool for NASA. Contestants will test their designs during a simulated mission at NASA's Neutral Buoyancy Laboratory in Houston, Texas, where astronauts practice for spacewalks.

Team Falcons, made up of 13 students from diverse majors, is developing a tool designed to help astronauts join overlapping softgoods (textiles) from one side while conducting extravehicular activity (EVA) on the Moon. They created an inspiring design proposal and outreach plan. Over the next few months, they will collaborate with a NASA mentor to refine their design and build a prototype for testing at the Johnson Space Center, potentially contributing to future space missions.

"Participating in Micro-g NExT allows our students to apply classroom knowledge to real NASA missions," said Janet McLarty-Schroeder, chair of physics, astronomy, and engineering. "Despite having fewer resources than many university teams, our students excel and demonstrate the strengths of our community college programs."

Cerritos College provides various student programs through NASA and hosts the NCAS (NASA Community College Aerospace Scholars) program, which is open to all majors. In 2024, a group of

Cerritos College students won a national award in NASA's Gateways to Blue Skies Competition, making them the only community college winners.

Follow Team Falcons' adventures on [Instagram](#), [X](#), and [YouTube](#).

About Cerritos College: *Cerritos College serves as a comprehensive community college for southeastern Los Angeles County. Communities within the college's district include Artesia, Bellflower, Cerritos, Downey, Hawaiian Gardens, La Mirada, Norwalk, and portions of Bell Gardens, Lakewood, Long Beach, Santa Fe Springs, and South Gate. Cerritos College offers nearly 300 degree and certificate programs in nine divisions. Annually, more than 5,000 students successfully complete their course of studies. Enrollment currently averages 21,000 students. Visit Cerritos College online at www.cerritos.edu/.*

-END-