

WSGC 2023 Fall AC Meeting  
First Nations Launch Update Report

Rob Cannon

First Nations Launch had a successful 14th annual competition April 28-29, with 21 teams joining us over the weekend. The focus for the competition was on structures with the Moon Challenge requiring teams to fabricate certain components while the Mars Challenge needed to fabricate their entire rocket. Competition awards will be included at the end of the report.

The three winning teams from the '23 competition, the University of Washington-Seattle, University of Colorado-Boulder, and Queen's University (international competitor) have all been invited to the Kennedy Space Center for a VIP tour August 23-25. Currently, the itinerary includes a bus tour around the KSC and Space Force space complexes, a visit to Blue Origin's Florida facility, a day at the Visitor Complex, and an opportunity to view the NASA Crew 7 launch.

The University of Northern Oklahoma received the Next Step Award to participate in the RockOn! Program at Wallops Flight Facility in June. The weeklong workshop allowed the participants to construct their own payload that was supposed to be launched at the end of the program. Unfortunately, due to weather conditions at the end of the workshop, the launch was scrubbed and rescheduled for August 15. The two students who attended the workshop Abbigayle Vargas and Grant Biggers are planning on returning to Wallops to view the launch and collect their payload.

Due to past COVID restrictions, we have a backlog of competitors from '21 and '22 that we are working to provide their VIP Tour in October. This tour will follow a similar format to the August tour, but will be a combined tour with the FNL '21 and '22 participants and NASA MINDS participants.

Preparations are underway for the formal announcement of the 15th Annual FNL Competition. The annual focus of the competition will be on Payloads this year. The team has started working with Mike Mortensen as we would like to incorporate drones as the Mars challenge payload. The largest hurdle we anticipate is securing the appropriate waivers to allow the teams to deploy and operate their drones above 400'. The official announcement is planned to go out on September 1. We are happy to announce that our Keynote Speaker will be Astronaut John Herrington.

We will be attending the AISES Conference this October in Spokane, Washington. We are working to see if local teams might be interested in supporting our booth. A session request was submitted and FNL is currently on a wait list.

Casey Brown from the Ho-Chunk Nation has graciously offered to provide support as a Cultural Liaison to First Nations Launch and WSGC. This connection with the Ho-Chunk Nation has been facilitated thanks to Sierra Space.

2023 FNL AWARD WINNERS					
MOON			MARS		
<b>Written Report</b>			<b>Written Report</b>		
	1st Place	University of Colorado-Boulder		1st Place	Queen's University
	2nd Place	Turtle Mountain Community College		2nd Place	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
	3rd Place	Northern Oklahoma College		3rd Place	University of North Carolina-Pembroke
<b>Oral Presentation</b>			<b>Oral Presentation</b>		
	1st Place	University of Colorado-Boulder		1st Place	Queen's University
	2nd Place	Fort Lewis College		2nd Place	University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
	3rd Place	Turtle Mountain Community College		3rd Place	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
<b>Grand Prize Award</b>			<b>Grand Prize Award</b>		
	1st Place	University of Colorado-Boulder (88.8)		1st Place	University of Washington-Seattle (97.5)
	2nd Place	Turtle Mountain Community College		2nd Place	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
	3rd Place	Northern Oklahoma College		3rd Place	Northern Arizona University
		International		1st Place	Queen's University (103.3)

## **OVERALL**

**OUTREACH AWARD:** University of North Carolina, Pembroke

**ALTITUDE AWARD:** Leech Lake Tribal College

**AESTHETIC AWARD:** United Tribes Technical College

**PATCH DESIGN AWARD:** Peyton Meader, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

**NOBILE AWARD:** College of Menominee Nation

**JUDGE'S AWARD:** Leech Lake Tribal College

**SPIRIT AWARD:** University of Washington, Seattle

**ADVISOR AWARD:** Dr. Bret Benally Thompson, University of Wisconsin, Madison

**TEAM LEAD AWARD:** Phillip Prairie Chief, The University of Oklahoma

**ROOKIE TEAM AWARD:** Massachusetts Institute of Technology

## **NEXT STEP AWARDS**

**RockOn!2023:** Northern Oklahoma College

**Student Launch 2024:** University of North Carolina-Pembroke