



Pacific International Space Center for Exploration Systems

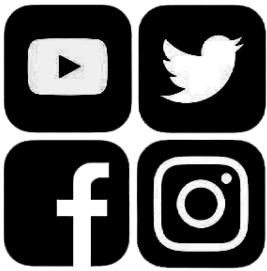


NEWSLETTER

Ten students graduate 2021 PISCES STARS Program



Left: STARS students pose at Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. **Right:** Building rockets.



@PISCES_HAWAII

The 7th annual STARS program wrapped up last month after a week of hands-on STEM activities and presentations. This year's program, which ran from June 21 to 25, featured workshops in rocketry, UAV aircraft and augmented reality. Ten high school girls graduated.

The students built and launched their own rockets and entered a rocketry competition put on by the

Hawaii Science and Technology Museum (HSTM) with funding from the County of Hawaii Dept. of R&D. Microsoft provided first-person demonstrations of its HoloLens mixed reality technology. HoloLens features a headset with a glass shield that covers the eyes and projects 3D, interactive holograms that can be manipulated by touch and hand gestures.

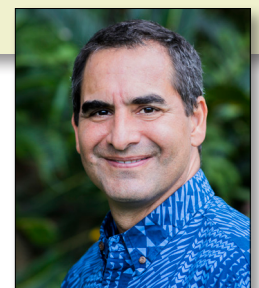
> Continued on *next page*

Message from the Director

The past seven-and-a-half years have been a wonderful honor and opportunity to share with the PISCES team. PISCES has officially closed its doors and the future remains uncertain. The governor and Hawaii legislators are still negotiating various bills and a new state bud-

get. These new pieces of legislation will determine whether PISCES will remain under DBEDT or move to the University of Hawaii at Hilo. Most importantly, they will determine whether PISCES will continue to be funded.

> Continued on *next page*



Rodrigo Romo

Message from the Director *continued...*

Various scenarios are playing out which indicate some form of funding will be available. Meanwhile, we have packed our office and high bay and placed everything in storage—hopefully, temporarily.

I am very proud of the PISCES staff who, even in the midst of uncertainty and closing, still rose to the occasion to conduct the 7th annual STARS program for Hawaii high school girls. A special recognition goes to Chris Yoakum, our public information and outreach officer, who once again has managed to put together a fantastic program despite challenges. And of course, I wish to acknowledge and thank our sponsors and partners: Microsoft, Caterpillar and the Hawaii Science and Technology Museum. Without them, the program would not have been possible this year.

This year the last day of STARS coincided with the first Big Island rocketry competition organized by

the Hawaii Science & Technology Museum and funded through a grant PISCES obtained from the Hawaii County Dept. of R&D. We have a great deal of gratitude to these two organizations with whom we've collaborated on exciting programs over the years.

This will be my last letter as the PISCES director, but I am optimistic that the program will resume operations later this summer and continue to carry on the work we have been doing in economic development, workforce development, applied research in planetary surface exploration, as well as outreach and education.

PISCES is bigger than any one person, and it should move forward carrying Hawaii into a bright future in Aerospace.

A hui hou,

Rodrigo Romo
Program Director

2021 PISCES STARS Program *continued...*

Women in STEM from Microsoft, Caterpillar, Gemini Observatory, Hawaii Space Flight Lab and Hawaii Volcanoes National Park led presentations and activities with the students.

"I am so glad that I got the chance to meet so many amazing women," wrote one STARS student in a feedback survey. "I will not for-

get the advice and encouragement they gave me."

With PISCES closing its doors at the end of last month, the STARS program will continue under the HSTM to continue encouraging young women in STEM education and careers.

STARS was sponsored by Microsoft, Caterpillar and HSTM this year.