



East Cooper Center for
Advanced Studies

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For Immediate Release

March 8, 2022

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Media Release

East Cooper CAS students earn special opportunity with NASA

Mount Pleasant, SC – Students from East Cooper Center for Advanced Studies are in the process of sending a school project to space. They recently learned their entry in the inaugural NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) [TechRise Student Challenge](#) was one of 57 proposals selected. This team of potential scientists and engineers will now have the opportunity to create an experiment that can operate and collect data from the edge of space aboard a Blue Origin suborbital rocket in 2023.

"Our team has done a tremendous job of designing their experiment," said Chris Sjolander, East Cooper CAS Engineering teacher and NASA TechRise Facilitator. "The entire effort has been student-led and managed. Our students are creating the future of safe space travel right here in Mount Pleasant."

The team at the East Cooper CAS is designing a surface catheter/blood suction device. Each student in this group is receiving \$1,500 to build their experiments and a NASA-funded spot to test them on the Blue Origin suborbital rocket flight in early 2023. The team also will receive a suite of materials for preparing their payloads, access to flight simulator software, and technical support from experts.

Administered by [Future Engineers](#), the NASA TechRise Student Challenge aims to inspire students to seek a deeper understanding of Earth's atmosphere, space exploration, coding, and electronics, as well as an appreciation of the importance of test data. Nearly 600 teams applied, representing 5,000 students in grades 6 through 12 from across the country.

"At NASA, we educate and inspire the next generation of scientists, engineers, and explorers," said NASA Administrator Bill Nelson. "The TechRise Student Challenge is an excellent way for students to get hands-on experience designing, building, and launching experiments on suborbital vehicles. I'm so impressed we received hundreds of entries from across the country, and I want to congratulate the winning teams. I can't wait to see these incredible experiments come to life!"

For more information about the winning team from East Cooper CAS, contact Principal Jeff Blankenship at (843) 856-5800. For more about NASA's TechRise Student Challenge, visit www.futureengineers.org/nasatechrise.

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About the Charleston County School District

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is a nationally accredited school district committed to providing equitable and quality educational opportunities for all of its students. CCSD is the second-largest school system in South Carolina and represents a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools spanning 1,300 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves approximately 49,000 students in 88 schools and specialized programs.

CCSD offers a diverse, expanding portfolio of options and specialized programs, delivered through neighborhood, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), Montessori, and charter schools. Options include programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; and military.