



SAN ANTONIO STUDENTS CONNECT WITH INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION

REAL-TIME INTERACTION REINFORCES TO YOUNG PEOPLE THAT THEIR FUTURE AS NEXT-GEN INNOVATORS IN SPACE TECHNOLOGY IS WELL WITHIN THEIR REACH.

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SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS – Recently, fifty area students enrolled in the City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department's summer programs gathered at AREA 21, located inside the San Antonio Museum of Science and Technology (SAMSAT), to participate in the 2023 Zero Robotics Summer Program Competition — a nationwide effort organized by NASA and MIT.



Throughout the summer, participants learned robotics, space engineering and computer programming — skills that helped them create code that was utilized by astronauts aboard the International Space Station (ISS) as they controlled NASA's Astrobee satellites during the competition. Other groups of students who also submitted entries watched from across the country.

The downlink was shown live inside SAMSAT's AREA 21 museum space, which also showcases an array of demonstrations and exhibits of technologies that are based in our community and are shaping humankind's future in space — from concepts in lunar construction developed by the WEX Foundation to robotics, cybersecurity, autonomous vehicles and much more.

"For the last five weeks of our summer program, the kids have been learning coding," said San Antonio Parks and Recreation Manager Sara Sharp. "They got to develop the code that was sent up to the space station, and they got to watch the astronauts actually input their code and watch the little lunar bee achieve its goal."

"Knowing that my team's code made it onto the ISS makes me feel really proud and happy," said student Manuel Cruz "We completed something that many people can't do."



SAMSAT'S AREA 21, where the downlink watch party took place, also provided the campers an opportunity to engage with hands-on exhibits that are also related to space technology and related fields, including a cybersecurity simulator, autonomous vehicle and projects by the WEX Foundation, which is at the forefront of developing integrated technologies and systems for the construction of different types of infrastructure in Earth's orbit and on the Moon.



Photo credits: Port San Antonio