Lockheed Martin Begins Recruiting For Japan STEM Education Program “Girls’ Rocketry Challenge”

The program seeks to continue inspiring the next generation of female scientists, engineers and mathematicians through model rocket development

TOKYO, Japan, July 24, 2017 - Lockheed Martin has opened applications for three new schools to take part in the “Girls’ Rocketry Challenge,” a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education program in Japan which encourages female students to experiment with model rocketry, ignites their intellectual curiosity in this field, and stimulates their interest in STEM careers through practical experience.

In partnership with the Japan Association of Rocketry (JAR), a non-profit organisation that sets the industry standard for model rocketry in Japan, Lockheed Martin’s Girls’ Rocketry Challenge is designed to enable students to learn the applicable use of subjects such as physics and mathematics in a creative and collaborative manner.

“Having seen the dedication and enthusiam of the participants of the first cycle of the program, we are excited to be able to continue this initiative into its second year,” said Chuck Jones, Lockheed Martin Japan’s chief executive. “The girls have made an impact not only within their own schools, but also across the wider education and model rocketry community, as they have inspired other female students to challenge themselves to learn about model rockets and enter competitions. Advancing STEM education always requires close collaboration between industry and educators, and we look forward to continue working alongside our partners, and to welcome the new participants to the program.”

The first cycle of the program, which took place from October 2016 to May 2017, saw 17 students from three school teams challenge themselves in building, and launching, their own model rockets.

Participants of the first round have said:

“Because I am not very good at science subjects, initially I was hesitant about joining the team. However, the program has given me opportunities that I would otherwise not have had, which is why I encourage other students to challenge themselves like I did!” (Kaetsu Ariake Junior High School team member)

“This activity has made us feel a lot closer to space, and has increased our motivation to conduct scientific research.” (Yamawaki Gakuen Junior and Senior High School team member)

“Through this challenge, we learned that research needs to be built up step by step. Unlike classroom experiments, model rocket development is done from scratch, meaning that you do not always get the results that you hope for. We hope that many more students get to experience the joy of experimenting without knowing the outcome.” (Keisen Junior and Senior High School team member)

The second cycle of the Girls’ Rocketry Challenge program will be formally launched in October, after which the school teams will obtain their class-4 rocketry licenses, develop their own model rockets, and present their projects at Science Castle, an academic science conference for school students, scheduled for the end of 2017.

The final milestone will be to compete against other school teams in the national model rocketry competition at JAXA, Tsukuba, in May 2018. Participation in the second cycle of the Girls’ Rocketry Challenge is open to female teams from junior and senior high schools from across Japan.

The Girls’ Rocketry Challenge is part of a larger Lockheed Martin investment in STEM programs. The program is Lockheed Martin’s first STEM education program in Japan, following the success of other STEM education initiatives in the US. In 2016, the corporation contributed more than $24 million to support education initiatives with a strong emphasis on STEM education.

About Lockheed Martin

Headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, Lockheed Martin is a global security and aerospace company that employs approximately 97,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services.

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