

# FACULTY IMPACT STORIES

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## CONNECTING MSU STUDENTS WITH AEROSPACE & STEM OPPORTUNITIES IN MONTANA



### DESCRIPTION

Finding hands-on aerospace opportunities can be challenging when for college students who live in a rural state such as Montana. NASA's Space Grant Consortium helps bridge that gap by supporting all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico with resources that bring aerospace education and research directly to students where they live.

At Montana State University, the BOREALIS (Balloon Outreach Research Exploration and Landscape Imaging System) Lab serves as a statewide hub for hands-on aerospace innovation. Through BOREALIS, MSU students gain direct experience designing and building space-grade systems for high-altitude balloon (HAB) missions, as well as participating in advanced drone-based aerospace research.

Working collaboratively, students develop novel engineering solutions to scientific and technological challenges, contributing to ongoing research in the upper atmosphere and beyond. Currently, a multidisciplinary team of MSU students is designing and building an American-made, research-grade drone to support university faculty conducting fieldwork across Montana.