

Welcome to the inaugural issue of ASCEND, the electronic newsletter for the University of Alabama's Department of Aerospace Engineering & Mechanics. Each month, we hope to give you a snapshot of the people and activities helping to shape the future of aerospace engineering and theoretical/applied mechanics.

September 2017 Spotlights

- On 21 August 2017, the **UA Fenrir Student High-Altitude Ballooning Team** joined 54 other student teams from across the nation in a collaborative effort to image the solar eclipse, live from near space, as part of *NASA's Eclipse Ballooning Project*. Launching from the campus of *South Carolina State University*, the team had a successful flight with their payload reaching an altitude of over 91,000 ft. A special thanks to the folks at South Carolina State for their amazing hospitality! The UA team's effort was funded by the *Alabama Space Grant Consortium*. For more information, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/UAFenrir/>.
- **Dr. Rohan Sood** (rsood@eng.ua.edu) and his students are working with engineers from the *NASA Marshall Space Flight Center* on the trajectory design and analysis of a sail-based spacecraft – the *Near Earth Asteroid (NEA) Scout*. The NEA Scout spacecraft has been selected to fly on Exploration Mission 1. For more information on Dr. Sood's research group, visit: <http://asrl.ua.edu/>
- **Dr. Samit Roy** (sroy@eng.ua.edu) has accepted an offer from the *Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR)* to serve as the Program Officer for the *Structural Prognosis* program. While he will advise his graduate students, Dr. Roy will be working full-time at the AFOSR for the next two years (beginning this October). We wish Dr. Roy the very best of luck in his new position and look forward to his eventual return to Tuscaloosa! For more information, visit: <https://www.ua.edu/news/2017/06/roy-selected-by-u-s-air-force-for-scientific-role/>
- On 22 September 2017, the **UA BSAE Class of 1962** will return to campus for their class reunion. Welcome home! For more information about the reunion, please contact Warren Ross (warrenross@centurytel.net)

Recognizing that you are busy and that your time is valuable, the ASCEND newsletter will always strive to be brief. Please feel free to contact us should you ever want additional information.

If you know someone who would also like to receive the ASCEND newsletter, please feel free to have them email me at john.baker@eng.ua.edu and I will add them to our distribution list. I hope you have an amazing September!

Roll Tide!
John Baker