National Space Society Awards Grant to the Haughton-Mars Project to Further STEM Education

KENNEDY SPACE CENTER, CA, UNITED STATES, October 2, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The National Space Society recently awarded a $15,000 grant to the Haughton-Mars Project (HMP) in support of their 2024 Apollo Fellowship and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education activities. The NSS grant funds are derived from a 2019 grant from the Club For the Future.

HMP-2024 Apollo Fellow Nicolas Mahoume returns from a drone survey of a giant ejecta block at the Haughton impact crater site on Devon Island. Credit: HMP/Pascal Lee

The Haughton-Mars Project is a NASA and private sector-supported, U.S.-based international planetary analog field research project sited on Devon Island in the High Arctic. It is dedicated to advancing the future scientific exploration of the Moon and Mars by robotic systems and humans. Devon Island is the largest uninhabited island and largest single expanse of polar desert on our planet. The terrain is not snowy or icy in the project's summer season, but rather a wide, largely lifeless expanse of red rock, physically mimicking the surface of Mars.

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>
> *Dale Skran, NSS COO/SVP*

"The Haughton-Mars Project is a global leader in planetary analog field science and exploration, and I am glad that the NSS is able to contribute to, and partner in, the project's Apollo Fellowship and other STEM education activities," said Dale Skran, COO of the National Space Society. "Well-designed Mars analog field work supports both the exploration and eventual human settlement of Mars."

Established in 1997, the HMP is led by Dr Pascal Lee, planetary scientist at the SETI Institute,

Mars Institute, and NASA Ames Research Center, and professor of planetary sciences at Kepler Space University. Dr Lee is also a recipient of the NSS's 2023 Space Pioneer Award for Mars Science and Engineering and is currently serving as a member of the National Academies' Steering Committee on a Science Strategy for the Human Exploration of Mars.

Drone view of the HMP Base Camp located on Devon Island in the High Arctic. Credit: HMP/Pascal Lee

The HMP-2024 Apollo Fellowship was awarded to Nicolas Mahoume, a master's graduate student in aerospace engineering at the Technical University of Delft in the Netherlands. Mahoume and his academic advisor, Prof. Sebastiaan de Vet, are working with Lee to understand the nature and scale of geologic terrain features on Mars that would benefit the most from aerial exploration by robotic rotorcraft. The field research was conducted with customized drones.

"I'm grateful to the National Space Society for its generous support of the Haughton-Mars Project, our Apollo Fellowship program, and our other STEM education endeavors," said Lee. "The success of humanity's future on the Moon and Mars depends on training highly qualified explorers who will have acquired the needed experience in surviving, performing, and thriving in extreme environments, doing scientific fieldwork and advancing exploration."

Other HMP-2024 STEM activities enabled by the NSS award include live interactions from the field with remote students across the U.S. and the anticipated presentation of the HMP-2024 Apollo Fellowship research results and STEM activities at the NSS' International Space Development Conference (ISDC) in Orlando, Florida on June 19-22, 2025.

ABOUT THE HAUGHTON-MARS PROJECT
For more information on the HMP and its Apollo Fellowship Program, visit their website or their NASA website.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL SPACE SOCIETY
The National Space Society was founded in 1987 via a merger of the National Space Institute and the L5 Society and is the preeminent citizen's voice on space exploration, development, and settlement. To learn more about the NSS and its mission to establish humanity as a spacefaring species, visit us on the web at nss.org.

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