

people news

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MCC student Nessler goes to space camp

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Wendy Nessler, a Mesa Community College geography student, recently returned from Huntsville, Ala., where she spent three days at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center as a member of the National Community College Aerospace Scholars program, according to a press release.

Ms. Nessler applied for the program because of her involvement in the Phi Theta Kappa Omicron Beta chapter at MCC. She was selected to complete 20 hours of competitive pre-work this past summer with 180 student participants and NASA engineers designing a mission to Mars. This included completing four assignments, a budget time line, three experiments and a line drawing of a rover.

Following the pre-work, Ms. Nessler was one of 40 participants chosen to go to the NASA facilities in Huntsville. On arrival, the students were divided into four companies and were given the task of developing a prototype they would present to NASA at the completion of their stay.

"After arriving at NASA, it was very fast paced and rather stressful being in a new

place and working closely with people you just met five minutes ago. We were able to be successful as a team by accepting pieces of the project that we knew we could do well at, and bouncing our ideas off of one another," stated Ms. Nessler. "I think we were all surprised at how quickly we were able to come together and get things done and we got much more out of our teamwork than our prototype."



Wendy Nessler

While at NASA, the group toured the facilities, learned about internship opportunities and listened to such presenters as Tim Pickens, a propulsion specialist and Frank Six, who invented NASA's Great Moonbuggy Race. They also learned about the history of the X-15 Rocket project.

"My grandfather worked on the X-15 project at NASA in the 1960s. It was fun to see and learn what they do," said Ms. Nessler.

Ms. Nessler is in her second year at MCC. This past summer, she worked for the National Weather Service on the Weather Balloon Project. She plans to transfer in fall 2013 to complete a bachelor's degree in meteorology and pursue a doctorate in astro-physics. Ms. Nessler encourages other students to become involved on campus so they can learn about opportunities.

"This experience helped me get a firmer grasp on what I want to do for my career," she explained.

Ms. Nessler extends her appreciation to Erin Saffell, her geography instructor, for her support and encouragement.