



## UNIVERSITIES SPACE RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

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### **Oregon High School Students' Lunar Research Recognized at NASA Meeting**

**Houston, TX—August 1, 2022.** A team of high school students from the Logos Public Charter School in Medford, Oregon, presented their lunar research poster "[Comparison of Known Lunar Pits Using the LROC Quickmap Tool](#)" during the NASA Exploration Science Forum (ESF), a hybrid meeting conducted at the University of Colorado at Boulder, on July 19–21, 2022.

The students participated in the 2021–2022 Exploration of the Moon and Asteroids by Secondary Students (ExMASS) program, a high school research program managed by the Center for Lunar Science and Exploration (CLSE). CLSE, a member of the NASA Solar System Exploration Research Virtual Institute (SSERVI), is led by the Lunar and Planetary Institute (LPI) and NASA Johnson Space Center. SSERVI provides funding for the ExMASS program, which is designed to envelop participants in the process of science, foster positive attitudes toward science, and enhance lunar and asteroid science knowledge.

"I was impressed by my team's determination to work through our research project," said Holly Bensel, the students' teacher at Logos Public Charter School. "I was impressed by their talent for producing visually pleasing slideshows and poster."

"For a decade, the ExMASS program has provided an authentic, student-driven research experience for high school students," says Andy Shaner, Senior Education Specialist at LPI and ExMASS program lead. "The student research presented at this year's NASA ESF demonstrates the high-quality scientific work high school students are capable of producing when given the opportunity."

The students presented their research poster and networked with other students and scientists virtually via the online platform Gather.town. In addition to presenting their research, the students competed with other high school, undergraduate, and graduate students in the ESF's student poster competition. The Logos team's research received an honorable mention in the competition. During one conversation, a lunar scientist invited the students to participate in a field research campaign in summer 2023 at Lava Beds National Monument in California.

The Logos team included students Jaelin Hensley and Asher Molzer; and teacher Holly Bensel. Dr. Viranga Perera of the University of Texas-Austin was the team's research advisor.

For more information about the ExMASS program, visit [Exploration of the Moon and Asteroids by Secondary Students](#).

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### **About USRA**

Founded in 1969, under the auspices of the National Academy of Sciences at the request of the U.S. Government, the Universities Space Research Association (USRA) is a nonprofit corporation chartered to advance space-related science, technology, and engineering. USRA operates scientific institutes and facilities and conducts other major research and educational programs. USRA engages the university community and employs in-house scientific leadership, innovative research and development, and project management expertise. More information about USRA is available at [www.usra.edu](http://www.usra.edu).

### **About LPI**

The Lunar and Planetary Institute (LPI), operated by Universities Space Research Association, was established during the Apollo program in 1968 to foster international collaboration and to serve as a repository for information gathered during the early years of the space program. Today, the LPI is an intellectual leader in lunar and planetary science. The Institute serves as a scientific forum attracting world-class visiting scientists, postdoctoral fellows, students, and resident experts; supports and serves the research community through newsletters, meetings, and other activities; collects and disseminates planetary data while facilitating the community's access to NASA science; and engages, excites, and educates the public about space science and invests in the development of future generations of explorers. The research carried out at the LPI supports NASA's efforts to explore the solar system. More information about LPI is available at [www.lpi.usra.edu](http://www.lpi.usra.edu).