

Why I Want to Go to Space Camp

When I was 2 years old, Buzz Aldrin signed my copy of his picture-book autobiography. I didn't understand the importance of his contribution until I reached the second grade and learned about the first moon landing. That was the year I fell in love with science class and completed my first school science project. It was about birds, a topic that has since grown to be a passionate hobby.

Birding was one of the reasons I became fascinated with flight and the exploration of the skies. I always thought that birds were lucky to have the ability to take to the skies and explore the unknown. Ornithologists still don't know so many things about the migratory patterns of birds, and how birds find their way while migrating, since various types of birds have different sized wing spans and fly at different altitudes. Similarly, space holds its own mysteries. Since space is largely unexplored, scientists do not have all the answers as to how different rocket designs will perform in space, how long humans can survive in space without ill effects, or even how far a distance humans can reach in our universe. These gaps in knowledge provide endless opportunities for study that I would like to pursue at Space Camp. After all, it's hard to be passionate about something when there is nothing left to discover because then you can't make an impact on your own passion!

In 2014, my family and I had planned to watch the space launch at Wallops island from our roof. However, the rocket launch failed. That memory really impacted me because I couldn't believe how after so much preparation, such state-of-the-art equipment had failed. I wanted to learn more about the technological designs used to go into space. I had the chance to find out this year when in my STEM class we were assigned a simulation project on planning out an exploration on Mars. Each aircraft was different and had its own pros and cons. Everything had to be taken into careful consideration, or else our "mission" wouldn't succeed. That led me to consider how difficult real space exploration must be, especially after my group had so much trouble with just a simulation! I was left wondering about the planning process behind space missions, how rockets are designed for zero-gravity travel, and how new technology is introduced so that astronauts can learn to pilot rockets. Attending Space Camp would provide me with an amazing and educational opportunity to explore my interests that I would love to be a part of!

