

President Commends Rocket Team Faculty and Students, Awards Million-NTD Prize to Encourage Continued Innovation

Campus focus

To encourage the Aerospace Department's rocket team for their successful execution of the Taiwan Space Agency (TASA) sounding rocket project with 3 successful rocket launches within 2 years, President Huan-Chao Keh specially invited the team's faculty and students for a meeting on August 15th. In addition to commending their hard work and contributions, he announced that starting this year, the team will receive NT\$1 million in annual R&D funding and student rewards, similar to the Tamkang Robotics Team, which has won world championships for consecutive years. He also instructed the Vice President for Administrative Affairs, Dr. Chun-Hung Lin, to assist in planning a suitable space as an aerospace research and development base.

Led by Department Chair Fu-Yuen Hsiao, the Aerospace Department's faculty and students, including Professor Yi-Ren Wang, the principal investigator of the sounding rocket project, Associate Professor Chien-Chun Hung, Assistant Professor Kaiti Wang, former department chair Shi-Min Lee, student team leader Jih-Yang Yuan, a third-year student in aerospace engineering, and team member Jung-An Yang, were accompanied by Vice President Lin and College of Engineering Dean Tzung-Hang Lee to receive the president's commendation.

President Keh noted that Chairperson Flora Chia-I Chang highly praised the performance of the Aerospace Department's faculty and students. After the successful test launch on August 5th, the chairperson issued rewards and decided to continue providing resources to fully support aerospace technology research and development. He emphasized this as an example of the "Matthew Effect," often stressed by Tamkang University's founder, where the strong become stronger, highlighting Tamkang's strengths. He encouraged the Aerospace Department to "continue developing research strengths on the current foundation." The president also stipulated that at

least NT\$200,000 of the million-dollar funding must be allocated to the "Space Technology Laboratory" student team, showing appreciation for the students' diligent learning and active participation.

Professor Yi-Ren Wang expressed gratitude to the university and mentioned that TASA is ambitiously planning a lunar exploration mission. Tamkang University can cooperate to launch aerospace R&D. "Each rocket launch can immediately enhance the university's reputation, boosting the university's enrollment." He also praised the student team for their performance.

Although there was a delay of one day due to avionics system issues, the students stayed awake for 2 consecutive nights to resolve the problem.

"Even though the test launch was successful, with only minor range issues, the flaws do not overshadow the excellence. We have already become the nation's only university rocket team." Assistant Professor Kaiti Wang echoed Professor Yi-Ren Wang's sentiments, acknowledging the challenges faced during the test launch. "But we encouraged the students to face the challenge head-on, which is the true meaning of education." She added,

"I was inspired myself."

Department Chair Fu-Yuen Hsiao noted that this year, the Aerospace Engineering Department expanded to 3 classes, with all admissions quotas fully filled, indicating that the development of small sounding rockets has had a positive impact. He is considering using the university's funding to improve the avionics system, hoping to launch the rocket to an altitude of 5 kilometers next year. Additionally, fuel development will be reconsidered, and collaboration with other universities is not ruled out. The most urgent priority is enhancing explosion-proof facilities, and he hopes to find a suitable location on campus to serve as the research and development base.

Team captain Jih-Yang Yuan reported to the president that being part of a rocket development team as an undergraduate has been an incredibly special experience, allowing him to gain valuable skills. He plans to remain with the team, saying, "Elon Musk is pushing the world toward space, and we must not fall behind." Jung-An Yang, one of the 8 female team members, enthusiastically declared, "Tamkang Aerospace welcomes you!"



