



News

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Dobson Family Sponsoring SWOSU Human Exploration Rover Challenge Team

Everett and Jeanetta Dobson of Edmond have made a major gift in support of Southwestern Oklahoma State University's National Aeronautics & Space Administration Human Exploration Rover Challenge (NASA HERC) Team for 2019-20.

This year marks the eighth consecutive Challenge in which SWOSU, with locations in Weatherford and Sayre, has competed.

The NASA HERC each year features an engineering design challenge to engage students worldwide in the next phase of human space exploration. The annual event is a more complex follow-up to the successful NASA's Great Moonbuggy Race.

The competition challenges high school and college students to create a vehicle designed to traverse the simulated surface of another world. During its 20-year run, NASA's Great Moonbuggy Race engaged more than 10,000 students and demonstrated that these budding scientists and engineers were capable of complex work. The NASA HERC continues that tradition by providing an authentic engineering experience. Student teams design, build and test technologies that enable rovers to perform in a variety of environments. The HERC inspires participants to become the engineers to design NASA's next-generation space systems.

The SWOSU HERC Team for the 2019-20 academic year consists of SWOSU students, including:

- Trey Bidy, Tucker Sawatzky, Teddy Deaton and Ryan Boecker, all of Weatherford
- Katherine McDowell of Okemah
- Jacob Gonzalez of Newcastle
- Neenu Kakkanatt of Bethany
- Jacob Liao of Oklahoma City
- Colton Parkinson of Fay
- Nathen Johnson of Anadarko

Faculty Sponsors include Brett Chase, Todd Raborn, Nathan Brooks and Talon Watkins. SWOSU instructor and holder of the Ed & Winnie Ola Berrong Endowed Chair in Engineering Technology Cindi Albrightson serves as the project lead.

Everett Dobson is a 1981 SWOSU graduate who was inducted into the SWOSU Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame in 1999. He has endowed the Everett Dobson Chairs in Business, Marketing, Management and Finance in the Everett Dobson School of Business & Technology at SWOSU and provided the private investment necessary to construct the Everett Dobson Golf Training Facility on SWOSU's Weatherford campus. In 2015, Dobson was inducted into the SWOSU Presidential Order of Merit in recognition of his 25 years of service on the SWOSU Foundation, Inc. Board of Trustees where he served as Investment Committee chair.

The Dobsons are parents of three and grandparents of four.

"We are deeply grateful to Everett and Jeanetta Dobson for their generous investment in the 2020 SWOSU NASA HERC," said Albrightson. "This is a one-of-a-kind enhanced learning experience for our SWOSU students, which is only made possible thanks to philanthropic partners like the Dobsons."

For more information, please contact the SWOSU Department of Engineering Technology in the Everett Dobson School of Business & Technology at 580-774-3162.

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Administration	▷
Alumni and Foundation	▷
Community	▷
Events	▷
Faculty and Staff	▷
Miscellaneous	▷
Sayre	▷
Students	▷

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