Smead Aerospace
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

Future Leaders in Aerospace 2026: Hosted by the University of Colorado-Boulder

Wednesday May 13th

Arrival and transit to Homewood Suites hotel (4950 Baseline Rd, Boulder, CO)

Upon arrival, please tell the front desk you are with the CU Aerospace Future Leaders event and they will check you in and provide room assignments.

Welcome reception at the hotel (informal happy hour) 6pm

Thursday May 14th

Shuttle leaves hotel at 7:30am (breakfast is included at hotel)

7:45am: Arrival to Aerospace building (3775 Discovery Drive), located in AERO N240

Breakfast snacks and coffee/tea provided at Aerospace building

8:30am Kickoff and welcome, Prof. Penny Axelrad and Torin Clark

8:45am Welcome from College of Engineering and Applied Sciences, Medford Moorer Jr., Assistant Dean of Strategic Initiatives and Senior Advisor to the Dean

9:00am Welcome from Smead Aerospace Engineering Sciences Department, Hanspeter Schaub, Department Chair and Distinguished Professor

9:10am Keynote faculty research talk, Robyn Macdonald, Assistant Professor, Aerospace Mechanics Research Center (AMREC)

9:50 am Research talks: Autonomy, Navigation, and Orbital Intelligence

Yingke Li, Knowledge-Action Unity for Aerospace Autonomy

Kaila Coimbra, Lunar Rover Localization under Sparse Navigation Infrastructure

Mikaela Dobbin, Leveraging Inter-Satellite Links for GNSS-Limited Precise Orbit Determination in LEO

10: 35am Break

10:55am Panel – Pursuing an academic career (applying, interviewing, and negotiating), Hosted by Incoming Dept. Chair John Evans with panelists Prof. Brian Argrow and Zach Sunberg

11:35am Group Photo, Jeff Zehnder

11:45am Lunch in AERO 224L

12:35pm Why Academia? - a conversation about why we are here. Led by Prof. Penny Axelrad, with Prof. Emerita Delores Knipp, Prof. Maryam Shakiba, Prof. Jeff Glusman

1:15pm Research talks: Propulsion, Power, and Spacecraft Performance

Lauren Simitz, New Insights into the High-Temperature Flame Dynamics of Emerging Fuels for Propulsion and Power

Anant Girdhar, Comparing Combustion Chemistry Comprehensibly, Concisely, and Conically

Divesh Soni, Agile Slew Maneuvers for Large Ultralight Spacecraft

2:00pm Break

2:20pm Research talks: Sensing the Skies and Advanced Aircraft Safety

Kenjiro Lay, Structural-Aerodynamic Sensor Fusion for Active Flutter Suppression

Nathaniel Jenkins, Aircraft Lightning Protection: Zoning by Simulation

Allegra Farrar, An Adaptive Sensing Framework for Advanced Earth-observing Satellite Monitoring and Warning of Tropical Cyclones

Ramchander Rao Bhaskara, Precision Depth Sensing: Space Science to Robotics

3:20pm Panel – Work-life Balance in Aerospace Careers and Academia, Chaired by Prof. Torin Clark, with Denise Phillips, Outreach and Community Engagement Officer, MIT Dept. Of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Prof. Jay McMahon, Smead Faculty Fellow, and Jess Morris, Director of Workplace Well-being

4:00pm Aerospace Building and Lab Tours

4:30pm Shuttle transportation back to hotel at 4:30pm

6:00-6:30pm Shuttle to dinner at Banquet dinner at Chatauqua House with Keynote speaker, Prof. Allison Hayman

Shuttle back to hotel

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Friday May 15th

Shuttle leaves hotel at 7:30am (breakfast is included at hotel, please check out, bring your luggage with you to the Aerospace building and we can store it)

Arrival to Aerospace building (3775 Discovery Drive)

Breakfast snacks and coffee/tea provided at Aerospace building in AERO N240

8:15am *Panel – Building a Research Program, Chaired by Prof. John Farnsworth, with Profs. Eric Frew, Bob Marshall, Tomoko Matsuo*

8:55am Research talks: Brains, Behavior, and Life in Extreme Frontiers

Taylor Lonner, Modeling Orientation Perception in Terrestrial Aviation and Spaceflight

Mich Lin, Impact of habitability on behavioral health in isolation and confinement

Sarah Leary, Advancing wearable sensor systems for behavioral health monitoring in extreme environments

9:40am Break

10:00am Research Talks: Dynamics, Fluids, and the Physics of Motion

Jiwoo Song, Data-Enabled Modeling and Design of Complex Aerospace Systems

Shilpa Sajeev, Selected Eddy Simulations (SES) - a non-DNS approach with Navier-Stokes Dynamics at all Scales

Adnan Mansour, Investigation of Multidimensional and Magnetized Effects on Soliton Generation for Space Debris Detection

Anoop Kiran, Aerodynamic interactions and control algorithms for multi-robot flight

11am Panel - Academic Pathways, Chaired by Prof. John Farnsworth, with Teaching Prof. Alexandra Le Moine, Research Prof. David Marshall, and former NASA astronaut Jim Voss

11:40am Closing remarks and logistics (reimbursements)

11:50am Lunch to go or in person

12:15pm Car transportation to optional hike, or transportation to the airport on own