**Application for Scholarship to**

**Space Center U, Houston, TX**

**Offered by**

**The Virginia Space Grant Consortium (VSGC)**

**in collaboration with VSDB Outreach Services**

(Applicants, please print this out for future reference)

**The Space Center University (Space Center U) Program for Students with Visual Impairment** is a challenging new three-day program for students with blindness or visual impairment, ages 15 through18. **It will be held August 8-10, 2018, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Space Center Houston, Houston, TX.**

This pilot program combines classroom theory with thought-provoking, hands-on tasks that promote teamwork, problem solving, communication and engineering solutions to space-related situations. The program is designed to develop and improve critical-thinking skills, fiscal responsibility, creativity and the drive to be successful.

Space Center U Visual Impairment program includes the following:

* Hands-on, engineering-based activities and data collection for real-world analysis
* Interactive, project-based learning that includes a one-stage rocket launch, thermal tile and cryogenic capsule testing, robotics, parachute design, collaborative teaming and implementation of critical thinking skills
* Experts sharing what it takes to work at NASA and the projects that prepare humans for space exploration
* Daily lunch at Space Center Houston
* Brunch with an Astronaut
* Graduation ceremony and certificates

Space Center U’s Visual Impairment Program was developed jointly by Space Center Houston’s accessibility and inclusion coordinator and the Space Center U coordinator, as well as local experts, to meet the needs of students with low vision or blindness. A variety of accommodations will be available, including computer software/technology, and materials presented in Braille, large print, and verbally. Tactile examples of key concepts will be used.

For more information on [Space Center U’s Visual Impairment Program](https://spacecenter.org/space-center-u/visual-impairment-program/), see <https://spacecenter.org/space-center-u/visual-impairment-program/>

**Scholarship Opportunity**

**The Virginia Space Grant Consortium** (VSGC) is a coalition of five Virginia colleges and universities, NASA, state education agencies and other institutions representing diverse STEM education and research. VSGC offers a wide range of student opportunities including fellowships, scholarships, internships, research experiences, and student flight projects. The **VSGC is offering a scholarship** **to one Virginia student who meets the requirements below.**

 **Requirements for Recipients of VSGC’s Space Center U Scholarship:**

* Must be a student living and going to school in Virginia, with an IEP as a student who is blind or vision impaired;
* Must be 15 through18 years old;
* Must have adequate software/technology and literacy skills;
* Must be able to participate in the full program, Aug. 8 – 10, 2018, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm each day;
* Must be able to travel to and from Houston on days preceding and following the program;
* Must be able to participate in a program that is group structured;
* Must be able to take care of his/her own medical and personal care needs; and
* A parent or parent designated adult chaperone must accompany the student and be responsible for the student during travel and between the hours of 4:00 pm and 8:00 am each day during the program;

The **scholarship will cover the following costs for the scholarship recipient and the cost for a parent or a parent designated adult chaperone:**

* Registration fee for the student to attend Space Center U - (value $349.95) Includes admission, supplies, staff, presentations from NASA experts, private tours, brunch with an astronaut, lunch and graduation.
* Registration fee for one parent/chaperone to accompany the student - (value $229.95) Includes admission, daily lunch, presentations from NASA experts, private tours, brunch with an astronaut, lunch and graduation
* Airfares for student and one parent/chaperone
* Lodging for student and parent/chaperone (**one room** for up to 4 nights)
* Allowance to cover meals not provided by the hotel or program

VSDB Outreach Services is collaborating with The VSGC, and handling the application process. Application components follow.

**How to apply for the VSGC Scholarship to attend Space Center U**

1. Complete the [online application](https://goo.gl/forms/2cKLoVzqXHGfTVHD2) at <https://goo.gl/forms/2cKLoVzqXHGfTVHD2> before midnight, May 9, 2018. It is recommended that the online application be submitted as soon as possible, so that we may start a file for each applicant, and will be able to identify other documents sent by email with the student identified by initials and birthdate.

**In addition to the online application for scholarship, to complete this application the following documents must be received by midnight, May 9, 2018:**

1. **A copy of the student’s 2 most recent report cards** should be scanned and emailed as attachments to debbie.pfeiffer@vsdb.k12.va.us Please block out the student’s name and write his or her initials and birthdate in its place as identifiers, and to maintain confidentiality in emailing. **Use** “**Space Center U documents**” as the **subject for the email** so that it will be given immediate attention.
2. A **Recommendation Form from each of two teachers is required**, with at least one of the two references from a Teacher of Students who are Blind/VI. This reference form will address the student’s abilities and interest in science, technology, engineering, and math, ability to work well with others, ability to use technology, and level of independence. Deadline for receiving the Teacher Recommendation Form is midnight, May 9, 2018.
	1. Teachers are **recommended** to complete the [**online** recommendation form](https://goo.gl/forms/aSsOewxV7LqhIxHt2) at this link: <https://goo.gl/forms/aSsOewxV7LqhIxHt2> Any problems completing/submitting the online form should be directed to debbie.pfeiffer@vsdb.k12.va.us by May 7. Please use **“Space Center U”** as subject.
3. **Student’s typed personal statement** of 250-500 words. Students, please include:
	1. your initials and birthdate as identifiers on the statement;
	2. information about your interest in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and/or math (STEM);
	3. your academic/career goals; and
	4. why you are applying to this program.

This statement should be attached as a Word or pdf document to an email sent to debbie.pfeiffer@vsdb.k12.va.us . Please use “**Space Center U documents**” as the subject for the email so that it will be given immediate attention.

**Applications online and required documents must be received by** **midnight** **May 9, 2018**.

* After May 11, 2018, completed applications will be reviewed by a panel, and those applicants chosen for an **online interview** will be notified along with their parents. The final decision on the scholarship recipient and alternate(s) will be notified on or before May 31, 2018, and information will be shared with all who applied.
* Upon scholarship award, additional forms will be required. These forms will come directly from VSGC or Space Center Houston and will need to be signed and returned so that the applicant can participate in the program.

**For additional information** about the VSGC Scholarship Application, please contact:

Dr. Debbie Pfeiffer

Director, VSDB Outreach Services

debbie.pfeiffer@vsdb.k12.va.us

(540) 414-5249 (texts will not be received)

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| **Use this as a checklist to note what you have submitted** |
| **Application Pkg. item:** | **Date Completed/Submitted:** |
| Student/Parent online application |  |
| Student’s Personal Statement |  |
| 2 most recent report cards |  |
| Recommendations from 2 teachers (check with teachers on when they submitted)  | 1 | 2 |