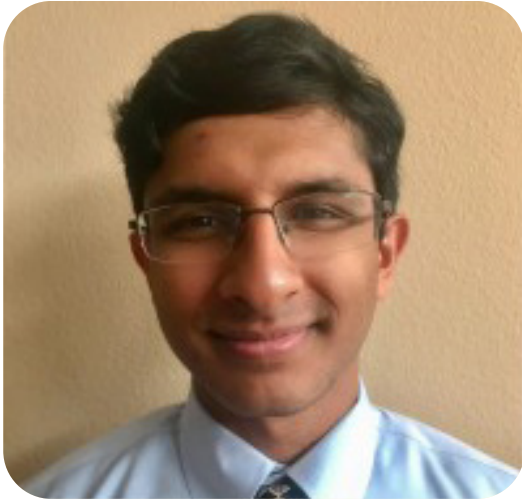


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VIJAY

Undergraduate Apprenticeship Program and GEMS Near-Peer Mentor

I am a Contact Dynamics Aerospace Engineer on the JETS [JSC Engineering, Technology and Science] contract working at NASA - Johnson Space Center and hired under the JETS teammate company GeoControl Systems [subcontract to Jacobs]. I am a member of JSC's docking team and help carry out loads and dynamics analysis and spacecraft docking testing.

WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE HOPES AND DREAMS?

I hope to elevate my employment at NASA from contractor to civil servant. Maybe one day I can be one of the first Martian astronauts.

BEST THINGS ABOUT THE PROGRAM

As a near-peer mentor, I was able to pass on knowledge related to college and STEM that I had accumulated over those four years to motivated high school students with high potential. I was happy to have a chance to use my communication and leadership skills with a younger crowd of students, especially since I had a great deal of experience to share which I hope helped kickstart their STEM careers.

HOW PARTICIPATING IN AEOP INSPIRED YOU TO ADVANCE IN STEM

As an undergraduate apprentice, I was exposed to research at the University of Houston in high-strain rate response of Magnesium alloys. Thanks to this apprenticeship role, I was able to learn and apply crucial skills involving modeling, simulation development and data analysis that helped me land my current position.

IF YOU COULD MEET ONE PERSON LIVING OR DEAD, WHO WOULD YOU CHOOSE? WHY?

Roger Federer. He is my favorite tennis player and one of the first people I considered a role model. I hope to emulate his composure under pressure.