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For Immediate Release

May 20, 2019

Compton College Students to Launch High Altitude Balloon May 31

A group of Compton College students in STEM majors, ranging from computer science to physics, plan to conduct the college's second High Altitude Balloon (HAB) launch on May 31 at 10 a.m. (weather permitting). Under the guidance of Physics Instructor Kent Schwitkis, the first HAB was launched from Compton College in June 2018 and reached an altitude of 89,000 feet. The students hope to surpass the altitude gained last year and reach approximately 130,000 feet with this year's HAB launch.

The weather balloon will be about six feet in diameter at launch and will propel a student-designed and constructed payload to a high altitude. The balloon's payload consists of video cameras and onboard computers incorporating various types of sensors, including those that will record light intensity, acceleration, temperature, atmospheric pressure, altitude, and cosmic rays. The students applied the knowledge gained from last year's maiden launch of Compton College's HAB project to improve this year's experiment. In 2018, the balloon launched from Compton College traveled to near Victorville, Calif., in approximately 3 hours and 30 minutes.

"This physics project provides students with a real-world opportunity to apply their classroom knowledge of the manufacturing and engineering processes, including planning, design, prototyping, and testing," said Schwitkis. "Students gain experience in making contingencies regarding weather and wind patterns impacting the flight path of the balloon and its landing, in order to gain permission from the Federal Aviation Administration for the flight."

The May 31 launch of the High Altitude Balloon will take place at 10 a.m. on the Compton College campus just west of Parking Lot A, located at 1111 Artesia Boulevard, Compton, CA 90221.

For more information about the HAB launch, please contact Kent Schwitkis at 310-900-1600 ext. 2428. To learn more about the STEM degree programs offered at Compton College, please contact MESA Program Specialist Lorena Fonseca at ext. 2544. The Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) program at Compton College provides support to students who are majoring in math or science so they may excel academically and transfer to four-year institutions.

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Photo Available Online:

<http://www.compton.edu/adminandoperations/communityrelations/images/2019/2018-High-Altitude-Balloon-Launch.jpg>

Caption:

Compton College students launched their first High Altitude Balloon (HAB) project in June 2018 (pictured here). The college's second HAB launch is scheduled for May 31, 2019 at 10 a.m. (weather permitting) under the guidance of Compton College Physics Instructor Kent Schwitkis.

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About Compton College

Compton College is the community's education solution offering a full complement of transfer and degree courses, as well as career and technical education. Students may earn an associate degree or certificate, transfer to a four-year university or train for a career. Compton College is located at 1111 E. Artesia Boulevard, Compton, CA 90221.