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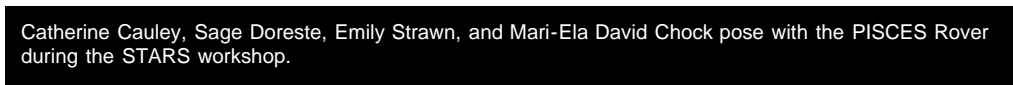
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Posted **September 1, 2014 - 6:07pm**

Isle students to stay overnight in HI-SEAS habitat



The PISCES STARS program concluded with an out-of-this-world experience for three Hawaii Island high school students — they spent Labor Day weekend on “Mars” via the HI-SEAS (Hawaii Space Exploration Analog and Simulation) Habitat on Mauna Loa, making them the first students ever to stay at the two-story geodesic dome.

Catherine Cauley of Hilo High School, Sage Doreste of Connections Public Charter High School and Emily Strawn of Konawaena High School are accompanied by HI-SEAS Principal Investigator Kim Binsted, PISCES STARS Project Lead Mari-Ela David Chock, PISCES Cultural Advisory Committee

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Member Koa Rice and PISCES Executive Administrator Polly Roth.

"We are thrilled to be able to offer this one-of-a-kind opportunity to our STARS," Chock said.

"To experience one night of a simulated Mars mission is priceless in terms of educational value and we can't thank Dr. Binsted and the HI-SEAS team enough for collaborating with PISCES to help make this happen."

"We're delighted to welcome these smart young women to 'Mars.' You never know — they might be going there for real one day," Binsted said.

The field trip, which began Saturday, is the grand finale of the first ever PISCES Women STARS (STEM Aerospace Research Scholars) program. The program kicked off July 7-11.

During the one-week workshop, Cauley, Doreste and Strawn learned about ISRU (in-situ resource utilization), designed a lunar lander, conducted a mission on the moon using MoonBots, got hands-on experience driving the PISCES planetary rover through an obstacle course, toured three observatories, experienced sunset at the summit of Mauna Kea as well as learned about Hawaii's cultural connection to space exploration.

"I loved the lectures. It can be hard to find all the information on our own so to be able to hear it from people directly involved was amazing," Strawn said.

"My favorite part of the week was controlling the rover ... just because you can actually get a sense of what it's like to control and maneuver," Doreste said. "Also, hearing from people who are involved in the science and math fields is great so you can hear the real deal."

STARS is specifically for female high school students and is designed to encourage more young women to pursue a career in aerospace or other related STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) fields.

"For now, the program is open to high schools on the Big Island," said Chock.

"But our goal is to expand it in the near future so we can make STARS available to all young women throughout the state of Hawaii."

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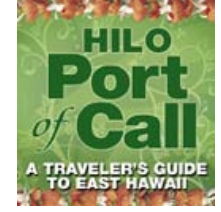
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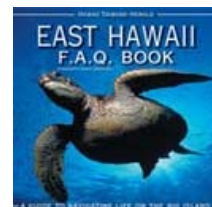
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