

SCEP Engineer Leads Award-Winning Team

Aaron Shields, Student Career Experience Program engineering student with the Defense Contract Management Agency NASA Product Operations ATK Launch, is acting as team leader for the 2008–2009 Chimaera project at Utah State University.

Shields' peers selected him to oversee and coordinate the team's efforts in the NASA university student launch initiative, a national competition with a score of participants. Shields and his team are looking to prove for the second consecutive year that they are ahead of the pack when it comes to rocket science.

"Working at DCMA has definitely provided valuable experience and allowed me to better lead my team toward meeting our performance objectives," he said.

Chimaera, USU's rocket team, has already won two awards: best vehicle design and best documentation and presentation. The vehicle design award went to USU for its advanced energy management system, the air brakes and control surfaces, which steer the rocket and control its altitude. The NASA competition involves achieving one mile in altitude, and Chimaera's energy management system performed remarkably well, with the average error for the test



Aaron Shields, SCEP engineering student with DCMA NASA Product Operations ATK Launch. (Photos courtesy of Aaron Shields, DCMA NASA Product Operations ATK Launch)

and competition flights at less than one-half of one percent.

The team also won the Documentation and Presentation award for their detailed and professional reports and reviews. Their final report will be one of the most thorough studies in rocket design and prototyping at USU, totaling more than 400 pages.

Chimaera team members are hoping to be the overall champions for the second-year running. **C**



Members of Chimaera, USU's rocket team, lead by DCMA's Aaron Shields.