

30 young astronauts share their learning experiences (with photos)

Thirty Hong Kong secondary students who participated in the Young Astronaut Training Camp 2023 implemented by the Hong Kong Space Museum have returned from an eight-day training trip to Beijing and Leng Hu in Qinghai. They were presented with certificates at a sharing session held at the Hong Kong Space Museum today (August 29). Three students who were honoured with Best Camper Performance awards for their outstanding efforts reflected on their valuable experiences gained from the training camp.

The training camp ran from July 29 to August 5. Students started the trip in Beijing and visited key science research and astronomical facilities such as the Headquarters of the National Astronomical Observatories, and the Miyun and the Xinglong Observing Stations to study the development of optical and radio astronomical observation in China. They attended a science lecture by aerospace experts to learn about relevant projects being pursued in China's space station, and experienced a rocket launch and life on board the space station through virtual reality. The students also met the first astronaut of the country, Mr Yang Liwei, to understand the latest developments of Chinese astronauts in training.

This year marks the first time the camp visited the Leng Hu Mars Camp in Qinghai, which features a striking resemblance to the Martian landscape, and has an excellent condition for astronomical observations. The students explored the geological features near the Mars Camp, attended courses on the making of a solar-powered Mars rover and the challenges of living on the red planet, while enjoying stargazing under a magnificent night sky. In addition to participating in astronomy and science-related programmes, the students also visited the Mogao Caves in Dunhuang, a World Heritage Site, to appreciate its art, history and culture.

Launched in 2009, the Young Astronaut Training Camp has been held on 12 occasions, attracting a total of 360 students. This year's training camp is the first since the outbreak of the pandemic in 2019. Recruitment of the training camp started in May and received an overwhelming response. After three rounds of selection – a quiz on astronomy and space science, a three-day pre-camp training and a final interview, 30 students from Secondary 2 to Secondary 6 were selected as Young Astronauts out of more than 160 applicants from around 100 local secondary schools.

The training camp is jointly presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department and the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce, in association with the Beijing-Hong Kong Academic Exchange Centre. The training camp is implemented by the Hong Kong Space Museum and sponsored by the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce. For details of the training camp, please visit the website of the Hong Kong Space Museum at hk.space.museum/en/web/spm/activities/yatc.html or call 2734 2765.

