



To the moon! Mexican women win space habitat design contest

PrepaTec Metepec students Ana Valeria Castañeda and Lili Mariana Terán have won **first place** in the Mexico-USA-LATAM edition of the [International Space Settlement Design Tournament \(ISSDT\)](#) for their **space habitat** design proposal.

The **ISSDT** is an **international tournament for high school students** and its **objective** is for **participants to design a space settlement and business plans**.

*“They prepared a **design proposal of the first habitat on the moon** and a business presentation for a fictitious space company,”* explained Ligia Vélez, a science teacher at PrepaTec Metepec.

From science club to victory at the international competition

As well as being on the winning team, Ana Valeria and Lili Mariana are members of “PULSARS,” a science club at PrepaTec Metepec. The students and their fellow club members took part in the tournament because they were in this group.

They highlighted the work of one of their teachers. *“**We’re grateful to Professor Alberto Bermeo**(a teacher at PrepaTec), **since he got them interested in the astronomy science club,**”* said Professor Ligia Vélez, who is also the founder of “PULSARS.”

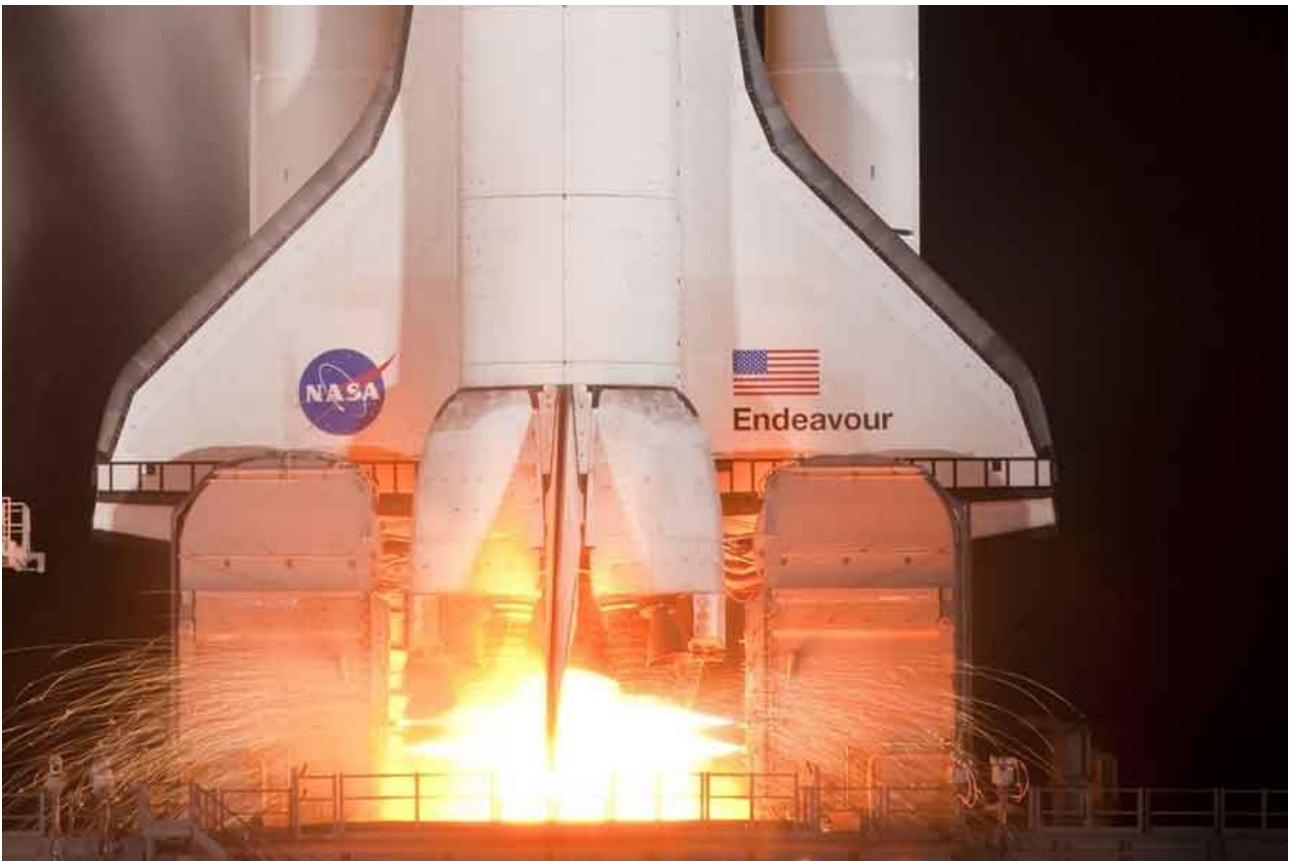
The tournament begins by dividing participants into four teams. **Each group conceptualizes, plans, develops, and pitches their space settlement projects as though they were bidding for a contract to build it.**



Participants are mentored and eventually judged by highly experienced specialists from the aerospace industry.

*“The leader of each group is a professional from the aerospace industry. Current and former **executives from [NASA \(National Aeronautics and Space Administration\)](#) make up the judging panel,**”* said Ligia Vélez.

At the end of the tournament, which included Mexican, American, Colombian, and Venezuelan students, as well as students of other nationalities, **Ana Valeria and Lili Mariana’s team, Dougeldyne Astrosystems, was named the winner.**



For their efforts, the PrepaTec Metepec students won three different prizes and experiences:

*“They’ll be able to **present their project to NASA engineers, be given a virtual tour of their facilities in Houston, and receive a **media kit,****”* said Ligia Vélez.

ISSDT tournament coming to Mexico for the first time

The **International Space Settlement Design Tournament** is based on the [Space Settlement Design Competition \(SSDC\)](#), the first space settlement competition for high school students.

Thanks to **collaboration between**[Expanding Frontiers](#), the ISSDT organizer based in Texas, and Mexican organization [SpacePort Mx](#), it was **possible to extend this contest to Latin American students** in 2021.

“The respective aims of these organizations are to bring students closer to the commercial space industry and shape a successful Latin American generation for the new space age,” concluded the professor.

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