

NASA astronaut speaks to TU students



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Rajen Barua 14 November 2012 9791 views

NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) USA successfully performed the Virtual Appearance program of Astronaut E. Michael "Mike" Fincke with Tezpur University's Annual Technical Festival 'TechXetra 2012' on November 2, 2012. The astronaut virtual appearance program is an exciting and memorable experience for all involved. The students and faculty of Tezpur University as well as some of the neighboring institutes interacted with NASA astronaut at the Kalaguru Bishnu Prasad Rabha Auditorium at Tezpur University. The event was organized as part of the annual technical fest of Tezpur University, TechXetra 2012 with the sponsorship of FASS. The event was a huge success with over 1000 people attending it.

Mike spoke on a variety of topics including his ISS missions and later took questions from the audience. The session lasted for more than an hour and was an experience of a lifetime for the students. He encouraged the students to study hard and to follow their own passion and his words encouraged them a lot. It is hoped that similar such programs can be organized in the future.

Speaking on behalf of the organizers, Halim Masuk Hazarika has this to say, "It was a great and once in a lifetime experience organizing an event of such stature. TechXetra 2012 witnessed a giant leap in the fields of technical and cultural extravaganza with a total of about 10,000 people from almost all parts of the nation. One of the biggest inclusions in the fifth edition of TechXetra was "NASA Webinar" which was appreciated and praised by everyone. Our special thanks to Mike Fincke for giving his valuable time for the appearance which made a great impact among the students. Mike influenced and boosted the minds of the enthusiastic audience and helped making TechXetra 2012 a fest never to be forgotten. We especially thank Mr. Rajen Barua (FASS President) for initiating the idea and making it happen. We also thank Brenda (NASA Coordinator) and all the FASS members for their co-

operation throughout and their help in making the Webinar a grand success."



The "TechXetra 2012" program of Tezpur University, scheduled from 2nd to 4th of November, is the University's fifth edition of its National Level Annual Technical Festival. The last four TechXetra programs have already carved out a niche in terms of learning, team spirit and entertainment. In the coming TechXetra 2012, the multifaceted festival embraced a myriad of competitions and events in the zones of robotics, hardware and software development, structure and design, science exhibition, multi-hued photography, latent talent unfolding in ad-making event, panel discussion, brainstorming quiz, essay, guest lecture of eminent personalities and the best-pick-of-all-times hardcore computer gaming among the students from various parts of India with a module of cultural extravaganza. General public and students are also welcome to attend the festival.

Astronaut Mike Fincke is not unknown to Assam. Being the husband of Assamese Renita Saikia, who herself is an engineer in NASA, Mike visited Assam several times in the past. Additionally, he also conducted four interactive telephone sessions with the students of four institutions in North East (Dibrugarh University, Aham Jatiyo Vidyalaya, Guwahati, St Anthony's College, Shillong and Central University, Imphal) from the ISS in 2008 and 2009. FASS International also arranged for an integrative live session between Mike Fincke and students of 84 schools in Guwahati in 2009. This Virtual Appearance in Tezpur University is in continuation of the program of FASS International (USA) who is planning for more such programs with other interested institutions of North East.

Rajen Barua

An engineer by profession and a writer by passion. Barua writes on various critical cultural, historical and linguistic issues of Assam and India. Barua had been living in the USA with his family for the last 30 years. Barua had always been engaged in doing various welfare works for Assam and the North East. Barua is also the founder-chairman of the International 'think-tank' NGO called 'Friends of Assam and Seven Sisters (FASS).

BY RAJEN BARUA

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