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NASA Announces University CubeSat Space Mission Candidates

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NASA has selected more than dozen small research satellites that each could fit in the palm of your hand to fly in space on future rocket launches.

These cube-shaped nanosatellites, called CubeSats, which measure about four inches on each side and weigh less than three pounds, are small but pack an outsized research punch. They will enable unique technology demonstrations, education research and science missions, and will study topics ranging from how the solar system formed to the demonstration of a new radiation-tolerant computer system.

The 14 CubeSats selected are from 12 states and will fly as auxiliary payloads aboard rockets planned to launch in 2016, 2017 and 2018. They come from universities across the country, non-profit organizations and NASA field centers.

As part of the White House Maker Initiative, NASA is seeking to leverage the growing community of space-enthusiasts to create a nation that contributes to NASA's space exploration goals. In the first step to broaden this successful initiative to launch 50 small satellites from all 50 states in the next five years, the agency has made a selection from West Virginia, one of the 21 "rookie states" that have not previously been selected by the CubeSat Launch Initiative.



The map above shows the 2015 CubeSat Launch Initiative selections.

Image Credit: NASA / Google Maps

The selections are part of the fifth round of the agency's CubeSat Launch Initiative. The selected spacecraft are eligible for placement on a launch manifest after final negotiations, depending on the availability of a flight opportunity. The organizations sponsoring satellites are:

- **Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana**
 - A Satellite Demonstration of a Radiation Tolerant System, RadSat, is a technology demonstration of a new radiation tolerant computer system in a low-Earth orbit satellite mission to demonstrate a technology readiness level 9 of the technology.