



Grand Valley State University (GVSU) and Grand Rapids Public Museum (GRPM) are proud to present the sixth annual *Roger That!* public symposium on space exploration on the weekend of **February 10-11, 2023**. The *Roger That!* symposium is named in honor of Roger B. Chaffee, a native Grand Rapidian who lost his life in the Apollo 1 fire. A wide variety of activities are included in this two-day event – there’s enough space for everyone! The 2023 event has a theme of “History and Space” and will be presented in a hybrid format, beginning with virtual speakers Friday morning and transitioning to in-person events around 4pm Friday afternoon, with the remainder of the symposium in person.

**The 2023 keynote, Astronaut Jose Hernandez**, will speak at GVSU’s Loosemore Auditorium on Friday evening at 6:30pm and again at 11:00am on Saturday morning at GRPM.



Astronaut Hernandez has an inspiring story, having grown up in a family of farmworkers and being the first in his family to attend college. An upcoming movie about his life, *A Million Miles Away*, is currently in production. His presentation is appropriate for all ages and is open to the public free of charge. There will be a public reception preceding the GVSU talk in the Hager Exhibition Space on Friday 5:30-6:30pm. A flyer suitable for sharing with students is available by contacting Dr. Karen Gipson ([gipsonk@gvsu.edu](mailto:gipsonk@gvsu.edu)).

**STEM kits and classroom visits** are available free of charge to interested K12 teachers. Both are available on a first-requested, first-served basis. The STEM kits include instructions and equipment for hands-on exploration and are aligned with 5<sup>th</sup> grade NGSS standards, although teachers of any grade-level may request and receive the kits while supplies last. Please email [rogerthat@gvsu.edu](mailto:rogerthat@gvsu.edu) to request kits and/or classroom visits.

**STEAM activities for K5 students** are organized by GRPM on Friday, February 10 to afford younger students the opportunity to learn about space exploration through a series of programs,

including hands-on activities and planetarium presentations. Family-friendly activities also occur at GRPM on Saturday, February 11.

***Design That!*** (a design challenge competition) is held at GVSU for 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> school students, with students working in teams to describe and solve problems in one of four areas – humans in space, communities in space, technology in space, or equal opportunities in space. Students are encouraged to design and build physical objects or use non-fictional and fictional narrative styles to present solutions to challenges related to space exploration. *Design That!* was carefully designed to align with specific NGSS standards, and students can present their projects in person and/or via short videos. Prizes will be awarded separately for 5<sup>th</sup> -6<sup>th</sup> grades and 7<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> grades. Complete details about *Design That!* can be found on the symposium website ([www.gvsu.edu/rogerthat](http://www.gvsu.edu/rogerthat)), and a flyer suitable for sharing with students is available by emailing [gipsonk@gvsu.edu](mailto:gipsonk@gvsu.edu).

**An academic conference** on Friday (8:30am - 4pm) features a series of virtual presentation by experts in two domains: *Space & Society* and *Space & Science*. These talks are geared towards an adult lay audience, primarily college students and the general public, but high school classes are welcome to attend and specific talks are accessible to all ages. The conference is free, but registration is required. Registration opens in January, at which time abstracts for the talks will be available on the symposium website.

For more information about any aspect of the *Roger That!* symposium, see [www.gvsu.edu/rogerthat](http://www.gvsu.edu/rogerthat) or contact Dr. Karen Gipson at [gipsonk@gvsu.edu](mailto:gipsonk@gvsu.edu).

The *Roger That!* symposium is funded in part by the Michigan Space Grant Consortium and in part by GVSU's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Astronaut Hernandez's appearance is made possible by special augmented funding from GVSU's Division of Inclusion and Equity and the Office of the President.