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LSU graduate's career will include building rockets for Blue Origin



LSU Campus (WAFB)

By WAFB Staff

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BATON ROUGE, La. (WAFB) - One LSU mechanical engineering graduate is preparing to begin her career of building rockets for Blue Origin, a space exploration company formed by Amazon founder Jeff Bezos.

Bailey Smoorenburg walked across the stage on Friday, May 19, and will soon move across the country to begin working at Blue Origin.

"I'm super excited to move up to Seattle," Smoorenburg said. "It's a cool city with different weather; definitely not as hot as Louisiana, which I'm grateful for. I'm also excited to go on hikes and visit all the national parks."

Smoorenburg will work as a manufacturing engineer in charge of the engine thrust chamber assembly at Blue Origin. In her position, she will likely work on the BE-7 engine for the company's Blue Moon, a flexible lander that will deliver cargo or crew to the surface of the moon.

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The new LSU graduate is no stranger to the space exploration industry. She interned at Relativity Space during the summer of 2022. Relativity Space is an aerospace manufacturing company based in Long Beach, California.

"My job at Blue Origin will be similar to my internship duties with Relativity Space—creating new processes, helping technicians, and overseeing the design and build of these rocket engines," Smoorenburg said.

Smooenburg also had an internship with NASA during the summer after her freshman year at LSU. While the internship ended up being virtual because of the pandemic, she said she learned a lot by working with crews at the Johnson Space Center in Houston.

Before attending LSU, Smooenburg attended Mandeville High School and was part of a robotics team that had NASA mentors.

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"I remember being on my FIRST Robotics team and having college-age mentors help us, so I wanted to give back and was in a good position to do so," Smooenburg said. "Not only am I helping these students build their culture and knowledge base, but I also get to build my own knowledge, and it's a good outlet for me. Once I move to Seattle, I'll find another team to mentor."

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