



Sponsorship Opportunities 2025-2026



<https://www.aiaa.rice.edu>



AIAA Rice

Rice's chapter of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics is the home for all things aerospace at Rice. We host networking events, industry speakers, and behind-the-scenes tours of the aerospace industry across Space City. Rice Flight—the RC airplane competition team hosted by AIAA Rice—is competing for the third time in the SAE Aero Advanced Competition, after competing with two planes and winning the Third Place Design Report Award at the 2025 Fort Worth competition.

We are brought together by a passion for learning and innovation, and every member is dedicated to helping their teammates reach their full potential as future engineers and scientists.

President's Letter

Dear Friends of AIAA Rice,

I am writing to introduce Rice's AIAA chapter and Rice Flight, the competition RC plane team which the chapter was formed to support. My name is Nancy Lindsey, and I am the founder and president of Rice AIAA, and design lead of Rice Flight. Rice has teams focused on rocketry and space technology, but until 2022, had no student organization devoted to fixed-wing flight. When I became interested in studying airplanes, it quickly became apparent that we would need to start a new organization. It has been incredibly rewarding to see so many students come together to explore fixed-wing aviation.



In our first year, we qualified for the 2023 AIAA Design, Build, Fly international competition, built a plane to competition specifications, and participated in the competition. This past year, we pursued a more technically difficult goal: the 2024 SAE Aero Advanced Competition. We built a 10 ft wingspan 'Primary Aircraft' to fly a payload of water and deploy one-pound fully autonomous glider. The glider carried as its payload the components of a $\frac{1}{3}$ pound ground rover, capable of carrying 12 times its weight in water across a 30 foot obstacle course to an endzone. The team worked hard last year, and we were one of only three teams that was able to successfully takeoff, deploy our autonomous glider, and land in competition last March. This year, we are competing in both the SAE Aero Regular and Advanced 2025 competitions. We have been optimizing the designs for both our competition aircraft, and are planning to begin prototyping and test flights by the beginning of January. The team is very excited to compete again, and we are hoping that this year we can win. To complete our project, however, we need sponsors, and we'd be very grateful if you would consider helping us!

AIAA is unique at Rice in providing students with both academic and practical challenges that no course, and no other student organization, offers. Rice undergraduate courses do not teach the aerodynamics fundamentals needed to design a functional aircraft. We provide Rice students with aerospace design experiences to develop both technical and leadership skills, and we hope to encourage Rice to expand its aerospace education offerings so that students interested in the future of airplane design can begin formal studies as undergraduates. Outside of the competition team, the AIAA chapter hosts a wide range of educational and networking opportunities, including speaker series, K-12 outreach, and field trips to airshows and flight museums. We also partake in national AIAA organization events such as the SciTech conference and local Houston area meetups.

This is a critical year for the survival of AIAA at Rice. We performed well last year, and need to maintain our technical momentum to become an established part of the Rice community. The Rice students who are our members want to be leaders in aircraft technology for the future, and with your help, they can become the next generation of industry innovators. Your support can enable our team to focus on learning what it takes to design an aircraft.

Thank you for your consideration. It would be a pleasure to answer any questions you might have, and I hope that we can count on your support.

Sincerely, *Nancy M.
Lindsey*

Nancy M. Lindsey, AIAA Rice President | nancylindsey@rice.edu



Student Leadership

AIAA Rice & Rice Flight Competition Team Leadership



Ian Schechter
Rice Flight Design Lead
Mechanical Engineering '28



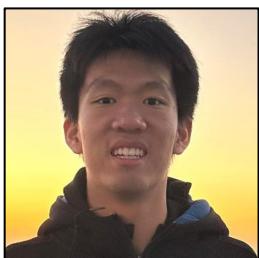
Max Kuhlman
Rice Flight Team Captain
Electrical and Computer Engineering '26



Ryan Mattana
Rice Flight Aerodynamics Specialist
Mechanical Engineering '27



Cristiana De Sousa
Rice Flight Simulations Specialist
Mechanical Engineering '26



Gerald Lu
Rice Flight Software Specialist
Electrical and Computer Engineering '27



Inigo Perez
Rice Flight Propulsion Specialist
Mechanical Engineering '28



Nikhil Ashri
Rice Flight Avionics Specialist
Electrical and Computer Engineering '28

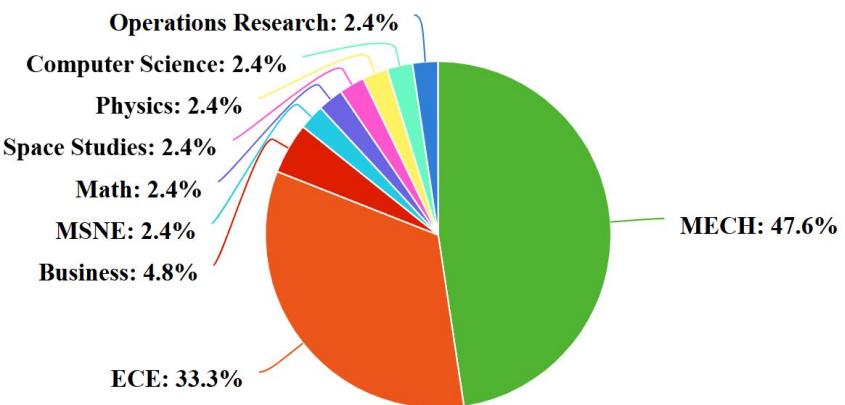


Will Feng
Rice Flight Structures Specialist
Mechanical Engineering '28



Meet the Team

Majors

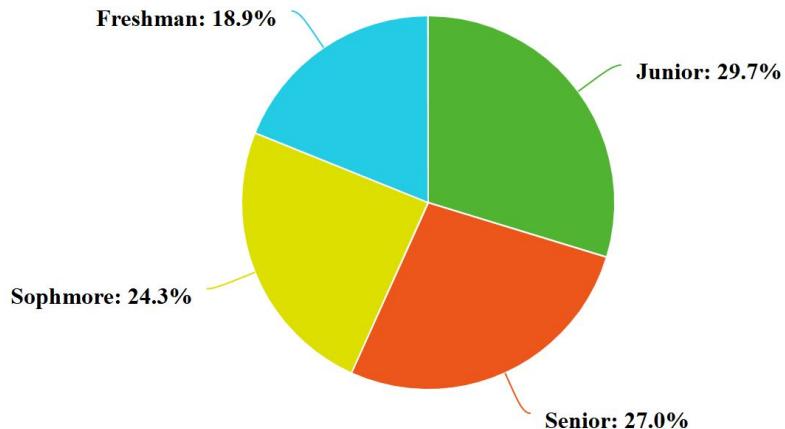


40 Active Members

9 Majors Represented

Mechanical Engineering
Electrical and Computer Engineering
Materials Science and Nanoengineering
Computer Science
Mathematics
Physics
Business
Computer Science
Operations Research

Class Level



2025 - 2026 Trajectory

AIAA Rice Organization Events

AIAA Rice hosts many events throughout the year. We host industry and academia speakers at networking and informational events, visit industry partners such as local startup Venus Aerospace and attend outreach events including the Wings over Houston airshow, visits to the Lone Star Flight Museum and the NASA Johnson Space Center, and a K-12 outreach program teaching students to build mini-gliders. We also have a workshop series for new students to build their own RC planes. Finally, we will host a national AIAA conference at Rice in order to build engagement for topics we are passionate about

SAE Aero Advanced 2025 Competition - Rice Flight

Rice Flight, the competition team hosted by AIAA Rice, is competing in the SAE Aero Advanced Competition for the third time this year. Our first year of competition, we were one of only three teams to successfully take off our primary aircraft, deploy our glider, and land. Our second year of competition, we flew two planes with significantly fewer members than teams from other universities. To build on these strong performances, we are working on advanced projects including a complete custom autonomy system and a mobile payload.





AIAA Events

AIAA hosts a wide range of events throughout the semester. We leverage our contacts to get inside tours of NASA's Johnson Space Center, attend the annual Wings over Houston Airshow, and visit aviation museums. We also participate in national AIAA opportunities—students enjoy meeting a wide range of professionals and seeking internships and entry-level positions at the annual AIAA SciTech conference, and in getting to know veteran members more personally at local Houston meetup groups. We are hoping to improve our outreach further this year by hosting a national AIAA conference in Houston to provide networking and educational opportunities to all students interested in careers in aviation and aeronautics. Next semester, we plan to host our own unique speaker series on campus, and plan to invite a variety of aviation experts in both industry and academia to help guide students towards future career options.

Rice Flight Competition Team

2025 SAE Aero Advanced Competition

In 2025, Rice Flight competed in both the regular and advanced categories as one of the smallest teams at the entire competition. Our Regular Class Plane, Condor, has a 14'8" wingspan and can take off weighing over 42 pounds within only 100 feet. After designing and manufacturing from October 2024-March 2025, we achieved successful takeoff and flight with payload at the competition.

Our Advanced Class Plane, Magpie, is an autonomous tricopter capable of both horizontal and vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL). We designed and prototyped two iterations of the plane and test flew both before the competition. At competition, we took home third place in the Advanced class design report, a strong performance for only our second year at the competition.



2026 Competition

In 2026, we are returning to the advanced division of the SAE Aero Design competition, aiming to improve on our strong performance our past two years competing.

For this competition, we are designing a 3.5 lb fully autonomous fixed-wing aircraft that is capable of both horizontal and vertical takeoff, flight, and landing. This aircraft is designed to communicate with, deploy, and capture a fully autonomous independently mobile payload, using real-time kinematic GPS, inertial measurement units (IMUs), and LIDAR sensors for location and mapping.

Additionally, we have developed a custom multidisciplinary design optimization (MDO) program to computationally determine the best configuration of design parameters to maximize our competition score.

Sponsorship Levels

The continued success of AIAA Rice depends on the generosity of private donors and corporate sponsors. Join our team of partners, so we can keep providing Rice University students with the technical and leadership skills they need to succeed as engineers. AIAA Rice is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, tax-exempt organization, so all donations to the team are tax-deductible.

Glider - \$500+

- Name and logo on T-shirt, website, all project technical posters, and in promotional materials
- Shoutouts on team social media
- Regular project updates

Rotorcraft - \$1,000+

- Name and logo posted in the SAE team workspace and displayed at AIAA events on presentation materials
- Team shirts made available to sponsors
- Speaker invitation to general meeting

Fixed Wing - \$2,500+

- Sponsor a flight test, field trip, or other team event
- Dedicated company banner displayed in team workspace and at team events
- Small logo displayed on 2025 SAE Aero Advanced Primary Aircraft
- Name and logo on the 2025 SAE Aero Advanced mobile ground stand

Spaceplane - \$5,000+

- Aircrafts, components, and AIAA Rice members available for presentations at corporate events
- Logo prominently displayed on 2025 SAE Aero Advanced Primary Aircraft
- Company's promotional material handed out at team events

All sponsorship levels include benefits of the above levels.

Non-monetary donations will be given an equivalent sponsorship level based on the value of goods and services provided.

