# ARIK T. JENKINS

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## Summary

Engineering leader and founder with 8+ years of experience in test engineering and automation with a focus on unifying software and hardware systems. Proven track record in technical strategy development, team building, systems integration, and cross-functional collaboration across aerospace and robotics industries.

## Work Experience

### Founder and CEO                                                01/2025 – current
Company: Traveler Inc. - [go-travel.ai](https://go-travel.ai)
- Built an AI-powered travel planning platform from concept to live MVP, running user testing and iterating on core trip planning and collaboration experiences.
- Designed and implemented a scalable web architecture using React, Next.js, TypeScript, Prisma, Inngest, and cloud infrastructure with AI enrichment pipelines for locations, experiences, and trip planning workflows

### Head of Engineering -> CTO                       08/2023 – 11/2023, 05/2024 – 2/2025
Company: Stellar Pizza / Serve Automation Robotics
- Restructured the engineering organization and design process to promote focus on impactful initiatives
- Developed a technical strategy and criteria selection for a reduction in force to extend runway
- Oversaw technical knowledge transfer to Hanwha, who acquired Stellar - summarizing existing designs, technical state, and advising on suggested design changes and future requirements.
- Planned technical knowledge transfer programming for two international visits. Korea <-> USA

### Head of Test and Integration                                  12/2021 – 08/2023
Company: Stellar Pizza / Serve Automation Robotics
- Built a team of three engineers and two specialists
- Set up and led engineering priority meetings to identify and plan resolutions for vehicle reliability issues
- Organized vehicle work sprints utilizing the entire engineering department around major company milestones such as technical road trips to Las Vegas and San Francisco, investor demos, and public releases
- Hired operations engineering leader and technician and spun off and managed the Operations Engineering group as it grew to 9 engineers

### Test and Integration Engineer                                 11/2020 – 12/2021
Company: Stellar Pizza / Serve Automation Robotics
- First test engineering hire, oversaw integrated vehicle bring up and component and system level testing
- Built engineering Issue, Change, Test systems from the ground up
- Owned life-cycle of system capability testing - from making dough and effectively capturing process variables to performing root cause investigation, data analysis, firmware development, and design update recommendations

### Test Automation Engineer                                      08/2016 – 12/2019
Company: Space Exploration Technologies (SpaceX) || Department: Development Test
- Ran and automated hydraulic and mechanism testing across dev, qual, and ATP for several products
  - first stage landing legs 2.0 | fairing deployment pusher | parachute test instrumentation systems | Dragon capsule astronaut seats
- Developed test matrices adhering to NASA reliability standards balancing test complexity and effectiveness
- Designed and analyzed structures, electrical circuits / PCBAs, fluid flow, and thermal systems

- Designed software tools to enable pre and post-test analysis of distributed loads using foam load shoes
  - > Pre-test: excel calculator estimating load distribution with discrete non-linear spring stiffness approximation
  - > Post-test: pressure sensitive film paper with a computer vision algorithm to create a pressure map
- Enabled design engineers to self-serve test reporting by writing an extensive Python library to automatically generate test reports for hydraulic load testing using pass/fail parameters from an excel config
- Automated test stands utilizing Python to generate auto-sequence code

**Engineering Intern / Masters Researcher**                                06 – 08/2015, 01 – 05/2016
Company: NASA Langley Research Center || Department: Structural Dynamics
- Built a physical model of a heliogyro solar sail blade and matched natural frequency with design concept
- Programmed a DC motor for precise speed/position control using PID and an Arduino for motor I/O
- Created a computer vision application in Python to capture the model motion
- Performed system identification using Observer/Kalman Identification and transfer function estimation on both the motor and blade model. Used models to design a novel control algorithm

**Teaching Assistant**                                                       08/2014 – 12/2015
Organization: The University of Alabama || Department: Mechanical Engineering
- Lectured on Static Machine Design and administered tests, quizzes, and homework assignments
- Taught and facilitated two senior mechanical engineering labs

## Technical Skills

**Core job function**:
- Fault tree analysis, organizational leadership, team building and talent acquisition, engineering strategic planning, Jira and Confluence Admin suite
- Full Stack Web Application Development – React, Next, Typescript, Postgres, CI/CD, git, Python
- Hydraulic testing, mechanism testing, fluid system design

**Ancillary / Prior**:
- Matlab, Simulink, Computer Vision OpenCV, Arduino microprocessors, circuit building, and electro-mechanical control

## EDUCATION

**MS in Mechanical Engineering,** GPA: 4.00/4.00 – The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL             May 2016
Focus: Control Systems | Thesis: Control design and instrumentation - Heliogyro Solar Sail

**BS in Mechanical Engineering,** GPA:  3.87/4.00 **–** The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL             May 2014
SAT: 2250/2400, GRE: 326/340, ACT: 34/36

## SKILLS/HONORS/HOBBIES

- Conversational Spanish
- National Merit Scholar
- Running an entrepreneurship group

- Building side software projects
- Travel in Mexico, Spain, Brazil, Thailand, Italy, Japan, Canada
- Skiing, volleyball, guitar