NASA HUNCH

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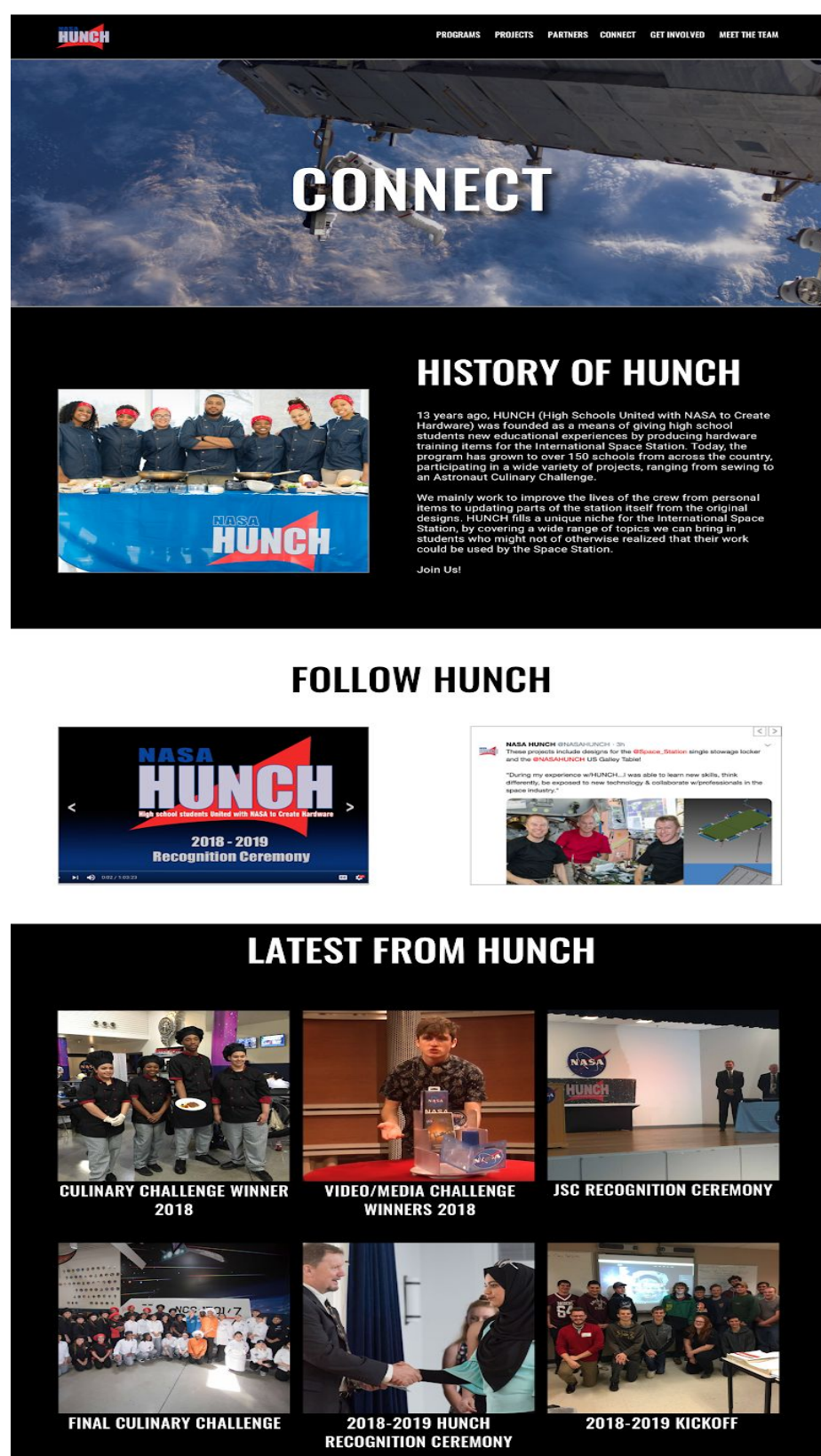SPIFe Summer Internship - ARC TH

Background

13 years ago, HUNCH (High Schools United with NASA to Create Hardware) was founded as a means of giving high school students new educational experiences by producing hardware training items for the International Space Station. Today, the program has grown to over 150 schools from across the country, participating in a wide variety of projects, ranging from sewing to an Astronaut Culinary Challenge.

HUNCH fills a unique niche for the International Space Station. By covering a wide range of topics, HUNCH can bring in students who may not have realized that their work could be used by the International Space Station. Our goal with the HUNCH website is to both inform students and teachers of how they can participate and showcase student work on HUNCH projects.

Design

Connect Page

What: A new idea for a page to allow students and teachers to connect with HUNCH social media + learn about the program.

Features:
-Social Media Plugins
-Blog Grid Layout
-History Section

Team Page

What: New page to highlight each member on the HUNCH team.
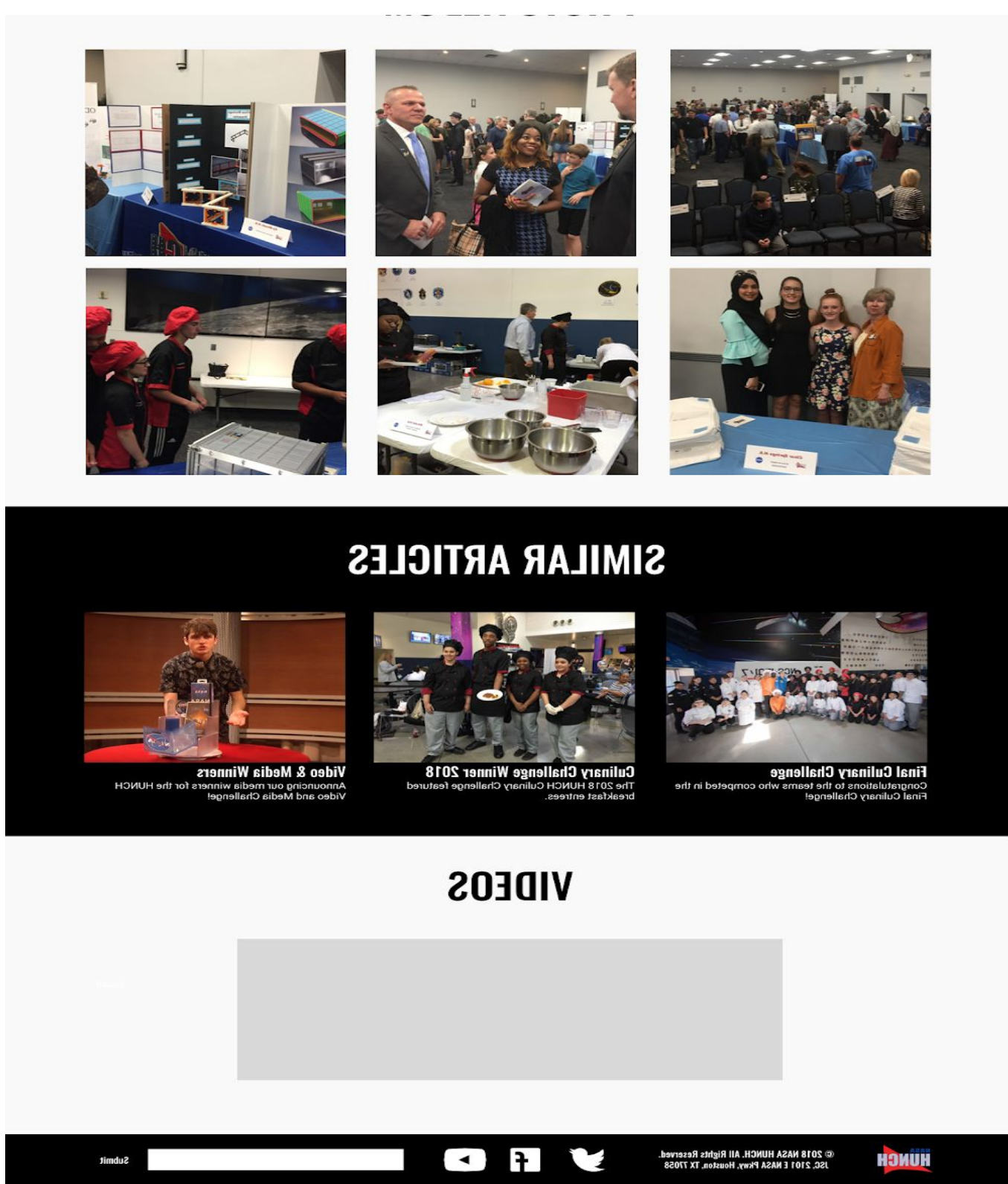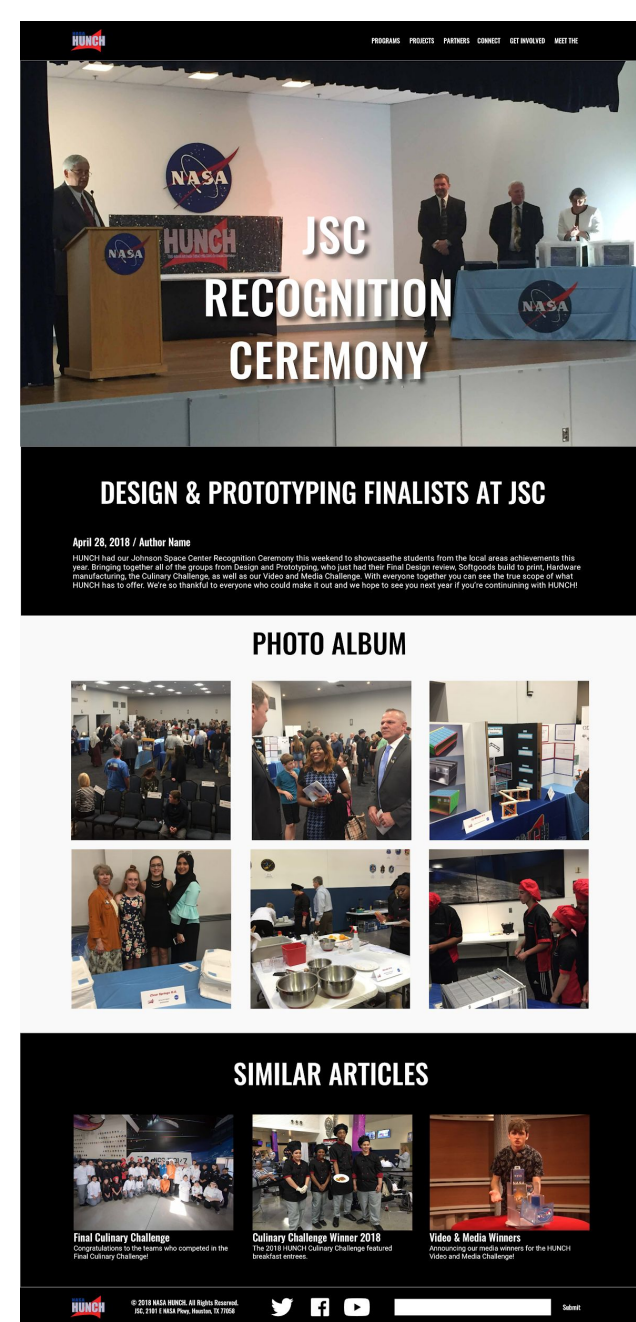
Features:
-Name
-Position
-Contact Information

Individual Blog Posts

What: A new idea for a page to allow students and teachers to connect with social media + learn about HUNCH.

Features:
-Social Media Plugins
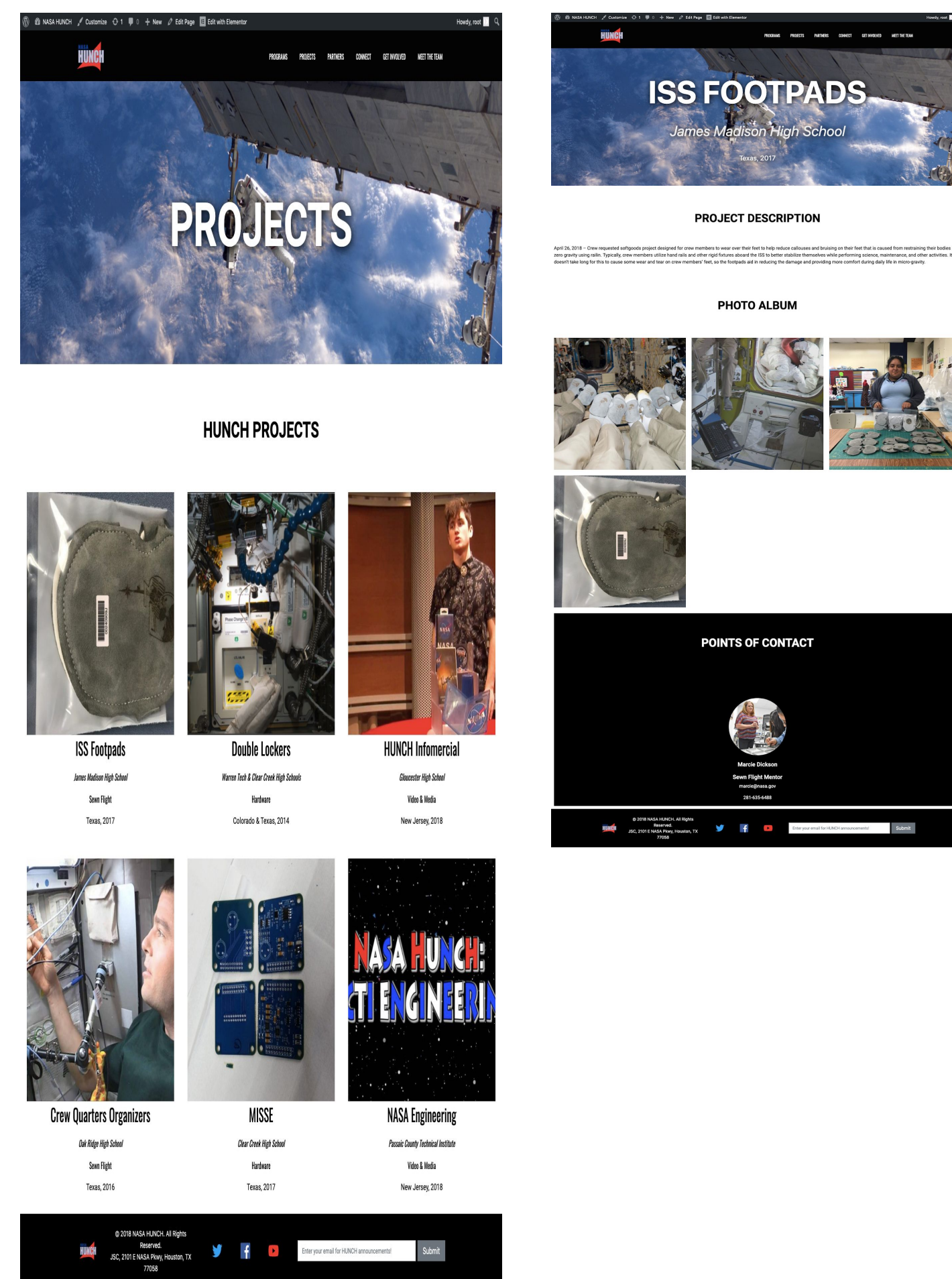-Blog Grid Layout
-History Section

Projects Pages

What: Newly designed main projects page and individual project pages that are cleaner and easier to read.

Features:
-Photo albums
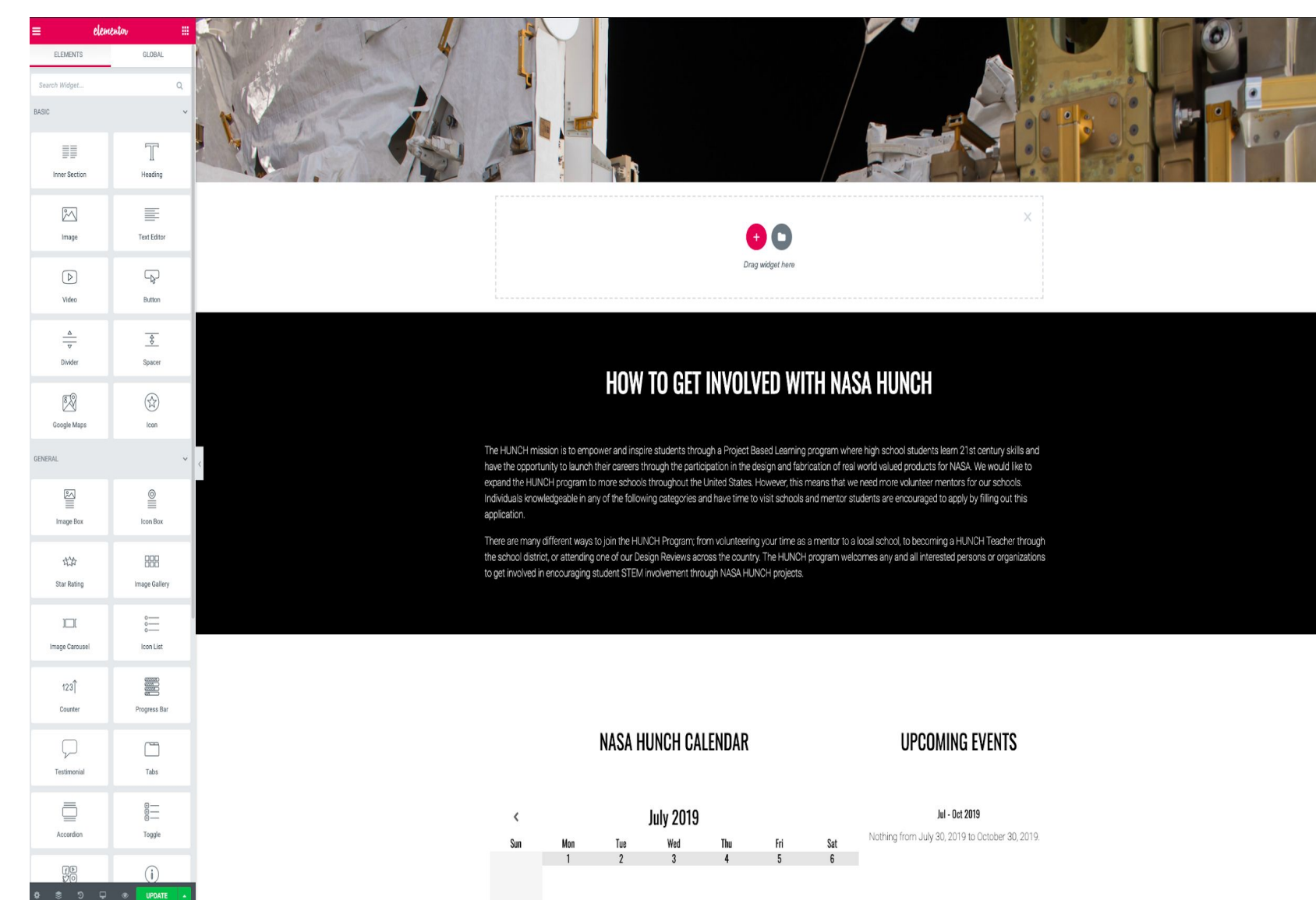-Grid layout
-Bigger text

Project Goals + Considerations

-Integrate WordPress CMS into NASA HUNCH website
-Design and implement new pages to provide users with more information about the HUNCH history and mission
-Create more standardization across the website's pages
-Ensure that the website provides students and teachers all resources to be involved with HUNCH

Development

Elementor

A WordPress plugin that simplifies the design and implementation of a dynamic web page.

-Insert widgets for headings, text, images, videos, custom HTML, etc.
-User interface where developers can directly change the content on a web page

WordPress

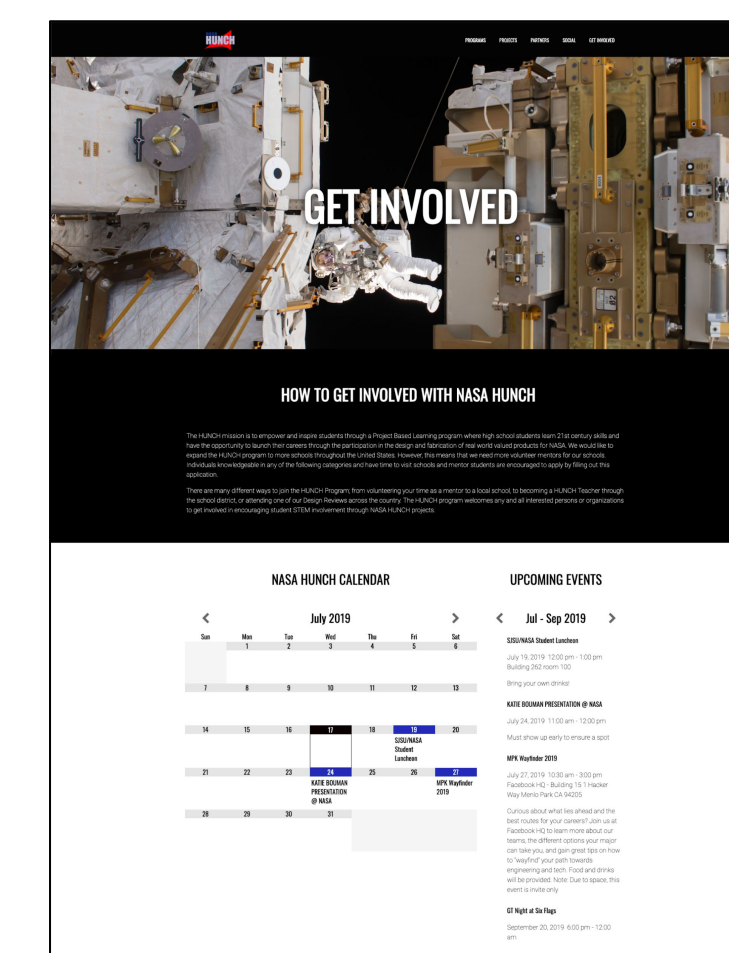New content management system for NASA HUNCH website.

-Eliminates the need for extensive knowledge of HTML/CSS
-Allows for quicker content update
-More organized

Issues

-WordPress doesn't allow for designated home page to also be the posts page.
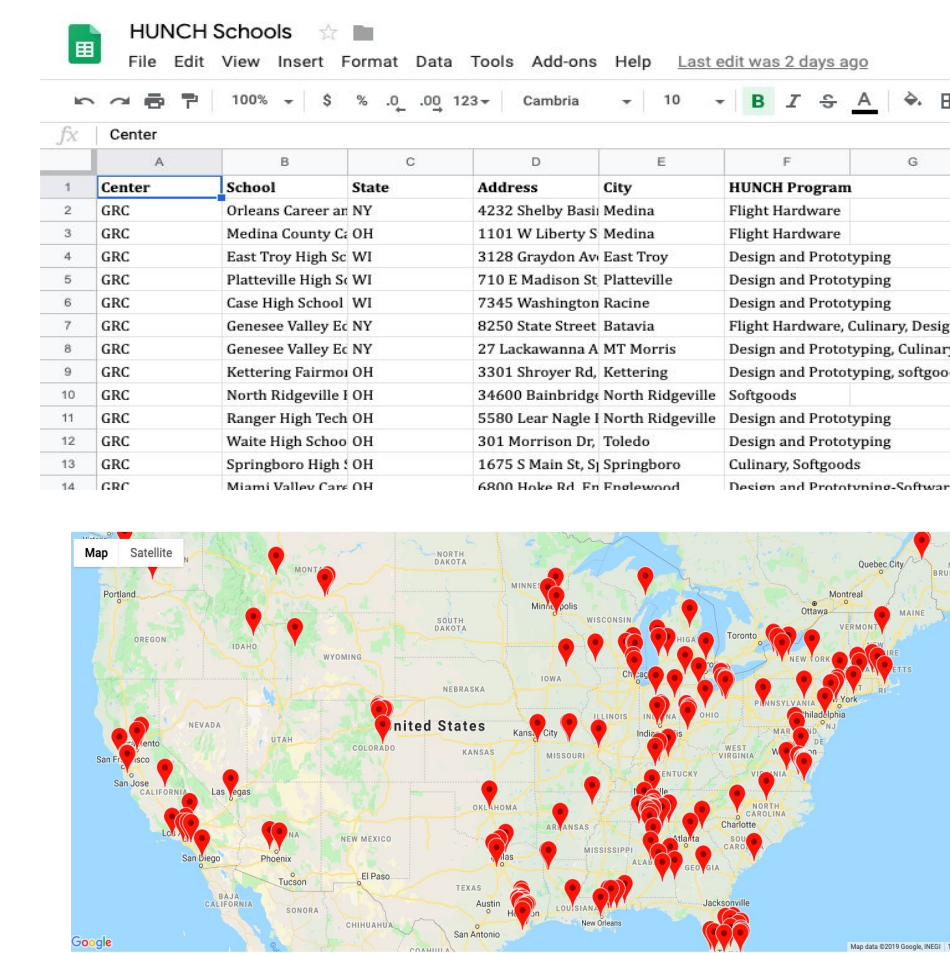-Had to figure out how to make content easily editable given restrictions of Elementor and Wordpress

Calendar Section

-New section within Get Involved page
-Allow users to see dates and details for upcoming HUNCH events

HUNCH Schools Map

-Made HUNCH Schools map easier to use
-Edit/Add school data to Google spreadsheet
-Saved changes into local JSON file
-Easy script to update map

Key Takeaways

- Having a template for individual projects page and blog posts creates structure for the content and allows students to use these pages in their portfolios because more information regarding the process is given
- Redesigned Social Page to the Connect Page allows students and teachers to better understand what HUNCH is about
- New Meet the Team Page highlights all members of the HUNCH programs, not just a select few
- Overall improved visual design that is consistent across the website
- Much improved map feature allowing easy and quick location updating
- Calendar section showing users all upcoming events would increase the number of site visits and interactivity from high school students, consequently increasing knowledge of and participation in HUNCH programs