UC Aerospace Student’s Childhood Dream Closer to Reality

By: Desiré Bennett

School of Aerospace Systems junior and ACCEND student, Kyle Flenar, awarded the prestigious NASA Aeronautics Scholarship. Out of 200 applicants nation-wide, Flenar is one of only 20 to receive this award.

Kyle Flenar’s curiosity in aerospace was first piqued by a space shuttle launch he witnessed when he was just four years old. “I have been fascinated by NASA and the incredible work that they do to advance technology and our knowledge of the universe ever since,” he said.

Flenar, whose interests are in the design and aerodynamics of flight vehicles, is excited about the opportunity to be a part of the NASA team, “This experience will significantly impact my life and open up a world of opportunities.”

The opportunity, the NASA Aeronautics Scholarship Program, offers two years of support to exceptional aerospace engineering undergraduate students. Flenar will receive $15,000 for each school year as well as a $10,000 summer internship at a NASA Research Center. This year only 20 students, out of 200 applicants nationwide, received the award.

Associate Professor of Aerospace Engineering & Engineering Mechanics Kelly Cohen, PhD, who served as Flenar’s instructor, believes that Flenar is the perfect candidate to receive this scholarship. “He is an excellent student, has conducted meaningful research, won awards and participated in several extra-curricular activities across the college,” Cohen said. “I have observed him to be an excellent team player, very hard working, with immense potential for a brilliant career ahead of him in aerospace engineering.”

In addition to the NASA Aeronautics Scholarship, Flenar conducted research analyzing the effect of bleed holes on supersonic air flows. And under the supervision of Drs. Paul Orkwis and Mark Turner, Flenar conducted research on “Analyzed shock wave/boundary layer interaction of
supersonic air flows over bleed holes using CFD” as well as authored the joint AIAA publication *Modeling and Simulation of Bleed Holes in the Presence of Shock Wave/Boundary Layer Interaction*. “While Kyle worked as a research co-op in my lab on [the project], he took that challenge with gusto and has shown he has the capabilities to be an excellent researcher,” said Orkwis.

Flenar, an honor student active in the Engineering Tribunal, the AIAA and Engineering Ambassadors, is ready for the challenges that lie ahead. “To me, that is what aerospace engineering is all about: being presented with a complex problem and using your educational background to devise a creative solution,” he said. “Ultimately, I aspire to be a part of a team that furthers technological development, resulting in the expansion of human knowledge with global or universal discoveries.” Thanks to this scholarship, Flenar is one step closer to realizing this goal.

[NASA’s Announcement](#)