

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

Campus News Archive

Campus News, Newsletters, and Events

11-20-2009

Physic students launch scientific balloon

University Relations

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.morris.umn.edu/urel_news

Recommended Citation

University Relations, "Physic students launch scientific balloon" (2009). *Campus News Archive*. 1374.
https://digitalcommons.morris.umn.edu/urel_news/1374

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Campus News, Newsletters, and Events at University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well. It has been accepted for inclusion in Campus News Archive by an authorized administrator of University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well. For more information, please contact skulann@morris.umn.edu.

Contact

Melissa Weber, Director of Communications
Phone: 320-589-6414, weberm@morris.umn.edu

Jenna Ray, Editor/Writer
Phone: 320-589-6068, jrray@morris.umn.edu

Physic students launch scientific balloon

Summary: The attached equipment measured the function of altitude on temperature, pressure, carbon dioxide, radioactivity, skylight polarization, skylight colors, ultra violet light, and the speed of sound.

(November 20, 2009)-On a cold November morning, Professor Gordon McIntosh's Experimental Physics class launched the first-ever scientific balloon at the University of Minnesota, Morris. Carefully attached in Styrofoam boxes or "pods," data collection equipment captured information for student experiments as the balloon ascended to nearly 90,000 feet and traveled more than 70 miles. Increasing in size as it rose, the 10-foot balloon grew to 30 feet in diameter before it exploded and floated gently to the ground by parachute, landing in a tree.

The students gathered a variety of data via the scientific balloon. The attached equipment in the pods measured the function of altitude on temperature, pressure, carbon dioxide, radioactivity, skylight polarization, skylight colors, ultra violet light, and the speed of sound. A video camera recorded the balloon's journey. The students used a software program to predict the balloon's flight path in order to plan for its recovery.

"The students have worked very hard to understand the science behind their projects and to implement their experiments," says McIntosh.

McIntosh attended a workshop last summer at Taylor College to prepare for introducing scientific balloons into physics coursework at Morris. James Flatten, former Morris colleague and now associate director of the Minnesota Space Grant Consortium, shared his scientific balloon expertise with McIntosh and assisted with the Morris balloon launch.

Posters of the students' research projects and the flight video will be on display in the Science Atrium from 2:30 until 4 p.m. on Tuesday, December 8, 2009.

View a slideshow of preparations and the launch [by Natalie Johnson '11, Wichita, Kansas](#)

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at morris.umn.edu or call 888-866-3382.