

## Portraits of my team members

### **Yvonne und Ralf Heckel**

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This is an anniversary year for my parents. 20 years ago they started to build up today's International Space Education Institute together with Prof. Dr. Jesco von Puttkamer. That's why there is also a 20 on the mission logo. At that time, the goal was to recruit new engineers for the upcoming moon and Mars landings and to get them on their way. This trip is a promise of the professor who led the International Space Station ISS for more than 10 years and who already died 10 years ago as the longest serving NASA employee. But my parents also made a promise. With long-term dedication, they both stuck to it and overcame many hurdles to get here. Now here we are, surrounded by young NASA space engineers of our own and old, for the first launch back to the moon. It's a story like the book I'm reading right now: "Apollo 8 - Departure into Space, by Jesco von Puttkamer". Here in America, you can only feel the high respect my parents receive. They get asked a lot.

### **Tara und Jesco**

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My two siblings are always with me when I go on a big trip. Tara is 13 and visits the Quartiersschule an der Ihmelstraße in Leipzig (secondary school). Jesco is 8 and attends the 3rd grade of the 74th elementary school in Leipzig. Both write reports just like everyone else and have assignments, just different ones according to their age. Like me, both have grown up with these programs since childhood and are experienced in them. Tara is the best in her class and Jesco is the best CAD designer and 3D printer of his age that everyone here knows. My parents always take us with them because we grow from it and also give a reason for some extra space for important equipment in the luggage. I'm very grateful that both of them always manage to do this with their own power.

### **Cosma Heckel**

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I am Cosma Heckel, 15 years old and I was born in Leipzig (Germany). Meanwhile I am 1,70 m and surpass a few of my team members. My hair is light brown, my eyes are blue and my body is relatively sporty. Self, I would describe myself as a bright personality, always looking for new knowledge. I am open to anything and everything, which is why I am building my own team for the HERC competition along with Arthur Sommer. My siblings Tara (13) and Jesco (8) Heckel are also on it. They both write reports about what they experience.

**Arthur Sommer**

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Arthur Sommer is from Leipzig and has been with us since July 2022. He is about 2 m tall with brown hair and chestnut eyes. He plays basketball in the club and trains in the gym, and recently also on the NASA rover. Arthur is a nice person who is helpful and cares about the well-being of his team. He works on projects with determination, focus and perseverance. A good quality is also that he asks questions if he does not understand something.

**Alina Santander**

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Alina is 24 years old, comes from Bolivia, has a Russian mother and can speak 4 languages fluently (Spanish, German, English Russian). She first came to us in Leipzig in 2015, completed a 2-month summer camp and celebrated her 16th birthday with us. She participated 3 times in the Roverchallenge, 2 times with us, once with her own team and was invited on very many TV shows. Alina is very popular in Bolivia. She has been studying mechatronics in New York since we won the world championship together in 2019.

**Valeria Zafra**

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Valeria Zafra Vasquez is 24 years old, comes from Mexico City and is now smaller than me. NASA engineers think we're in the same class. But she has a degree in engineering from UNAQ in Querataro and works as an engineer on the interior design of the cyber truck at Tesla. She interned at the International Space Education Institute in Leipzig in 2020, instructing us in Solid-Works and helping convert the institute to virtual instruction during Covid.

**Team Mexico:****David Suares**

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Team Leader for Team Mexico and Professor of Engineering at the Cuernavaca Campus of Tec Monterrey in Mexico. He has been friends with my father Ralf Heckel for a long time and both work closely together in terms of student exchange. The NASA rover team of Tec Monterrey Campus Cuernavaca already received the Jesco von Puttkamer International Team Award of the College Division 2 times. This is also the reason for the invitation for this team to the rocket launch by the International Space Education Institute and NASA Headquarters.

**Abraham Vega**

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Abraham Vega is about 1,75m tall, has black shoulder-length hair and wears glasses. He is a mechatronics engineering student at Tec de Monterrey, an analog astronaut at the Lunares Scientific Research Station, a scientist and researcher, and will soon publish his first article. He completed a 3-month internship last year at the International Space Education Institute in Leipzig, Germany.

**Ian Doring Romo**

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Ian Doring is about 1,75m tall and has dark brown hair. He wears glasses and has a nice smile. He cares about the well-being of every team member and is studying mechatronics at the Tecnológico de Monterrey, Cuernavaca campus. He is 19 years old and has participated in the NASA Human Exploration Rover Challenge for two years. Last year, he was the project leader of the team that won the Ingenuity Award and first place overall in the virtual challenge without personal participation.

**Jorge Emiliano Turner Escalante**

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Jorge Emiliano Turner Escalante studies computer science at the Tecnológico de Monterrey Campus in Cuernavaca. He is 20 years old about 1,80m tall and has brown curly hair. He is a bit shy but a very nice personality. He helps the team with imaginative ideas and usually thinks two steps ahead. Called by friends: Turner, he participated in the virtual NASA Human Exploration Rover Challenge 2022, taking first place overall with Iktan Roving, but without having a rover in the course. He is part of the TecXotic underwater robotics team in the MATE ROV competition and is currently a junior mentor on the FIRST Robotics Competition high school team Lebotics.

**Sebastián Cruz**

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Sebastián Cruz is a 22-year-old engineering student in mechatronics at the Monterrey Technological Institute on the Cuernavaca campus. He is about 1,80m tall has heavily curled, reddish hair and always a smile on his face. Cruz (his nickname) always has a joke to spare and is, however, a very good engineer. Thus, with Iktan Roving as STEM leader, he won several HERC awards, including second place in 2021 on the Virtual Challenge, first place in 2022, the STEM Engagement and Ingenuity Award.

**Daniela Espinosa**

Daniela Espinosa is a 20-year-old student in her third semester of the Mechatronics program at the Tec de Monterrey Campus in Cuernavaca. She is about 1,7m tall and has brown wavy hair. Dani (her nickname) is a nice young girl who always takes care of her team. She is a former member of the high school robotics competition Lebotics Team and a current member of Iktan Roving as a pilot and team leader. Unfortunately, she is shy and doesn't like to be photographed.