

INTRODUCTION

Dear Readers,

This special space-focused issue of *Æther: A Journal of Strategic Airpower & Spacepower* stems from an 18-month US Space Command effort focusing on space educational outreach across the profession. General James H. Dickinson's Strategic Innovation Group first collected the space research topics that each Space Command joint directorate deemed as priorities for military students, faculty, and researchers across the enterprise to engage with. In spring 2022, a wide range of military universities and programs were provided this research list, with the added incentives that the command would provide coaching and academic outreach for those students throughout the year.

Nearly 40 participants signed up for the pilot exercise. Today this special issue of the journal features the top contributors selected for inclusion in this issue. Submissions represent the US Army War College, the Schriever Scholar's Program, the Air War College, and military organizations such as the Defense Intelligence Agency, the US Space Force, the US Space Command, and elsewhere. Their ranks and experience vary from field grade officers and professional military education faculty to a lieutenant general and deputy commander of a combatant command, and many in between. Faculty research and student efforts, along with individuals balancing real-world missions with their personal academic pursuits, demonstrate additional diversity of thought.

These authors and writing teams, together with an army of volunteer editors and reviewers from across the Department of Defense, worked to create this special issue devoted to space. General Dickinson's personal foreword further illustrates his prioritization of space educational outreach and development, and his vision for the future. The Space Command's academic year 2024 space research list, with eight times more topics added, is already out and moving toward a special publication in 2024 that will build upon this one. We hope you enjoy this issue and look forward to this annually. We would also like to thank the Air University Press, the *Æther* editor and staff, and the network of coaches, leaders, reviewers, and support staff that made this issue possible. Never a day without space! Never a day without space outreach! **Æ**

Ben Zweibelson & Miller Belmont
Guest Editors

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