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NASA teams up with two companies for space-related projects

Two local companies are teaming up with NASA's Johnson Space Center on technology development.

The Woodlands-based Houston Advanced Research Center and Houston's AmeriSciences recently signed separate NASA Space Act Agreements with JSC. HARC is pursuing technologies related to commercial fuel cell systems, while AmeriSciences is focused on developing and testing multivitamin nutritional supplements intended for astronaut use before and during flights.

The two-year NASA-HARC agreement calls for NASA to offer expertise to HARC in the area of fuel cell test stands and system designs. HARC's analysis and testing efforts could eliminate the need for NASA to develop on-site testing, officials say.

NASA says that working with HARC's Center for Fuel Cell Research and Applications also may benefit NASA's future space missions through improved fuel cell performance.

Meanwhile, NASA has partnered with AmeriSciences to develop a multivitamin formulation for potential use by astronauts. Based on NASA's need to provide increased nutritional support for long-duration spaceflight, scientists at JSC have compiled information on multivitamin formulations. AmeriSciences manufactures a multivitamin that meets many of NASA's needs, according to the agency.

The agreement with AmeriSciences includes the co-development of the multivitamin, shared responsibilities for product testing, participation in project reports, identification and assessment of related technologies, and demonstrations and other activities.

Created in 1982, HARC is a nonprofit organization that created the Center for Fuel Cell Research and Applications in July 1998.

Founded in 1999, AmeriSciences is a producer and distributor of nutritional, dental and skincare wellness products.

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