

Drone on!

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UPDATE -- The MSU Unmanned Systems Team ended up 14th out of 24 teams at the 2016 AUVSI Student Unmanned Air Systems international competition, June 15-19 in Maryland. Team Captain Hanish Mehta said the Spartan team performed very well for its first time competing at the event. "The teams were very welcoming. I was very pleased. Our team performed beyond expectations. The team is very excited now and looking forward to next year's competition."



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MSU student team headed to national drone competition in Maryland

A group of Michigan State University engineering students is among 17 teams taking part in a national drone competition June 15-19 in Maryland.

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The MSU team will be competing in the 2016 Student Unmanned Air Systems event at the Webster Naval Field in Patuxent River, Maryland.

“We are building a fully autonomous UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle), with flight times of greater than 30 minutes and a payload capacity of more than five kilograms,” said Hanish Mehta, an applied engineering sciences major from Mumbai, India.

He said the team is working on two quadcopters. “One is huge and the other one fits in my backpack,” he said.

The team’s UAV uses a target-recognition program during competitions that was written by the team’s computer science subcommittee. The software allows the team to keep track of the number of geometric targets detected and relays target information to mission control stations using an on-board computer.

Much of the team’s assembly work took place in Mehta’s apartment, where he has a 3D printer to fabricate custom parts. The team also operated out of two workshops in MSU’s Computer Center.

To practice, they go to off-campus locations where they can fly in accordance with hobby category regulations.

“Our team always makes sure that the area we are using is cleared, and we fly at an altitude of less than 400 feet,” Mehta said. “We have two emergency retrieval members on standby and one spotter always assists with flight operations to look out for potential hazards.”

For more information on the competition, please visit <http://www.auvsi.org/home>.

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Related Website: [Story courtesy of MSUToday.](#)
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