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Alumni Spotlight: Aaron Jackson (SSDS '14)

For as long as he can remember, Schechter alum Aaron Jackson (SSDS '14) has wanted to be an engineer. During his undergraduate years at University of Southern California (USC), he narrowed his focus to the engineering field of aeronautics (aircraft that fly within the atmosphere) and defense applications. At USC, he was the performance captain of the AeroDesign Team, which designs, builds, and flies a plane in a national competition each year.

As captain, Aaron was responsible for performance calculations, predictions, and using software to size and design the plane. After receiving a bachelor's degree in aerospace engineering from USC last year, he is one step closer to fulfilling his dreams as he pursues a master's degree in the field, also at USC.

In addition to his schooling, Aaron is an intern at Lockheed Martin Skunk Works. Through Lockheed Martin, he has been stationed in Fort Worth, TX, where he has worked with the structures and dynamics team on the F-35 Fighter Jet. This summer, Aaron will move to Palmdale, CA, where he will work with the Military Operations Analysis Team on cutting-edge aircraft that may someday fly.

"From a young age I had a creative knack and loved to build and iterate through design," Aaron said. "I decided to become an engineer after learning it was a profession which encouraged imagination and trying new things. I became interested in the aerospace and defense industry after learning about the seemingly impossible feats that many fighter and stealth aircraft are able to achieve through engineering."

Outside of the aerospace and defense industry, Aaron enjoys screen-printing and clothing design, playing guitar, and surfing. He said he loves living in LA and frequently goes to Malibu, Santa Monica, Venice, and West Hollywood "for all kinds of adventures including hiking and surfing."

When reflecting on his years at Schechter, Aaron said that the science and art curriculum sparked his creativity, which in turn ignited a passion for engineering. "Schechter provides opportunities for students to connect and identify with their passions by bringing in a wide range of guest speakers, performers, and musicians who are excited about their chosen field," he said.

"My Schechter teachers allowed me to approach courses from my own unique perspective and to express my creativity while still learning the material," he added. "The diverse and dual curriculum encourages students to challenge themselves, synthesize various topics, and view learning from a holistic perspective."

Aaron is still very close with many Schechter alumni from the Class of 2014, including Joey Schroyer, Eli Ecanow, and Ignacio Saps. "Connecting with alumni is always exciting, as they are all doing outstanding and interesting work," he said.

Aaron's sister, Beth (SSDS '11), attended University of Michigan, and now works as a Creative Recruiter for Havas, a media holding company. Aaron's sister, Jane (SSDS '09), attended New York University, and now works as an Actor, Voiceover Artist and Creative Freelancer in London.

