

# Generations of STEM:

# Bobak Ferdowsi

## Systems Engineer

Born from parents who immigrated to the US from Iran, Bobak grew up both in California and Tokyo. Inspired by science fiction and shows like Star Trek, he went on to focus his studies in aerospace engineering. He attended the University of Washington majoring in aerospace engineering, and then MIT where he joined the Lean Aerospace

Initiative. He is a systems engineer at NASA, working to make sure projects come together as a whole.

Bobak is best known for his role on *Curiosity*, the rover that landed on Mars in 2012. His mohawk hair style was front and center during the televised landing, earning him the nickname “Mohawk Guy.” The mohawk was selected by his team, who votes on a new hairstyle for Ferdowsi each mission. His media popularity has made him a role model for students to see the lighter side of engineering, and inspire them to reach for their dreams.

Ferdowsi is currently working on the NISAR joint Earth observation mission at Jet Propulsion Laboratory. NISAR will be the most expensive Earth-imaging satellite ever built, and will be used to collect data about natural processes and climate change.



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