



# **Eisha Matsubara**

**Electrical Engineer  
Class of 2003**

**By Jak Murasaki**

Most people know something about space exploration. They may know about the countless satellites orbiting the Earth making daily life possible or the spacecraft that make it possible to take living organisms into outer space. They read and see video of robotic rovers and spacecraft that explore and gather knowledge of the foreign and alien world outside of ours. What most people are ignorant about is all the work that goes on behind the scenes that makes these things possible.

The lead American center for exploration of the solar system is Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California. With its vision of “Pushing the outer edge of exploration”, JPL is a key contributor to the many spacecraft that we humans have sent up beyond the sky, and the knowledge that we have obtained from them. Its primary function is the construction and operation of robotic planetary spacecraft. An individual who works within JPL and is part of an elite team that is vital to JPL’s success is Eisha Matsubara.

Eisha is an electrical engineer for JPL’s Avionics Section. She is part of the Electronic Ground Support team. Although it sounds complicated, what she basically does is build any type of electrical hardware that is needed to support a JPL mission. Eisha describes her job as a three-step process. She and her team first gather the requirements from either the instrument and/or the flight side of a proposed project as to what type of electronic equipment support they need. Then they brainstorm solutions which lead to the design and manufacture of the equipment. Finally, they integrate and test the equipment as part of the whole system. Without their hard work, there wouldn’t be any spacecraft coming out of JPL.

While at Waiakea High School, she became fascinated with how electronic circuits work. Having always loved science and math, she took a

particular interest in them in high school and took part in a lot of extracurricular activities involving math, science, and electronics. She wanted to make the most of her high school experience and looking back, she doesn't remember relaxing much. Between school, sports, and student government activities, Eisha was always busy. Her time in high school really played a major role in where she is today. She still uses the skills she learned in her high school electronics classes.

Having very good and supportive teachers and parents played a huge part in Eisha's inspiration. From reading space books and attending Future Flight (a space summer camp) to interning at a space engineering company in LA, Eisha was always encouraged to do what she wanted to do and to explore possibilities. "I guess my inspiration came from a lot of great mentors who wanted to share their interests with me."

And to all graduating seniors, Eisha's advice to you all is; "Make sure you love what you're doing. If you love what you're doing (no matter what it is), you will find a way to make it work in your life. If you don't like what you're doing, change it now. It only gets harder to change the longer you stay in a place you don't like.) Life is too short, so it's important to not only make the most out of it, but also have fun doing so. Although we all will have regrets at some point in our lives, we must try to make the best of them and learn from them as much as possible. It is our experiences, both the good and bad that shape us so never be afraid to pursue what you want or to explore new things." Eisha didn't know where exactly she was going to be but she pursued what she enjoyed and tried her best. Now she gets to work knowing that the projects she helps create will be flying in space one day and contributing to our knowledge of space. She enjoys what she does and learns new things every day. Eisha truly follows the motto of JPL and leaves a trail where there is none.



