

US scientists host 'bake sale for NASA'

June 8 2012

Could some really great cupcakes be enough to send Americans back to the Moon?

More than a dozen US universities are hosting events on Saturday to urge support for the cash-strapped space agency, which faces major cuts to its planetary programs in fiscal year 2013.

Ranging from shoe shines to car washes and bake sales, the events are not actually designed to raise money to send to [NASA](#), the organizers stressed.

"Our goal is not to raise money but to raise awareness and to have people tell Congress to put the funds back to last year's funding level," said Cindy Conrad, an assistant at the Southwest Research Institute in Boulder, Colorado.

NASA's planetary programs are expected to be cut by more than \$300 million dollars in President Barack Obama's next budget, and the cost-cutting has already axed a major Mars project with Europe.

The [US space agency](#) has faced harsh criticism in recent years by slashing a program to return Americans to the Moon and retiring the space shuttle fleet in 2011 without a replacement vehicle to take [astronauts](#) to space.

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