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The USA Science & Engineering Festival Offers Future Explorers an Out-Of-This-World View of Next Generation Space Travel

WASHINGTON – January 18, 2012 — This spring, the USA Science & Engineering Festival, the nation's largest celebration of science and engineering, will take festival-goers behind the scenes as NASA and industry partners forge a bold new era of space exploration. April 28-29, 2012, in Washington, DC, the Lockheed Martin-sponsored Festival will unleash the imaginations of the next generation of discoverers with inside information on what it takes to travel to the moon and Mars, as well as the future of space travel for the masses.

NASA leads space exploration in the United States and the world, with exciting missions in aeronautics, robotic and human exploration, and science. The agency retired the Space Shuttle Program in 2011, and is fostering a new era of spaceflight with breakthroughs in technology and innovation to send humans deeper into space as it inspires the next generation of engineers, scientists and explorers.

Lockheed Martin, the host of the Festival and a leading aerospace company, leads the industry team developing the Orion Multi-Purpose Crew Vehicle, NASA's next-generation spacecraft for future human exploration throughout our solar system.

"NASA engineers, in collaboration with Agency partners, have combined innovative technical approaches with advanced concepts to develop Orion," said Dr. Ray O Johnson, Lockheed Martin Senior Vice President and Chief Technology Officer. "The journey ahead is exciting, and it will lead us to new discoveries and distant worlds. At Lockheed Martin, we are committed to space exploration; we are inspired by the pioneers of the space age, and we are encouraged by the opportunities that lie ahead."

Festival-goers will interact with several members of the space community, including people who have traveled into space as private citizens and leaders from companies who hope to make space tourism more broadly available.

“We believe that space remains one of the greatest frontiers to explore for America and the world,” said Larry Bock, Executive Director of the USA Science & Engineering Festival. “We are working closely with our sponsors and partners to ensure that we’re bringing the excitement of this field to the public during the Festival.”

Richard Garriott, a presenter at the upcoming Festival, became the sixth private citizen to travel to space in October 2008 when he traveled aboard the Russian Soyuz TMA-13 spacecraft to the International Space Station as a self-funded tourist.

“I made my experience a productive one that went beyond simple sightseeing and personal fulfillment,” said Garriott. While on his 12-day journey in space, Garriott – whose father is former NASA astronaut Owen Garriott – conducted several experiments, took photographs and communicated with students.

Garriott’s Festival presentation will focus on what he thinks space travel will look like over the next 20 years, as well as how anyone with a passion or vision can achieve his or her dream, including space travel.

Also presenting at the Festival will be George Whitesides, President and CEO of Virgin Galactic – the pioneering U.S.-based space tourism company. Whitesides and his team are working to create a fleet of spaceships that can transport people into space on a regular basis with a goal of getting to space by 2013.

Virgin Galactic is currently developing space vehicles designed to hold two pilots and six customers – tourists, scientists or others in the space community – for space flight. The company plans for flights, which will last approximately two hours, to take off and land at one location or spaceport with the actual time in space being a little les than five minutes. Travelers would be able to get out of their seats, float around the cabin and look down on the Earth.

“I think it’s important for children today to realize that they are going to grow up in a world where, if anyone puts their mind to it, they can go to space,” added Whitesides. “Since the dawn of the space age, only about 525 people have been to space. We’re hoping to fly that number of people in the first year to year-and-a-half of our operation.”

Festival attendees can also explore and take pictures with one of America’s newest spacecraft – a Merlin rocket engine developed by SpaceX – a company NASA recently contracted to deliver cargo to and from the International Space Station.

For a more in-depth look at the Festival’s space-related exhibits, activities and speakers, please visit this special article on the Festival Website.

About the USA Science & Engineering Festival:
The USA Science & Engineering Festival is the country’s only national science festival, and was developed to increase public awareness of the importance of science and to encourage youth to pursue careers in science and engineering by celebrating science in much the same way as we celebrate Hollywood celebrities, professional athletes and pop stars. For more information on the USA Science & Engineering Festival, please visit the Festival website.

Sponsors and Media Partners:
Lockheed Martin is again the presenting host of the USA Science & Engineering Festival. Lockheed Martin is joined by other Festival sponsors and partners to date: K&L Gates, Northrop Grumman Foundation, EE Times, New Scientist, Popular Mechanics, Popular Science, Scientific American, Technology Review published by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, U.S. Air Force, AT&T, C&EN, the news magazine of the chemical & related sciences, ENGINEERING.com, National Science Foundation, ResMed Foundation and Farrell Family Foundation, Lawrence and Diane Bock, National Institutes of Health (NIH), American Scientist, CrazyEngineers.com, Forbes/Wolfe, Illumina, Inc., The Kavli Foundation, Life Technologies Foundation, Microsoft Corporation, The Epoch Times, WAMU 88.5 - American University Radio, LEGO Education, MedImmune, METRO, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, PBS Kids, Physics Today, The Planetary Society, SchoolTube, Sigma Xi, Washington FAMILY Magazine, 3M, American Nuclear Society, Amgen, Applied Physics Laboratory, Association of Science-Technology Centers, Baxter International Inc., Celestron, Center for America, Center for Biotechnology Education at Johns Hopkins University, John Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, Northern Virginia Technology Council, Project Lead the Way, Purdue University, Raytheon,

The Scripps Foundation for Science and the Environment, Society for Maintenance and Reliability Professionals (SMRP), Vertex Pharmaceuticals, The Rubik's Cube, U.S. Army RDECOM, U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Xconomy, Academy of Model Aeronautics, American Mathematical Society, Biogen Idec Foundation, Children's National Medical Center, Dassault Systèmes SolidWorks Corp., Destination DC, Draper Laboratory, FEI Company, Genentech, National Girls Collaborative Project, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), SGT, Inc., SpaceX, University of Massachusetts Lowell, UMBC, U.S. Census Bureau, Statistics in Schools, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Aerospace Corporation, Armed Forces Communications & Electronics Association (AFCEA) Belvoir Chapter, Aldebaran Robotics Inc., American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association (AARDA), American Society of Agronomy, American Society of Civil Engineers, Atlas Experiment at the Large Hadron Collider, Big Kid Science, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), Carnegie Mellon Software Engineering Institute, Central Intelligence Agency, Constellation Energy, Consortium for Ocean Leadership, Crop Science Society of America, Data.gov, Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Chemical and Biological Technologies Directorate, DeVry University, EurekAlert!, George Mason University, Georgetown University, Georgia Institute of Technology, Idaho State University, James Madison University, Johns Hopkins University, Undergraduate Neuroscience Program, Making Neuroscience Fun Program, Kurion, Inc., Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Michigan Tech Mind Trekkers, National Museum of Health and Medicine, North Carolina State University, NumbersAlive!, Rochester Institute of Technology, San Diego State University, SMU Caruth Institute for Engineering, Society of American Military Engineers, Soil Science Society of America, The American Society for Microbiology, The George Washington University, The George Washington University, School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS), The KidWind Project, The Mars Society, The Pennsylvania State University, The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), Thirty Meter Telescope Project, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Tumblehome Learning, Inc., United States Naval Academy, University of Connecticut, University of Florida, University of Georgia, University of Rochester, Vanderbilt University, VCU School of Engineering, Wellesley College, West Virginia University, Wind Energy Foundation, American Elements, and Wolfram.

The USA Science & Engineering Festival is a grassroots collaboration of over 500 of the United States leading science and engineering organizations, including:

- Professional Science & Engineering Societies including the National Academies, AAAS, American Physical Society, American Chemical Society, IEEE, Association for Women in Science (AWIS), Society of Hispanic Engineers, National Society of Black Engineers, and many more.
- Universities/Colleges/Research Institutes including Harvard, Princeton, Stanford, Yale, Georgetown., Johns Hopkins, U.S. Naval Academy, J. Craig Venter Research Institute, Carnegie Institute of Sciences and more.
- Government Agencies and Federal Laboratories including NIH, NASA, USDA, EPA, Office of Naval Research, Department of Energy, Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory, Fermi Accelerator Facility, U.S. Geological Survey and many more.
- Corporations including Lockheed Martin, Life Technologies. Amgen, Baxter, ResMed, Hitachi, and many more.
- Informal Science Outreach Organizations including the Smithsonian, American Museum of Natural History, The Franklin Institute, Koshland Museum, and many more.
- Community Organizations including *FIRST* Robotics, Girls Inc., Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and more.

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