

Boeing Gives \$1 Million to Challenger Center for Teacher Development

Challenger Center for Space Science Education announced today that The Boeing Company will contribute \$1 million to support professional development programs for the nation's math and science teachers.

"The entire network of current and future Challenger Learning Centers will be the grateful beneficiaries of Boeing's generosity," said Dr. June Scobee Rodgers, Founding Chairman of Challenger Center for Space Science Education. The international non-profit organization set up as a living memorial to the STS 51-L crew that perished in January 1986. Dr. Rodgers, widow of 51-L Commander R. Francis "Dick" Scobee, continued, "Our network of 52 Challenger Learning Centers will serve as a launching point for these new training materials and professional development opportunities that will enhance math and science instruction in their schools. Boeing's gift will ensure that the half a million students and teachers served each year across the country will receive the quality teaching materials they deserve."

"This gift supports an enduring legacy of education and leadership for future generations," said Jim Albaugh, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems president and CEO. "It is a fitting tribute to the memory and mission of the Apollo, Challenger, and Columbia crews and all those who have sacrificed so much in the name of space exploration and discovery."

Particularly in light of the Columbia tragedy one year ago last week, Boeing's gift will coincide with strong interest in developing Challenger Learning Center communities in eastern Texas (the towns of Nacogdoches, Hemphill, and Lufkin lay in the debris path of the Columbia wreckage), as well as in Amarillo, Texas, the hometown of Columbia Commander Rick Husband.

Educators in these communities, as well as countless others, will benefit from Boeing's gift to Challenger Center and its network of 52 Challenger Learning Center communities already in existence worldwide.

"Our partnership with Challenger Center provides the next generation of engineers, scientists and astronauts the tools to fulfill our nation's long-term space exploration goals and vision," said Mike Mott, Boeing NASA Systems vice president and general manager.

This gift provides Challenger Center the ability to fund, coordinate, distribute, field-test, and promote new professional development programs created by network partners, many of which are located in communities where Boeing employees live and work.

Over the past 18 years, designing and disseminating professional development materials for teachers has been at the core of Challenger Center's strategic plan. Forging relationships between our 52 Challenger Learning Centers and the teachers in these communities has proven invaluable in improving the level of instruction provided in the classroom.

Challenger Center for Space Science Education is a global not-for-profit education organization created in 1986 by the families of the astronauts tragically lost during the last flight of the Challenger Space Shuttle. Dedicated to the educational spirit of that mission, Challenger Center develops Learning Centers and other educational programs worldwide to continue the mission to engage students in science and math education.

Challenger Center's network of Learning Centers throughout the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom has been a recognized leader in educational simulation, with a strong standards-based emphasis. Challenger Learning Centers and Challenger Center's award-winning classroom and teacher training programs all use the excitement of space exploration to create positive learning experiences that raise students' expectations of success, foster in them a long-term interest in math, science, and technology, and help them develop critical communication, decision-making, team-building, and collaborative skills.

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