

C O M M U N I T Y N E W S**Conference provides educators a lesson about space station**

The International Space Station will be the subject of many more exciting and creative lessons for schoolchildren around the country. That is the hope for organizers of Space Center Houston's sixth annual ISS Educators Conference held February 4 and 5.

More than 500 educators participated in the two days of networking, lectures and workshops on ISS education techniques and activities while expanding their own personal knowledge of science, math and space program concepts and status. Nearly 100 different breakout sessions were offered highlighting various projects and methods for incorporating space and ISS into multidisciplinary lesson plans.

NASA was a partner for the event and many JSC employees were featured instructors and guest speakers including ISS Program Chief of Staff Bill Bates, Jack Bacon of ISS Systems Engineering & Integration, Expedition One Commander William Shepherd and STS-96 Mission Specialist Ellen Ochoa. Roger Crouch, chief scientist for microgravity at NASA Headquarters, also addressed the visitors.

The ISSEC attracted guests from all corners of the country, and not just classroom teachers. Dave Schaar, an educational workshops coordinator from SciTrek science and technology museum

in Atlanta, Georgia, was a first-time visitor to the conference and said the event was rich with useful ideas and concepts.

"I'm always curious as to new ways to get kids excited about science in the classroom," said Schaar. "It's one thing to talk to them about how exciting science can be but it's a lot better when you can show them through hands-on exercises."

Although many of the visitors were seeking ways to apply the ideas to math and science lessons, many of the instructors emphasized that the activities could be used to reinforce other subjects.

Linda Helmke, an ISSEC guest instructor and teacher advisor from Saskatoon Public School District in Canada, led a session entitled "A Day on the International Space Station." Designed for students kindergarten through fifth grade, Helmke's project entailed using yards of black plastic to recreate a classroom into a simulated space station complete with twinkling lights for stars and large planets on the horizon.

ISSEC is a blessing for many of the educators who seek material and resources for space curricula. They frequently walk out of the conference with a head full of fresh new ideas and arms full of resource materials – renewed and invigorated by the possibilities of space. ■



ISSEC organizers wish to thank all of the JSC volunteers and The Boeing Company for their support of the event.

NASA JSC Photo 2000-01180 by Bill Stafford

Space Center Houston hosted more than 500 educators in its sixth annual International Space Station Educators Conference. During the two-day event, guests participated in lectures and workshops to discover new techniques to share the excitement of space with students.

Johnson Space Center blood donor receives recognition

Gary Kane, a JSC retiree, recently received a plaque from St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital honoring him for his outstanding record of donating blood over the years.

Stephanie Logsdon, St. Luke's Blood Donor Program manager, and George Abbey, JSC director, presented the plaque and congratulated Kane for donating more than 14 gallons of blood – the highest number of donations on record with St. Luke's for any current or former JSC employee. Abbey also thanked Kane for his 33 years of loyal service with JSC and 40 years of federal service. Abbey commended Kane, and all JSC blood donors, for contributing to this worthwhile cause.

Kane worked in the Mission Operations Directorate for much of his career, and worked in the Systems Management Office most recently. He started donating blood here at JSC in 1971. He's contributed between three and six times a year since then, sometimes donating at St. Luke's Hospital downtown location between JSC blood drives.

Kane explained, "I believe the thing that got me involved was the realization that until an artificial substitute can be utilized for blood, donors are an absolute necessity for the health and

well-being of the community." He plans to continue donating at the JSC on-site blood drives as a retiree.

Donations from JSC blood drives are frequently used to help employees, their

families, and other community members who have undergone heart surgery or had diseases like leukemia, cancer, or hemophilia. At JSC's recent January blood drive, donors gave 538 units of blood, the second best showing since JSC began its partnership with St. Luke's. The timing was great because a critical blood supply shortage was threatening to cause delays to a number of surgeries at the time.

JSC's next blood drive will be held from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. March 29 and 30. The blood drive will be conveniently staged in the Teague lobby in Bldg. 2. No appointment is needed to donate whole blood. Appointments are encouraged for those wishing to donate plasma or platelets. To schedule an appointment, call Donna Stuart at x33032.

For more information about donating blood, see the blood drive Web site located on the Human Resources Office homepage. Or, if you have a specific question about how a medical condition may affect your ability to give blood, call St. Luke's Blood Donor Center at (713) 791-4483. ■



NASA JSC Photo 2000-01267 by James Blair

JSC Director George Abbey, left, and Stephanie Logsdon, St. Luke's Blood Donor Program manager, right, present a plaque to recently retired JSC employee Gary Kane in recognition of his outstanding record of donating blood over the years.

Energy industry leader offers survival tips

If there is anyone out there who has endured some of Houston's most trying times and demonstrated how to successfully navigate an organization through the strains of change, it is former Reliant Energy CEO Don Jordan. With more than 40 years in the energy industry, Jordan recently imparted some of his lessons learned to a crowd of JSC's leaders.

Jordan, president of the World Energy Council, was a featured speaker as part of the George M. Low Leadership Series, a continuing lecture series initiated by JSC Center Director George W. S. Abbey to help center leaders learn from government and industry peers.

Jordan's vast experience with the energy company includes its transitions from Houston Lighting & Power Company to

Houston Industries and more recently, to Reliant Energy. Those transitions, he says, parallel many challenges that the space program also faces.

"The technological and economic mountains that you must climb in business really challenge your imagination," said Jordan. "NASA's work makes business dim by comparison, but I suggest that many of the same principles that we have to follow in business to be successful might apply well here at NASA as well."

According to Jordan, times of dramatic and complicated change require many skills of an effective leader in order for an

organization to survive, not the least of which is proactive communication.

"Good communication is always critical, but it's also the easiest to forget, especially in times of change - when the business is under pressure," said Jordan. "Employees will feel resistance to change and threatened if they don't understand the changes. They have to feel that their role is important in order for them to gain that sense of urgency to reach the organization's goals."

Jordan cited the early days of the space program, when there was no shortage of passion or financial support for space

exploration, but says today's economy paints a different picture. "I bet many of you from the early days of the NASA program would not have predicted that the marketing of the economic benefits of the space program to the American public and to Congress would have become such an integral part of your job and key to your survival."

Yet, he says, with the ability to identify industry trends, gauge their importance and relevance to your organization and respond accordingly, you can adapt to the new demands and succeed in the new paradigm.

"Although change at the magnitude that Reliant Energy and NASA have seen can be unsettling and downright frightening, it is usually inevitable and will create great opportunities for us both." ■



Don Jordan