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New era of worldwide space exploration begins

By James Hartsfield

When *Endeavour* lifts off next month, it will lift more than just a new space station; more than the promise of unprecedented space research; more even than the cornerstone of the largest spacecraft ever built – it will have aboard the start of a new era of worldwide space exploration.

As the first of about three dozen shuttle missions to assemble the International Space Station, the STS-88 crew will initiate a construction site in Earth orbit, where a state-of-the-art laboratory complex will take shape during the coming years as components from across the globe are joined together.

“The International Space Station... is a stepping-stone to the future, and the future of space exploration is all of us working together,” *Endeavour* Commander Bob Cabana said.

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Assistant to the President for Science and Technology pledges support for NASA

President Clinton's assistant for science and technology visited JSC recently, and returned to Washington pledging to support the International Space Station program and its objectives.

Dr. Neal F. Lane visited JSC on September 22, toured facilities and received briefings on activities here related to the Human Exploration and Development of Space.

Tommy Holloway, manager of the Space Shuttle Program, and United Space Alliance's President and CEO Russ Turner briefed Lane on shuttle operations, while Randy Brinkley, manager of the

International Space Station program, provided an overview of station progress and plans. Dr. Nigel Packham, crew commander, Lunar/Mars Life Support Test Project, discussed closed loop life support system development efforts, and Dr. Doug Blanchard provided a tour of the Lunar Lab in Bldg. 31. John Muratore, X-38 project manager, provided an overview of the X-38, the crew return vehicle for the ISS.

According to Lori Garver, head of NASA Headquarters' policy and plans office, Lane pledged to support the ISS program and its objectives. ■



JSC Photo S98-13551 by Mark Sowa

Dr. Bonnie Dunbar (left), JSC's assistant director for University Research and Affairs, and JSC Director George Abbey (right) brief Dr. Neal F. Lane, assistant to the President for science and technology, on the current status of the International Space Station.



Skylab celebrates 25th anniversary.
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