



News Bureau

University Communications and Marketing Services
MSC 3K/New Mexico State University
P.O. Box 30001/Las Cruces, NM 88003-8001
Phone: (505) 646-3221 Fax: (505) 646-2099
E-mail: Ucomm@nmsu.edu
www.nmsu.edu/news.html

News Release

Aug. 31, 2006

Karl Hill, University Communications, (505) 646-1885, khill@nmsu.edu
CONTACT: Dr. Patricia Hynes, N.M. Space Grant Consortium, (505) 646-6414,
pahynes@nmsu.edu

NASA competition winners to take part in spaceflight symposium in Las Cruces

Key players from SpaceX and Rocketplane Kistler – the two companies NASA has selected to demonstrate new commercial space transportation systems – will be among the participants at the 2nd Annual International Symposium for Personal Spaceflight (ISPS) in Las Cruces Oct. 17 and 18.

Aerospace teams headed by the two companies will share \$500 million the space agency intends to spend through 2010 to stimulate development of commercial delivery services to the International Space Station. NASA made the awards, announced Aug. 18, under the Commercial Orbital Transportation Services (COTS) program.

Gwynne Shotwell, vice president for business development for the California-based SpaceX, or Space Explorations Technologies, and Charles “Chuck” Lauer, director of business development for Oklahoma City-based Rocketplane, will be among the aerospace entrepreneurs and experienced space explorers who will take part in the symposium.

ISPS, to be held at the New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum in Las Cruces, precedes the X PRIZE Cup competitions to take place at the Las Cruces International Airport Oct. 20 and 21.

“The symposium will deal with the many interrelated factors that will be crucial as we develop a viable commercial space industry in southern New Mexico,” said Patricia Hynes, director of the New Mexico Space Grant Consortium and co-chair of the symposium with William Gaubatz of the X PRIZE Foundation.

The symposium is presented by New Mexico State University, the X PRIZE Foundation and the NMSU-based Space Grant Consortium, plus two organizations respected for their

technical expertise and personal experience in spaceflight – the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) and the Association of Space Explorers (ASE).

ABC television newsman Sam Donaldson will be the master of ceremonies for the symposium.

The schedule for Tuesday, Oct. 17, includes sessions on space vehicles, space tourism and medical considerations for suborbital and orbital spaceflight. The second day's schedule includes sessions on maximizing your personal spaceflight experience, spaceports, impact of spaceport on southern New Mexico communities, and a panel discussion with experienced space explorers – the astronauts.

Shotwell and Lauer will participate in panels focusing on the challenges, technical and otherwise, of developing new space vehicles.

Through the COTS program, SpaceX will receive \$278 million in NASA seed money to help fund the development and flight demonstration of its Dragon flight capsule and Falcon 9 rocket. Rocketplane Kistler will receive \$207 million to help complete development of its K-1 reusable rocket and develop a cargo module. NASA has set aside \$15 million in COTS funds for its own program costs.

“The awarding of the COTS contract is significant because it is a way for smaller companies to participate in the next steps in development of the space transportation business,” Elon Musk SpaceX CEO stated, "By stimulating the development of commercial orbital spaceflight, the NASA COTS program will have the same positive effect on space travel as the Air Mail Act of 1925 had on the development of safe and affordable air transportation, moreover, the requirement for significant private investment and the fact that NASA only pays for objective, demonstrated milestones ensures that the American taxpayer will receive exceptional value for money." Hynes said. “We are fortunate to have representatives of both COTS winners with us for our second annual ISPS.”

The symposium is open to the public. Detailed information and an online registration form can be found on the ISPS Web site, <http://spacegrant.nmsu.edu/isps/2006/>. For assistance with registration, contact Joylynn Watkins of the New Mexico Space Grant Consortium, (505) 646-6414 or nmsgc@nmsu.edu.

Information about the X PRIZE Cup activities scheduled for Oct. 20 and 21 can be found on the Web at <http://www.xprizecup.com/>.



NMSU News Photo

University Communications and Marketing Services

MSC 3K/New Mexico State University

P.O. Box 30001/Las Cruces, NM 88003-8001

News releases are available at http://www.nmsu.edu/~ucomm/Releases_toc.html



Logo is available at
http://ucommphoto.nmsu.edu/newsphoto/isps_logo.jpg