



Bridgeport Public Schools

For Immediate Release

Contact: Dawn Schirizzo
Beardsley School
203-576-7184

BEARDSLEY STUDENTS' SIGNATURES SET FOR OCT. 23 SPACE LAUNCH

Bridgeport, CT – October 16, 2007 – Students at Beardsley School will become part of a space mission on Oct. 23 when their personal signatures are launched aboard NASA's Space Shuttle Discovery on mission STS-120. The event is a culmination to the students' participation in the NASA and Lockheed Martin sponsored *Student Signatures in Space®* program, a key component of the Lockheed Martin Space Day celebration held annually on the first Friday in May.

Last May, students signed Space Day posters. Their signatures were then scanned onto a disk that will be carried on the Space Shuttle Discovery scheduled to launch October 23. This mission marks the 120th Space Shuttle flight and the 23rd Space Shuttle mission to go to the International Space Station.

Mission STS-120 will be commanded by Retired Air Force Col. Pamela Melroy. A veteran Shuttle pilot, Melroy is the second woman to command a Space Shuttle. Marine Corps Col. George Zamka will serve as pilot. Mission Specialists on the flight will be Scott Parazynski, Army Col. Douglas Wheelock, Stephanie Wilson, and Paolo Nespoli, a European Space Agency astronaut from Italy.

"The poster signing events on Space Day are always a lot of fun for the kids," said Barbara Reinike, Space Day program manager for Lockheed Martin. "However, the launch of their signatures is even more exciting because it makes it all real. And the

launch and mission itself provide wonderful teaching opportunities for educators, as they can bring the science of ‘their mission’ right into the classroom.”

“This was an incredible opportunity for the science curriculum to come alive! When I saw this, I just knew we had to do it,” Dawn Schirizzo, sixth grade teacher at Beardsley said. “Too often, it’s the chalk and talk method, but this lesson was out of this world!” Her students agreed. Nautika Drummond states, “It’s cool because space is so far away and my name is there.” Shajae Brooks agreed. “It’s cool too because I had never heard of anything that is mine going into space before.”

After the signatures return from space, the poster will be returned for permanent display to Beardsley along with a flight certificate and picture of the crew that carried the signatures into space.

Since the program began in 1997, more than 4 million students have participated in *Student Signatures in Space*. There is no cost for schools to participate. The program is limited to approximately 500 schools a year.

Lockheed Martin is the founding sponsor of Space Day. The mission of Space Day is to utilize space-related activities to inspire and prepare youth for careers in math, science, engineering, and technology. Throughout the year, millions of students, teachers, parents and space enthusiasts participate in Space Day educational programs and celebrations across North America.

For more information on Space Day and how to register a school to participate in *Student Signatures in Space*, please visit the Space Day web site at www.spaceday.org.

For more info on Beardsley’s participation or to make arrangements to cover any of the events, please contact Dawn Schirizzo at 576-7184.

For more info on the *Student Signatures in Space* program, please contact April Tensen at (540) 384-7809.

For more info about Space Day, please contact Barbara Reinike at 301-897-6601.

The mission of the Bridgeport Public Schools and its supporting community is to graduate all students “college ready” and prepared to succeed in life. For more information about Bridgeport Public Schools visit the website at www.bridgeportedu.com.