CARNEGIE SCIENCE CENTER EDUCATION DIRECTOR TO ATTEND SPACE SHUTTLE LAUNCH AT PERSONAL INVITATION OF ASTRONAUT

Science Center to host live viewing of launch and relay updates via social media

PITTSBURGH, April 26, 2011 — At the personal invitation of NASA astronaut and Pittsburgh native Mike Fincke, Carnegie Science Center’s own John Radzilowicz, director of Science and Education, will travel to the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Fla., as a guest at the final launch of the space shuttle Endeavour, scheduled for Friday, April 29, at 3:47 pm. This will mark the beginning of mission STS-134, a 14-day mission that will deliver the Alpha Magnetic Spectrometer-2 (AMS) to the International Space Station.

For those in the Pittsburgh region, Carnegie Science Center will be celebrating the launch onsite with a live broadcast of the launch, as well as space-themed hands-on activities from 3 to 4:30 pm. Visitors can always explore space at the Science Center with the Buhl Digital Planetarium & Observatory, the Omnimax film Hubble, and the Zeiss exhibit, a star projector originally used at the Buhl Planetarium from 1939 to 1991.

From his station at the Kennedy Space Center, John Radzilowicz will be using social media channels to keep people in Pittsburgh and beyond updated on the experience of witnessing a space shuttle take-off. Science Center Facebook updates can be found at www.facebook.com/carnegiesciencecenter. Carnegie Science Center’s Twitter handle is @CSCPittsburgh, and specific details about the launch can be found at #shuttlecsc. Radzilowicz will be fielding questions by users of Facebook and Twitter will use the #shuttlecsc hash tag. NASA will also be tweeting about the mission using the hash tag #STS134. Fincke has promised to don a Carnegie Science Center tee-shirt while aboard Endeavour to show his support for the place that first ignited his love for space.

“This is an opportunity of a lifetime, and I am thrilled to be able to share it with the folks back in Pittsburgh,” says Radzilowicz. “At the Science Center, our mission is to ignite a passion for science in our young visitors. Mike Fincke is a living testament to the power of informal education experiences to help spark the imagination of children and encourage them to explore science based careers. We are grateful for his support of the Science Center’s mission and his commitment to advancing informal science learning in Pittsburgh.”

As an undergraduate student, John Radzilowicz studied physics and astronomy at Manhattan College. He continued his education at the University of Buffalo with a master’s of education degree. Beginning his career at the Science Center in 1998, Radzilowicz ran the Buhl Planetarium & Observatory. He now oversees the development of all of the education and outreach programs at the Science Center, including the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) initiatives and the Girls, Math & Science Partnership. He teaches at local
A native Pittsburgher, astronaut Mike Fincke is no stranger to the Science Center. In fact, he visited the old Buhl Planetarium with his mom as a child and has been infatuated with space ever since. Now, as an adult who has fulfilled his dreams of traveling to space, Fincke is a strong supporter of the Science Center and its programs. In 2004, Fincke chose the Science Center as a site for a downlink from space. He spoke to more than 900 students in the Buhl Digital Planetarium and other areas of the Science Center, leaving all in attendance inspired and dreaming of becoming an astronaut. During the past decade, Radzilowicz and Fincke have used their passion for astronomy and space science to further the mission of Carnegie Science Center.

For more information on NASA, the shuttle's mission, or any of the astronauts on board, please visit NASA’s website. Members of the media who wish to contact Mike Fincke may do so by contacting NASA media relations office here or by contacting Gayle Frere at gayle.frere-1@nasa.gov.

**About the Launch**

Endeavour’s 14-day mission will deliver the Alpha Magnetic Spectrometer-2 (AMS) to the International Space Station. AMS, a particle physics detector, is designed to search for various types of unusual matter by measuring cosmic rays. Its experiments are designed to help researchers study the formation of the universe and search for evidence of dark matter, strange matter and antimatter. Endeavour also will fly the Expedite the Processing of Experiment to Space Station (Express) Logistics Carrier 3 (ELC-3), a platform that carries spare parts that will sustain space station operations once the shuttles are retired from service. The mission will feature four spacewalks to do maintenance work and install new components. These are the last scheduled spacewalks by shuttle crew members. Shuttle mission STS-134 is the final flight for Endeavour and the second to last flight for the Space Shuttle Program.

A colonel in the U.S. Air Force, Michael Fincke will serve as a mission specialist on STS-134. Selected by NASA in 1996, Fincke was assigned technical duties in the Astronaut Office Station Operations Branch serving as an International Space Station Spacecraft Communicator (ISS CAPCOM), was a member of the Crew Test Support Team in Russia, and served as the International Space Station crew procedures team lead. He is qualified to fly as a left-seat flight engineer (co-pilot) on the Russian Soyuz TM and TMA spacecraft. Fincke has logged more than 365 days in space and more than 26 hours of spacewalk time in six spacewalks throughout Expedition 9 and Expedition 18.
Wearing an all-white spacesuit, Fincke will go outside the station for spacewalks 2, 3 and 4. He has already performed six spacewalks—however, they have all been in Russian Orlan spacesuits. This will be his first spacewalk wearing a U.S. Extravehicular Mobility Unit. His current total for time spent spacewalking is 26 hours and 12 minutes, and he has logged more than 365 days in space. If the STS-134 mission goes as planned, he will be the American astronaut who has the most time spent in space, surpassing the record of 376 days currently held by Peggy Whitson.

About Carnegie Science Center
Carnegie Science Center is dedicated to inspiring learning and curiosity by connecting science and technology with everyday life. By making science both relevant and fun, the Science Center’s goal is to increase science literacy in the region and motivate young people to seek careers in science and technology. One of the four Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh, the Science Center is Pittsburgh’s premier science exploration destination, reaching more than 700,000 people annually through its hands-on exhibits, camps, classes and off-site education programs.

About Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh
Founded by Andrew Carnegie in 1895, Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh is a collection of four distinctive museums dedicated to exploration through art and science: Carnegie Museum of Art, Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Carnegie Science Center, and The Andy Warhol Museum. In 2009, the museums reached more than 1.2 million people through exhibitions, educational programs, outreach activities, and special events.

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