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City of Downey

Press Release

Columbia Memorial Space Center Hosts Special Commemorative Event for Challenger Anniversary

City welcomed Mr. Carl McNair, brother of one of the lost crew members from the Challenger mission

Downey, CA, January 26, 2011

On January 25, 2011, the City of Downey hosted a special event at the Columbia Memorial Space Center to pay tribute to the lives of the crew lost in the Challenger STS 51L mission. In commemoration of the 25th anniversary of this tragic loss, Mr. Carl McNair, brother of Challenger astronaut Dr. Ronald McNair, gave an inspirational presentation about his brother, the crew and the continuing mission of these true American heroes. A book signing of Carl McNair's book titled, "In the Spirit of Ronald E. McNair, Astronaut – An American Hero," immediately followed the presentation. Mayor Luis Marquez commented, "It is a great honor to be able to pay tribute to the lost crew of the Challenger STS 51L mission. We are extremely proud to have welcomed Mr. Carl McNair to our Columbia Memorial Space Center, where we continue to inspire the next generation of future space explorers."

This special event, which was attended by the Downey City Council and community members, celebrated the lives and the legacy of the crew of STS 51L. "The anniversary of the Challenger disaster is a day to remember and pay tribute to the crew members whose lives were lost. Our City wishes to thank Mr. Carl McNair for honoring us with his presence and joining us in celebrating such a heroic and extraordinary group of people," said Mayor Pro Tem Roger Brossmer.

The Columbia Memorial Space Center is a hands-on learning center for children that educates about careers in space exploration through engaging programs in engineering, technology and science. It features a Robotics Lab, High-Definition Computer Lab, a wide range of interactive exhibits and it is home to the only Challenger Learning Center in the Los Angeles area. The Space Center is also available for catered events, parties, meetings, luncheons and special programs. For more information, please call 562-231-1200 or visit the Center's website at www.columbiaspacescience.org.

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For Immediate Release