

« Previous Article | Next Article »

SHARING OUR EXPERTISE

## Space Camp

# Mission Success — Boeing Inspires Lifelong Learning

With a calm look on her face, April Davis donned her spacesuit and began to mentally prepare for the upcoming mission. In just a few minutes, Davis would board Space Shuttle Endeavour and then travel at speeds up to 17,500 miles per hour (28,000 kilometers per hour), 220 miles (350 kilometers) above Earth, on her first mission to the International Space Station — a mission she's been training for all week.

Most astronauts train for years before their missions, but Davis is no ordinary astronaut. In fact, she's not an astronaut at all. She is a fifth-grade teacher at Windsong Intermediate School in Friendswood, Texas. And the "mission" is a simulated one, part of her week at Space Camp, courtesy of Boeing.

Each year, Boeing partners with the U.S. Space & Rocket Center to sponsor educators from around the world at its Space Camp facility in Huntsville, Ala. Last year marked the 18th anniversary of Boeing Educators to Space Camp. Since 1992, nearly 700 teachers have participated in Boeing's annual program, reaching more than 30,000 students.

"We want to work with the world's educators to inspire students and use space exploration as a way to help spark their interest in math and science," said Rick Stephens, Boeing senior vice president of Human Resources and Administration. "By sponsoring Educators to Space Camp, Boeing is helping the students of today become the citizens of the future and the next generation of scientists, engineers and space explorers."



PHOTO: DALE RAINVILLE/BOEING

Teachers Carlo Tripodi (foreground) of Italy and Kee Taek Hong of South Korea participate in a simulated spacewalk during Space Camp.

"I'm thrilled to be a part of this," said April Davis, a fifth-grade teacher. "There are so many cool projects we do at Space Camp that will be hugely successful in the classroom—projects such as bottle-rocket launches and heat-shield exercises that are fun and educational and will get students at all levels excited about learning."



PHOTO: ADAM MORGAN/BOEING

Teacher April Davis of Friendswood, Texas, spent her week at camp in hands-on workshops including simulated space missions and astronaut training.

Last year, Boeing brought more than 75 teachers from 10 countries to participate in the weeklong course, continuing to expand the diverse, global network of educators attending Space Camp.

"Enabling educators to attend Space Camp each year is just one of the many ways The Boeing Company is investing in the future of space exploration," said Brewster Shaw, vice president and general manager of Boeing's Space Exploration division, headquartered in Houston, and a former astronaut. "The number of students pursuing math-, science- and technology-related degrees is declining, particularly in the United States. It is important that we work with educators, who have a direct influence on the students starting at a young age, to bring the excitement of these subjects into the classroom. The teachers' experiences at Space Camp will give them a unique perspective to share with their students."

The program uses space exploration initiatives to enhance teachers' skills in presenting math, science and technology lessons that will inspire students —

and ultimately help build a skilled work force for a globally competitive technology market.

Throughout their week at camp, the teachers participate in hands-on workshops that include simulated space missions and astronaut training as well as presentations by rocketry and space-exploration experts. The workshops help bring the excitement of real-world engineering challenges to levels suitable for students so they can better understand scientific and mathematical principles. The teachers also receive resources to augment what they teach in their classrooms to help students meet national standards for science, math and technology.

Boeing's support of Space Camp aligns with the company's community investment focus area in primary and secondary education, which promotes the professional development of teachers and provides them with the tools and resources they need to help improve student performance.

### CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP REPORT 2009

Corporate Citizenship Defined

Innovation

Sharing Our Expertise

Lean in the Community

Engineers Without Borders-USA

Space Camp

FIRST Robotics

Partnering with Others

Education Partnership

Humanitarian Delivery Flights

Botanic Gardens Conservation

Impacting Key Issues

Malaysian Cancer Center

Homeboy Industries, Inc.

2009 Investments



PHOTO: DALE RAINVILLE/BOEING

Teachers Rhonda Bristow (left) of Richardson, Texas, and Tamara Edmondson of San Antonio conduct a science project on the International Space Station at Space Camp.

"Boeing invests in lifelong learning — from early childhood education to career development for education professionals — as a key strategy for building the talent and critical skills necessary to meet the current and future needs of the aerospace industry," said Dayni Alba, Global Corporate Citizenship community investor in Houston, Texas, home to Johnson Space Center and the NASA astronauts' headquarters.

"Space Camp provides a hands-on learning environment where the excitement of science, math and technology are explored and practiced through the mysteries and wonders of space," said Cathrine Summer, director of Education at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center. "For educators, Space Camp provides a place to become a learner again and to join with other educators who share the same passions for teaching and learning."

After graduating from Space Camp, each teacher returns home with CD-ROMs filled with lesson plans and additional program materials to use in the classroom. The graduates also receive information about online educator resources to facilitate continued networking with fellow camp attendees. Additionally, Boeing is requiring participants to work with their school administrators to develop a plan describing how they intend to implement what they learned at the camp in their school or district.

"I've learned a lot and made some great connections with teachers from around the world," Davis said. "I can't wait to share this experience with my students and other teachers around the district."

[« Previous Article](#) | [Next Article »](#)

[Print this page](#)