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Students Celebrate Women in Space

Planetary Geologist Dr. R. Aileen Yingst to Host Online Chat

De Pere, Wis., 6/20/05 – Math and science have not typically been fields in which girls have excelled or been particularly interested. Teacher Tony Marinelli has plans to help change that, however, with help from curricula by Space Explorers, Inc. and the company's scheduled online chat with planetary scientist Dr. R. Aileen Yingst.

Marinelli will facilitate an all-girls space camp at Lakeland College in Kirtland, Ohio, from June 20 – 24. The camp focuses on girls entering first and second grade. Its itinerary is based on Space Explorers' K-3 Space[®] curriculum and culminates in Dr. Yingst's online chat, scheduled for Friday, June 24, from 9:30 to 10:00 a.m. EDT. The chat is open to the public and can be accessed by visiting <http://www.space-explorers.com/internal/mercurious/index.asp?room=yingstsummer>.

"The idea of an all-girls camp started several years ago when parents of young girls kept making the comment, 'I know of more girls who would sign up for your science camps if there weren't so many boys!'" Marinelli said.

Once the idea was approved by his supervisor, Marinelli began shaping the camp. "I choose space as the overall theme because as girls get older, they tend to shy away from careers in math and science."

To help promote the idea of women pursuing science, Dr. Yingst will answer questions from camp participants and the general public about what it is like to be a woman in the space industry. Dr. Yingst currently serves as Director of the Wisconsin Space Grant Consortium at the University of Wisconsin - Green Bay, where she continues her research in the surface composition of Mars and the interior workings of the Moon. She is also a team member of NASA's upcoming Mars Science Laboratory mission, slated for launch in 2009. Dr. Yingst previously served on the Galileo mission to Jupiter and its moons and worked closely with the Clementine lunar reconnaissance team. In addition, she spent two years with the Mars Atmospheric and Geologic Imaging Team at the University of Arizona, working as a geologist on the Mars Pathfinder and Mars Polar Lander missions.

Space Explorers, Inc., the space education company sponsoring the chat, strives to inspire a new generation of explorers to pursue careers in science, math, and technology through its Internet-based programs and activities. Space Explorers offers standards-based curricula, mission simulations, and experiments that incorporate actual NASA data. More than 4,400 teachers across the United States are currently registered to use Space Explorers programming in their classrooms.

To learn more about this and other upcoming chat events and view archived chats, visit <http://www.space-explorers.com/internal/events/chats.html>. For additional information, please contact Hollie Miller at 800-965-3763.

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