Space Center Houston Conference Draws International Educators
Connects Teachers to Astronaut in Space

HOUSTON, Feb. 6, 2018 – Space Center Houston welcomed more than 550 educators from the United States, Mexico, Canada, Australia, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Portugal, Japan and Hong Kong for hands-on learning experiences with rocket scientists, astronauts and renowned instructors at Space Center Houston’s 24th Space Exploration Educators Conference, Feb. 1-3.

The nonprofit science and space exploration learning center offers teachers and students of all disciplines access to immersive learning experiences, said Daniel Newmyer, Space Center Houston vice president of education.

“We’re not just teaching science to scientists,” said Newmyer. “It’s accessible to all and we have experts to help teachers and students connect the dots.”

Space Center Houston honored Jennifer Cheesman, a sixth-grade science teacher from Sun City, Arizona, with the prestigious Cherri Brinley Outstanding Educator Award for her significant achievements in space science education.

“Jennifer makes an extraordinary effort to incorporate space exploration as part of her students’ lives,” said Newmyer.

The award is named for the late Cherri Brinley, a Houston-area educator and space enthusiast who shared her passion for space science with students and fellow educators. Award recipients are leaders in education and recognized for helping to shape the future of students in pursuing careers in science, technology, engineering and math.

The theme of this year’s conference was “Our Destination Beyond,” taking teachers beyond the classroom, beyond borders and beyond boundaries to use the power of space exploration science as an educational tool.

The conference featured NASA’s Year of Education on Station and included a video teleconference with astronaut Joe Acaba on the International Space Station and retired astronaut Dorothy Metcalf-Lindenburger, who was in Houston for the event. Both are former educators.

Attendees submitted questions for Acaba, which he answered live while orbiting 250 miles above Earth.

Attendees earned up to 24 hours of continuing professional education credit, received numerous cross-curriculum ideas and ready-to-implement classroom activities, and made connections with STEM leaders during valuable networking opportunities.

Educators went behind the scenes of the astronaut training facilities at NASA Johnson Space Center and learned about the technology and research that is furthering NASA’s current and future deep-space missions.

Space Center Houston thanks the following organizations for their generous support of this year’s Space Exploration Educators Conference: The Albert and Ethel Herzstein Charitable Foundation, Northrop Grumman, Tranquility Foundation and CASIS.
Join the next Space Exploration Educators Conference Feb. 7-9, 2019. For more information about Space Center Houston educational programs, visit spacecenter.org/education-programs/.

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The Manned Space Flight Education Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit science and space exploration learning center with extensive educational programs. Space Center Houston is the cornerstone of its mission to inspire all generations through the wonders of space exploration. The center draws 1 million visitors annually, was called “The Big Draw” by USA Today and generates a $73 million annual economic impact in the greater Houston area. Space Center Houston is a Smithsonian Affiliate and the Official Visitor Center of NASA Johnson Space Center. More than 250,000 teachers and students from around the world visit the center annually to experience our educational space museum with more than 400 things to see and do. For more information, go to www.spacecenter.org.