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Space Adventures Announces 1st Second Generation Astronaut

First private spaceflight open to commercial involvement in mission activities.
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Space Adventures, Ltd., the world's leading space experiences company, announced today that famed game developer Richard Garriott, son of former NASA astronaut Owen Garriott, has begun preparations for a "commercially active" mission to the International Space Station (ISS).

Mr. Garriott's spaceflight, currently planned for October 2008, will be the first in a series of missions that will accommodate commercial activity aboard the ISS. Involvement from the private sector can include scientific and environmental research and educational outreach programming.

"It has always been Space Adventures' goal to open the space frontier. Now, with Richard's flight, we have designed a series of missions devoted to increase commercial involvement in manned space missions," said Eric Anderson, president and CEO of Space Adventures. "It is a very rare occasion when so many commercial opportunities are available in one space mission. We encourage interested parties to contact us."

Space Adventures made history in 2001 by organizing the mission of the first private space explorer. Now, the company continues to bring innovation to manned space flight by enabling corporate and non-profit entities to participate in commercial endeavors on the planet's only orbiting outpost.

"I am dedicating my spaceflight to science," said Mr. Garriott. "It is my goal to devote a significant amount of my time aboard the space station to science, engineering and educational projects. I understand the necessity for conducting research in extreme environments whether it is collecting microorganisms from deep sea hydrothermal vents to carrying out experiments in the continuous micro-gravity of Earth orbit." He continued, "We need to be adventurous in mind and stimulate our intellects to answer today's most daunting scientific questions and to invent tomorrow's technological marvels."

The first commercial research partner involved in Mr. Garriott's mission is ExtremoZyme, Inc., a biotechnology company co-founded by Owen Garriott. The company plans to conduct protein crystallization experiments in space with proteins that have important cellular functions and are usually associated with common human diseases. Having access to these superior crystals will enable researchers to learn more about the molecular details of these proteins which is essential for protein engineering and structure-guided drug design.

"Because of my career, it was almost natural for Richard to be interested in space and exploration. I am so pleased that he is able to embrace this himself and that he is dedicating his flight to research. I am very proud of him," said Owen Garriott, Mr. Garriott's father and former NASA astronaut (Skylab II/SL-3, STS-9/Spacelab-1).

Interested parties, including commercial and non-profit entities and space enthusiasts, can get involved in Mr. Garriott's spaceflight via his web site (www.richardinspace.com). Mr. Garriott will be updating the site continuously via photos, blog entries and individuals can submit questions and suggestions for his mission activities. "I want to involve as many people as possible in my mission," said Mr. Garriott.

About Richard Garriott:

Richard Garriott is best known as a key figure in the computer gaming field. He was one of the earliest and most successful game developers. Mr. Garriott developed the Ultima series which remains the longest running computer game franchise, and with his brother, Robert, he founded Origin Systems, one of the most respected PC game developers and publishers. Richard also created Ultima Online, which ushered in the new massively multi-player online (MMO) genre, the fastest growing segment in computer gaming today. More recently, he co-founded the North American arm of NCsoft, the world's largest online game developer and publisher. In October, his latest game, Richard Garriott's Tabula Rasa, will ship in North America and in the European Union. For more information, please visit www.rgtr.com.

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Space Adventures, the company that organized the flights for the world's first private space explorers: Dennis Tito, Mark Shuttleworth, Greg Olsen, Anousheh Ansari and Charles Simonyi, is headquartered in Vienna, Va. with an office in Moscow. It offers a variety of programs such as the availability today for spaceflight missions to the International Space Station and around the moon, Zero-Gravity flights, cosmonaut training, spaceflight qualification programs and reservations on future suborbital spacecrafts. The company's advisory board includes Apollo 11 moonwalker Buzz Aldrin, Shuttle astronauts Sam Durrance, Tom Jones, Byron Lichtenberg, Norm Thagard, Kathy Thornton, Pierre Thuot, Charles Walker, Skylab/Shuttle astronaut Owen Garriott and Russian cosmonaut Yuri Usachev.

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