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MEADOWLANDS ENVIRONMENT CENTER LAUNCHES SPACE CAMP

Press Opportunity: Exciting week of activities planned for aspiring explorers

Lyndhurst, NJ – The New Jersey Meadowlands Commission invites members of the press to join area youngsters and their parents on August 13 for a family night at the new William D. McDowell Observatory. The evening program is part of a new, week-long summer camp offered to students entering the 7th grade and taught by a NASA “ambassador.” Reporters and photographers are welcome to schedule a visit to the space camp anytime during the week.

“The New Jersey Meadowlands Commission is pleased to offer this exciting new summer camp to area students,” said Joseph Doria, Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs and Chairman of the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission. “*Lost in Space* will expand students’ horizons, teaching them about the wonders of the universe and how humans have discovered these wonders through space exploration.”

The new camp filled up quickly with 15 children from six local towns. It runs Aug. 11 – 15 and the schedule is as follows:

Day One: Outer Solar System- Campers learn about the constellations and how comets and asteroids have impacted our planets. They will play a game of space bingo, helping educators gauge the children’s familiarity with the study of space.

Day Two: The Sun, Stars and Planets- Students safely view the sun with various scopes and spotters to understand the dynamic nature of the sun and the benefits of our nearest star.

Day Three: Electromagnetic Spectrum, the Moon and Tides- Campers handle actual meteorites. They learn about NASA’s Apollo missions and future missions to the moon. At 8 pm, campers return with their families for a nighttime viewing through the McDowell Observatory telescope.

Day Four: Design Challenge- Students learn about NASA’s robotic missions and use common household objects to create their own rover designed to land on solid ground, in water or in a polar environment.

Day Five: American Museum of Natural History- Campers attend the *Space Show* at the Hayden Planetarium and get a behind-the-scenes look at the museum and meet space experts, including an astrophysicist. A space scavenger hunt through the planet earth, universe and meteorite halls completes the day.

The space camp, one of a half-dozen offered by the Meadowlands Environment Center, a partnership between NJMC and Ramapo College, is designed to address subjects that meet the New Jersey State Core Curriculum Content Standards. All MEC camps are held at the new Center for Environmental and Scientific Education, a “green” building that incorporates sustainable materials and alternative energy, in Richard W. DeKorte Park.

For more information on arranging press coverage, please call Lilo Stainton, NJMC Communications Director, at 201-460-4692. For information on MEC programs in general, please call Laura Venner, MEC Astronomy Educator, at 201-777-2432.