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SPACEPORT AUTHORITY CONGRATULATES NM SPACE GRANT CONSORTIUM ON FAA CENTER WIN

LAS CRUCES, NM - Spaceport America and the New Mexico Spaceport Authority (NMSA) congratulate Dr. Pat Hynes and the New Mexico Space Grant Consortium at New Mexico State University (NMSU) for being selected as the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Center of Excellence for Commercial Space Transportation (COE-CST). Winning the nationwide competition to host the COE-CST now enables NMSU to serve as the hub of a minimum \$5 million, five-year research coalition addressing key challenges in the development of the commercial space industry.

"It's a great day not only for education in the state of New Mexico, but also for the emerging commercial space industry and the role that Spaceport America will have in its continuing growth," said Spaceport America Executive Director Rick Homans. "This COE-CST reaffirms and cements New Mexico's leadership in the vanguard of commercial space." Homans said the Center would likely facilitate development of launch vehicle systems, technologies and operations research for Spaceport America. "We commend Dr. Pat Hynes and her team, and are excited to work with her innovative consortium from New Mexico, Florida, Texas, Colorado and California, as well as companies like Virgin Galactic, SpaceX and other members of the NMSU COE-CST industry advisory board."

In addition, NMSA Chairman of the Board Ben Woods said, "Today's announcement means the New Mexico Space Grant Consortium at NMSU will be at the center of development for industry enabling technologies such as space launch operations and traffic management, space commerce and commercial human spaceflight for launch

facilities like Spaceport America here in New Mexico."

More information on the COE-CST announcement can be found on the FAA website:
http://www.faa.gov/news/press_releases/news_story.cfm?newsId=11737

Spaceport America has been providing commercial launch services since 2006. The spaceport is the world's first purpose-built commercial spaceport and is now under going construction near Truth or Consequences, New Mexico. This state-of-the-art launch facility is expected to become fully operational in 2011. Officials at Spaceport America have been working closely with leading aerospace firms such as Virgin Galactic, Lockheed Martin, Moog-FTS, and UP Aerospace to develop commercial spaceflight at the new facility. The economic impact of launches, tourism and new construction at the Spaceport is already delivering on its promise to the people of New Mexico.

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(For additional information and images of Spaceport America go to www.spaceportamerica.com or contact David Wilson @- 575-524-8118)