



# NEWS

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**For Immediate Release**

**March 20, 2006**

## **El Camino College to Launch Space Science Day 2006**

El Camino College will be the place to be on April 1 for South Bay youngsters to explore the science of space and all its complexities.

Space Science Day 2006 is scheduled from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. April 1 at El Camino College's planetarium and science classrooms, 16007 Crenshaw Boulevard, near Torrance. The daylong event is sponsored by El Camino College and American Honda Motor Co., Inc., and coordinated by the El Camino College Astronaut Ellison Onizuka Memorial Committee. It is free and open to serious-minded science students in grades five through 12.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Space Shuttle *Challenger* tragedy in which Astronaut Ellison Onizuka perished along with the six other crew members. This annual event at El Camino College honors Onizuka's memory and is dedicated to his dream of inspiring the youth of America to strive for and achieve their career goals.

"We are proud to continue this tradition of offering area students a chance to explore the science of space on a real hands-on level," said El Camino College President Thomas M. Fallo.

"Early experiences with science and other academic areas can inspire youngsters to make their career dreams happen. Mr. Onizuka has been quoted as saying: 'Your vision is not limited by what your eye can see, but by what your mind can imagine.' We hope this event sparks our visitors' imagination."

Special appearances will be made by NASA astronauts Lt. Col. Loren Shriver, mission specialist Jim Buchli, and payload specialist Gary Payton, three of the four astronauts who flew with Onizuka on his first flight.

Shriver became the Deputy Director of NASA's Kennedy Space Center for Launch and Payload Processing in 1997, after serving in a variety of other positions for NASA. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in aeronautical engineering from the United States Air Force Academy in 1967, and a Master of Science degree in aeronautical engineering from Purdue University in 1968. He was commissioned in 1967 upon graduation from the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Buchli became a NASA astronaut in August 1979. A veteran of many space flights, he has orbited the earth hundreds of times and traveled millions of miles in space. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in aeronautical engineering from the United States Naval Academy in 1967 and a Master of Science degree in aeronautical engineering systems from the University of West Florida in 1975. Buchli received his commission in the United States Marine Corps following graduation from the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis in 1967.

As a payload specialist, Payton flew on *Discovery* in 1985 which launched from and returned to land at the Kennedy Space Center, Florida. This excursion marked the first dedicated Space Shuttle Department of Defense mission. He graduated in 1966 from high school in Rock Island, Illinois, and attended Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois. After one year he entered the USAF Academy in Colorado Springs where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in astronautical engineering. He later earned a Master of Science degree in astronautical and aeronautical engineering from Purdue University.

After a presentation by the astronauts, students at Onizuka Space Science Day will join classroom presentations and demonstrations led by El Camino College professors, Science FEST students, and guests from JPL and other institutions.

Students will participate in a variety of hands-on science activities and experiments, including the traditional Egg Drop Competition, where students attempt to build the perfect apparatus that will let an egg drop from a rooftop without breaking when it lands.

Other science activities include discovery of: telescopes, hot air balloons, rockets, paint-making, insects, space “bugs,” physics toys, space photography, physics puzzles, robotics, and a planetarium show in El Camino College’s own planetarium – starring a new, state-of-the-art projector.

The astronauts will also participate in a memorial service along with Onizuka family members at the Los Angeles Hompa Hongwaji Buddhist Temple on March 31.

Reservations are required for the free science event. For more information, call 310-660-3487 or check out [SpaceDay@elcamino.edu](mailto:SpaceDay@elcamino.edu).

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