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**YUKON EDUCATION REPRESENTATIVES RETURN FROM N.A.S.A. LAUNCH**

WHITEHORSE – Education Minister Patrick Rouble has returned to the territory after leading a delegation to the Kennedy Space Center to witness the launch of the space shuttle *Endeavour*. Minister Rouble was accompanied by Yukon student Robyn Guenette, her mother, Bev Hanbidge, and Terry Markley, an educator at the Department of Education and long-time co-organizer of the Marsville science project in Yukon schools.

All four Yukoners travelled to Florida to view the launch of the STS 118 shuttle mission, which included Canadian astronaut Dr. Dave Williams on board. The visiting Yukoners also had the opportunity to meet three astronauts from previous missions: Canadians Chris Hadfield and Julie Payette, and American Eric Roe.

The Yukon delegates travelled as part of a celebration of space education in all of Canada's provinces and territories. The educational messages of this shuttle mission include "nothing is impossible" and "work hard and follow your dreams".

"Marsville and other space-education related projects are just some of the ways the Yukon Department of Education continues to make learning new and exciting for students in Yukon schools," Rouble said. "Last year, we hosted astronaut Julie Payette in her visit to the Marsville link-up day at Vanier School. Her presentation included incredible photos and personal anecdotes about space."

The shuttle launch made a big impression on Robyn Guenette, who enters Grade 7 at Jack Hulland Elementary School this fall: "The launch was the most amazing thing I've ever seen! I felt the power of the shuttle; I saw fire and clouds of smoke. The noise of the launch was incredibly loud even though we were three miles away," she said.

"Astronaut Dave Williams and the crew of the *Endeavour* are great examples of where your dreams can take you," Guenette said. "I am very grateful to the Canadian Space Agency, the Yukon Department of Education and my teacher Mr. David Michayluk for giving me this opportunity to see the space shuttle launch," she added.

Guenette had participated in a space shuttle launch simulation at Jack Hulland this past school year with teacher Dave Michayluk's class. She was selected from this space focused class on the basis of her excellent work and participation in the science curriculum and in the class' shuttle simulation, as well as with luck when her name was drawn from the jar of names of other outstanding classmates.

Educator Terry Markley said the shuttle launch was an unforgettable experience for Robyn and for all the Yukoners who attended. "The working facilities of the Kennedy Space Center along with its on-site displays of rockets and space capsules of the past, combined with the massive scale of everything at the center and the literally astronomical facts and figures we were exposed to, set the stage for the emotional and dramatic shuttle launch," Markley said.

“I think we should continue with space travel and exploration so we can learn more about ourselves and our universe,” Guenette added.

The Marsville science project has been running in Yukon schools since 1996.

Attached is a photo of the Yukon delegation.

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(From left) Minister of Education Patrick Rouble with astronaut Chris Hadfield, Jack Hullah Elementary School student Robyn Guenette and her mother, Bev Hanbidge, and educator Terry Markley, longtime co-organizer of the Marsville science project in Yukon schools.