CEREMONY TO RECOGNIZE NASA ART CONTEST WINNERS

HAMPTON, Va. – Outer space has been known to prompt even the most pragmatic astronaut to become an artist with words and even pictures.

Some students near NASA's Langley Research Center in Hampton, Va., didn't have to leave the ground to portray with pastels and pencils what space travel might be like. The youngsters were part of the first ever NASA Langley art contest that produced a limited edition 2008 calendar "NASA: The Art of Achievement."

"NASA is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year," said contest organizer Katrina Young. "We wanted to do something special so the community could share in our celebration and at the same time learn more about how NASA encourages inspiration, innovation and discovery to build a better world."

NASA Langley asked schools and home schools to submit one entry per grade level, kindergarten to 12th grade. Contest rules stated artwork had to be original work, done without the help of a computer, that illustrated one of the four NASA missions: aeronautics, earth science, space operations and future space exploration.

Media are invited to an awards ceremony Wednesday night, Feb. 13 from 7-8 p.m. for the NASA 50th Anniversary Art Contest winners at the Virginia Air & Space Center in downtown Hampton. It will take place upstairs inside the Space Gallery area, near the Langley exhibits.
"We got about 70 entries from around Hampton Roads," said Young. "Since we've never tried something like this before, we thought that was fantastic."

Some of the artwork was fantastic too, according to one of the five judges, NASA Langley graphic artist Stan Husch. "We were blown away by some of the work done by the students," said Husch. "They produced some really sophisticated, but very imaginative drawings and paintings."

NASA Langley and its partners at the Virginia Air & Space Center (VASC) awarded about 50 prizes: a grand prize and 12 first place prizes, as well as certificates for second and third places and honorable mention. The grand prize included the cover of the calendar, admission passes to the VASC, a tour of NASA Langley and other rewards. First place winners' submissions are also included in the calendar. All of the artwork that appears in the calendar will also be on display at the Virginia Air & Space Center until the end of the year.

A complete list of winners will be posted on the Internet after the ceremony. For more information, check:

http://www.nasa.gov/langley

For additional information about NASA, please go to:

http://www.nasa.gov/

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