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Benefits of Microgravity Sciences Research Explored in Outreach Program for Student and the General Public

Los Angeles - On May 2, 2001, the California Science Center will host an outreach program of the Second Pan-Pacific Basin Workshop on Microgravity Sciences designed to help students, educators, researchers, and the public learn more about how life on Earth can benefit from research conducted in space. The morning session will take place from 10:00 a.m. to 11:40 a.m. and targets middle and high school students, while the [afternoon session](#), scheduled from 4:00 p.m. to 5:40 p.m., will be open to the general public. Both sessions will link with several broadcast sites across the country and the afternoon session will feature a live global town hall meeting including audiences in Australia and Hawaii.

Microgravity, or "Micro-G," is a state of very weak gravity—one-millionth of what is felt on Earth. Conducting physical and life sciences research in such an environment gives scientists unique opportunities to study processes that are obscured by gravity on Earth. In the coming era of the International Space Station (ISS)-the largest space structure and most multinational space endeavor in history-the term "microgravity" will become increasingly commonplace. Efforts such as this program will help educate the public about the potential advancements that can improve everyday life as a result of these studies.

The panel of experts and their topics will include Gerard Faeth, Ph.D., professor, University of Michigan, on combustion; Nicholas Bigelow, Ph.D., professor, University of Rochester, on micro-measurement (atomic clock); Chiaki Mukai, M.D., astronaut and cardiovascular surgeon, on living and working in space; and Bernard Harris, M.D., astronaut and surgeon, will speak on what it takes to fly. The event will also include demonstrations and taped segments with opinions from communities in various Pan Pacific nations.

The outreach program is an initiative of the Second Pan-Pacific Basin Workshop on Microgravity Sciences, a gathering of scientists who meet to discuss the latest physical, chemical, and biological discoveries related to microgravity and the space environment. One of the goals of the workshop is to "take upon itself the challenge to reach out to society in an effort to address ways that scientists can contribute to the betterment of the world we live in."

This year's workshop will take place May 1-4 in Pasadena, California. California Institute of Technology President David Baltimore is an honorary co-chair, and Vice Provost David Goodstein is an organizing committee co-chair. Participants in the workshop will include the National Aeronautics and Space

Administration (NASA), the National Space Development Agency of Japan, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the Canadian Space Agency, and the Russian Space Agency. The first workshop was held in 1998 at Waseda University in Tokyo. China will host the next in 2003.

The California Science Center's participation in the outreach program fulfills its mission, which is, in part, to stimulate public interest in science learning and make it accessible to everyone. For more information on the outreach sessions, call the Communications Office at (213) 744-7446.

The California Science Center is located at 700 State Drive, Exposition Park, Los Angeles. Open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., except for Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. Both the Science Center and IMAX Theater are wheelchair accessible. Admission to the exhibits is free; IMAX tickets range from \$3.75 to \$7.50. For show times, group rates or advance ticket purchases, phone (213) 744-2019. Parking is \$6; enter the visitor lot at 39th and Figueroa Street. For general information, phone (323) SCIENCE.

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