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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 3, 2011**

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### **CARYN ELEMENTARY STUDENTS' SIGNATURES ARE MOVING AT 17,500 MILES PER HOUR!**

Rancho Cucamonga – The launch of Space Shuttle Discovery last week was not only a historic moment in our nation's space program (it marks NASA's third-to-last Space Shuttle launch and the last mission ever for Discovery), but it was also a historic moment for students at Caryn Elementary, as their personal signatures were carried up to the International Space Station on the mission.

The project is part of the *Student Signatures in Space (S3)* program, jointly sponsored by NASA and Lockheed Martin. Designed to stimulate young people's interest in space and technical studies, S3 gives K-12 students the opportunity to send their digitized signatures into space and feel a personal involvement with the crew and the mission. Students at Caryn were among over 500,000 other students from around the world to sign giant posters in celebration of Space Day (celebrated the first Friday each May). The signatures were all scanned onto a disc, and the disc was manifested as part of Discovery's cargo.

Discovery, which launched last Thursday (Feb. 24), docked with the International Space Station (ISS) on Saturday (Feb. 26). So the signatures are now orbiting the Earth with the Space Station at 17,500 miles per hour, completing an entire Earth orbit approximately every 90 minutes.

As part of the STS-133 mission, Discovery is delivering to the ISS the Permanent Multipurpose Module (PMM), which will provide additional storage for the Station crew as well as a place to conduct experiments in fluid physics, materials science, biology, and biotechnology. The deliveries also include Robonaut 2, or R2, which will be the first human-like robot in space to become a permanent resident of the Space Station.

The importance of Math and Science can not be understated at this time especially as students compete on a global stage. Caryn students are excited to be part of this historic event. They are closely monitoring the mission and looking forward to having their signatures returned.

The STS-133 mission is scheduled to conclude on March 8, with an 11:35 a.m. EST landing at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. Following the mission, Space Shuttle Discovery will be permanently retired. To date, Discovery has flown 38 missions – more than any other Shuttle – and

orbited the Earth over 5,600 times. Discovery carried the Hubble Space Telescope into orbit and was the first Shuttle to rendezvous with the Russian Mir Space Station. By the conclusion of its current mission, Discovery will have carried 180 people, including the first female Shuttle pilot and later commander (Eileen Collins), the first African American spacewalker (Bernard Harris), and the first sitting member of Congress to fly in space (Jake Garn).

Upon conclusion of the mission, the poster that Caryn students signed will be returned to the school for permanent display, along with an official NASA flight certification verifying that the signatures flew in space and a photo of the STS-133 astronaut crew that flew the signatures.

NASA and Lockheed Martin have been conducting the Student Signatures in Space program since Space Day was created by Lockheed Martin in 1997. To date, over 6 million students have participated in the Student Signatures in Space program.

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For more information on the *Student Signatures in Space* program, please contact April Tensen at (540) 521-3814.

For more information about *Space Day*, please visit [www.spaceday.org](http://www.spaceday.org) .

Additional information on Space Shuttle mission STS-126 may be found at [http://www.nasa.gov/mission\\_pages/shuttle/shuttlemissions/sts133/index.html](http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/shuttle/shuttlemissions/sts133/index.html) (note link to press kit in blue overview panel on right)